

DRAFT Choosing a life jacket DRAFT

1. Label = the life jacket is U.S. Coast Guard approved for the:
 - Intended wearer's size
 - Intended wearer's weight
 - Water body (i.e. inland, near shore, off-shore, moving water)
 - Activity (i.e. general boating, PWC, towed sports)
 - Vessel type (i.e. recreational, uninspected passenger, commercial fishing)
2. Serviceable condition = there are no rips, tears, or buckle or zipper damage, floatation material not exposed.
3. Good fit = good performance.
 - Match the design and fit to body type
 - When tested in the water – mouth and chin are out of the water without effort. Device does not unduly restrict in-water mobility
4. It will be used in accordance with both the label and owner's manual

Vests:

- Snug but comfortable when fully fastened
- Zippers meet just barely (panels do not overlap)
- Lifting up gently on shoulder straps, no part of the vest should pull up to cover ears, chin or mouth
- Straps do not catch under edges of flotation panels
- Child should be able to raise arms with a "between the legs" strap fastened

Features to consider for best fit:

- Inherently buoyant devices with multiple and / or tailored panels
- Multiple adjustment points (i.e. shoulder and side strap adjustments)

Features to consider for best function:

- Pockets
- Emergency Locator Beacon loop
- Knife attachment
- VHF radio pocket
- Fabric color - Florescent green provides the best overall visibility in the water followed by florescent orange, non-florescent yellow and red

