

# Caring for your lifejacket

Use your lifejacket only when it is properly repacked.  
With some types of lifejacket you may need to  
repack parts and sometimes to keep it working  
properly, and remember the seller (RNLI or  
a recognised lifeboat).

## General inspection and maintenance

At least once a month, all lifejackets should be inspected  
and you should always inspect your lifejacket before  
you use it. The lifejacket should be inspected for any damage  
which may prevent it from working properly or  
which may cause it to become unusable. The

and folded corners for wear and tear and check that the  
retro-reflective tape is firmly attached to the jacket  
surface. At three monthly intervals, check webbing  
and stitching, sprayhood (if fitted), all buckles, zips and  
D-rings and ensure the whistle is securely fastened.

If the jacket is fitted with a light, check its operation  
and that the battery is in date – replace if necessary.  
Some lights are salt water activated and must be  
replaced after use.

The lifejacket should be repacked correctly, as  
per the manufacturers folding instructions.  
When not in use, lifejackets should be  
stored in a dry, well-aired area. Out of  
season the lifejacket should be opened  
up, partially inflated (to remove folds) and  
stored on a non metal coat hanger.

For free sea safety advice and information:

[RNLI.org/safetyandeducation](http://RNLI.org/safetyandeducation)

Email: [coastal\\_safety@rnli.org.uk](mailto:coastal_safety@rnli.org.uk)



# Lifeboats



## CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder maintenance

The CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder needs regular inspection. Every month it should be checked for tightness, as they can work loose and fail to inflate the lifejacket. Every three months inspect for corrosion as this may cause the cylinder to leak or to abrade the bladder.

Remove the cylinder and check the operating head. Test the operation by pulling the handle forward and checking that the firing pin travels forward and returns freely and the O<sub>2</sub> is not worn or bent. Take care with the plastic safety clip, which is designed to break when operated, and may need to be replaced.

If the cylinder thread is corroded with white powdery deposit, brush it off with a stiff nylon brush and blow out excess particles. The cylinder can be protected by placing the rubber finger of a washing up glove on it.

Any part of the jacket that was in contact with a rusty cylinder should be checked for damage and may need to be repaired by the manufacturer. On lifejackets fitted with a hydrostatic trigger, the hydrostatic device must be replaced at the correct intervals and particular care must be taken to ensure that the gas cylinder is correctly tightened, as there have been reported instances of the cylinder becoming detached on this type of jacket.

Ensure that the gas cylinder is correctly tightened



Check the plastic safety clip is intact

## IF ANY PART OF THE CYLINDER HAS A RED, RUSTY SURFACE, IT MUST BE REPLACED IMMEDIATELY WITH ONE OF THE CORRECT WEIGHT

It is advisable to carry a spare re-arming kit onboard in case the lifejacket is accidentally activated.

Your lifejacket should be serviced annually by a qualified agent.

Coastal Safety, RNLI Headquarters, West Quay Road, Poole Dorset BH15 1HZ

**0845 045 6999** United Kingdom

**1800 991 802** Republic of Ireland

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea

Registered in England and Wales (2055931) and Scotland (SC137735)

Charity number 01458181 (Republic of Ireland)

© 2016 RNLI



**Lifeboats**

