



# Lifeboats

## GIVE YOURSELF A FLOATING CHANCE

If you're in trouble in cold water:

- 1 Fight your instinct to thrash around**
- 2 Lean back, extend your arms and legs**
- 3 If you need to, gently move your arms and legs to help you float**
- 4 Float until you can control your breathing**
- 5 Only then call for help or swim to safety**

### FOR THOSE WHO FIND FLOATING A LITTLE HARDER:

- clothing can provide natural buoyancy for the first few minutes.
- stick to gentle movement to help you float.
- practice your floating technique in a pool.

The average temperature of British and Irish coastal waters is 12–15°C. That's cold enough to cause cold water shock.

### WHEN THE SHOCK HAS PASSED, LOOK FOR SAFETY. OPTIONS ARE LIKELY TO INCLUDE:

- swimming to safety – parallel to the beach if you're caught in a rip current
- calling for help
- finding something to hold onto to help keep afloat
- thinking about ways to preserve body heat until help arrives.

Help save lives. Share our Float to Live advice.  
[RNLI.org/RespectTheWater](https://RNLI.org/RespectTheWater)



The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea  
Royal National Lifeboat Institution, a charity registered in England and Wales (209603),  
Scotland (SC037736), in the Republic of Ireland (20003326) and the Bailiwick of Jersey (14)



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## RESPECT THE WATER WHEREVER YOU ARE

### What do you do if you see someone in trouble in the water?

All too often, people's first instinct is to go into the water. As a result, too many people drown trying to save others or their pets.

If you see somebody in danger of drowning at the coast, **call 999 or 112** and ask for the coastguard straight away.

Look for something that floats and throw it out to them.

Help them stay calm and encourage them to float.

#### HELPING YOU TO STAY SAFE



#### AT THE BEACH

- Go to a lifeguarded beach and swim between the red and yellow flags.
- Before going into the sea, consider your ability and the conditions; swimming in the sea is very different to swimming in a pool.
- When you enter the water, take time to acclimatise to the temperature.
- Have someone watching you from the beach and make sure they are able to call for help.



#### NEAR OPEN WATER

- When you're near open water, keep away from the edge; stick to designated paths and look out for safety signs; and keep clear of uneven, unstable or slippery ground.
- Avoid walking alone or at night, and always carry a means of calling for help.
- If exploring the coastline, always get local advice on the tide to make sure you don't get cut off.



#### ON THE WATER

- Carry a means of calling for help in case you do end up in trouble.
- Wear the appropriate flotation device, such as a lifejacket or buoyancy aid, it could save your life.
- If you are going out alone, tell someone ashore about your plans and what time you expect to be back.

To find out more visit: [RNLI.org/RespectTheWater](https://www.RNLI.org/RespectTheWater).

Please support us by sharing these important lifesaving skills.

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