

# PFD MAINTENANCE GUIDE



All Nookie PFD's are tested to ISO 12402-5 standards and marked internally accordingly. A 50N Buoyancy Aid is intended for use by swimmers who are close to help in sheltered waters where a bulky device could impair the users activity or create a dangerous situation. This is not a life jacket and does not turn an unconscious user face up. A buoyancy aid allows for freedom of movement and is suitable for water skiing, small boat sailing, kayaking, canoeing, paddle boarding etc.

Personal Floatation Devices (PFDs) or buoyancy aids form part of your Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and therefore should be inspected regularly for damage, wear & tear, floatation and suitability for intended use.

It is your responsibility to keep records of purchase date and location & use throughout their lifespan as you may be requested to show documentation by the relevant authorities (HSE, AALA or relevant UK or EC authorities) or by your insurers.

These records should also form part of your activities risk assessment.

## Wearing

Only choose a buoyancy aid that fits correctly. Put the buoyancy aid on like a jacket. Firstly do up the zip, then fasten the buckles and adjust the straps, starting at the bottom first until the buoyancy aid fits snugly. A buoyancy aid should fit close to the body so that it cannot be pulled off over the wearers head, but not fit so that it impedes the users freedom of movement or breathing.

Train yourself in the use of this device. teach children to float in the buoyancy aid. Full performance may not be achieved using waterproof clothing like drysuits as air will affect the PFDs performance and the wearers ability to swim.

## What is the lifespan of a Buoyancy Aid (PFD)?

As a manufacturer we are expected to offer guidance on lifespan and although this is not to say the product won't last longer we would expect a buoyancy aid in regular use to have a life span of approximately 3 years in commercial environments. However, other factors can reduce its life time.

Nookie PFDs have a maximum lifespan of 10 years after which they must be retired from use regardless of condition. Every PFD has a 'Month/Year of Manufacture' & Batch No. printed on the inside. It is this date of manufacture that the 10 year lifespan limit exists.

### NO USE

Unused & stored  
at room temperature

**10 YEARS**

### MEDIUM USE

Regular use, weekly  
(8 hours)

**3-5 YEARS**

### INTENSE USE

Used daily (3+ hours)

**1-2 YEARS**

## Product Care

Before & After Every Use:

Check your buoyancy aid for rips, tears, holes, torn seams, damaged straps or buckles and missing straps and buckles. Ensure fastening zips are free from corrosion and freely move through their entirety.

Occasionally:

Ensure all pockets are free from debris and mould, ensure they can open & close as intended. Check for excessive abrasion to the fabrics, webbing, buckles, zips & sliders.

Check for excessive fading as this may indicate a deterioration of the strength of materials.

Annually:

Check the internal foam. Check it fits well inside the shell and not loose as this could indicate deterioration or loss of floatation.

Perform a float test to determine that the device still provides enough buoyancy to meet the standard.

If the buoyancy aid shows any signs of damage to the structural components including zips, buckles, webbing or fabrics - replace it! Do not alter it



## Rinse

Always thoroughly rinse your PFDs in clean, fresh water after every use. Rinsing in disinfectant may reduce the lifespan of your PFD. Use in contaminated or polluted water like Marinas may reduce the lifespan of your PFD.



## Drying & Storage

Air dry your PFDs away from sunlight and direct heat sources. (do not leave on a radiator or in an airing cupboard). Extreme temperatures or drying rooms will shorten the lifespan of the materials & foam. Machine washing, sun drying, vans in hot weather are all big no-no's.



DO NOT leave your PFDs damp or wet for long periods of time. This can cause mildew and mould and ultimately will cause fabrics and foams to fail.

Hang PFDs on hangers from the shoulder straps. Avoid stacking or boxing for long periods as compression of the foam will damage it.

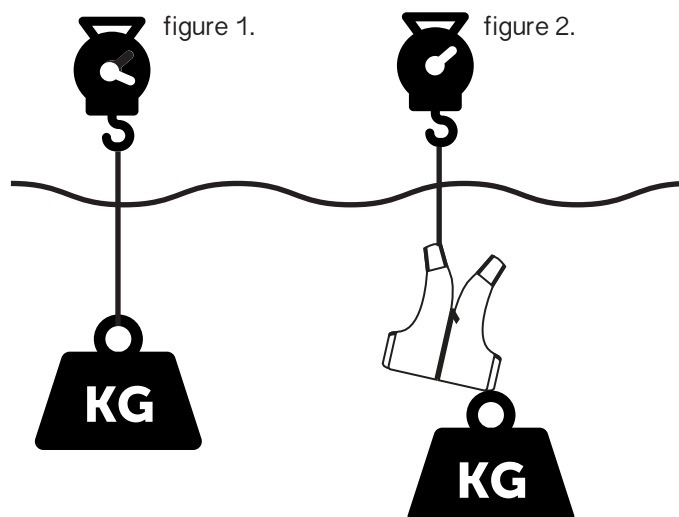
Do not put heavy objects on your PFD. Do not kneel on it or use it as a cushion! It will lose buoyancy when crushed.

## How do I test floatation in Buoyancy Aids / PFD's?

The foam used in buoyancy aids is expected to lose a percentage of its buoyancy over time and almost certainly will not provide test results to the same number of Newtons as the original ISO test. (The ISO12402-5 is designed to accommodate the expected loss of buoyancy over time.) The foam will deteriorate during normal usage but other factors will accelerate the process such as storage, compression, heat, sunlight and frequency of use.

Therefore, with regard to floatation testing, we cannot recommend any test because it will not be the same test that our buoyancy aids must be subjected to and pass for UKCA & CE (EU) approval. Any test performed is likely to have considerable inaccuracies performed outside laboratory conditions, however if you wish to undertake a rough test you will require a few items: a hanging scale, a short length of rope, a 10Kg steel weight, fresh water deep enough to submerge a complete PFD (a large barrel or pool) and karabiners for attachment.

1. Weigh and record the reading of the 10kg steel weight in water (figure 1)
2. Attach the weight to the PFD, and then to the scale with the rope, waiting for any trapped air bubbles to escape. Record the reading from the scales (figure 2).
3. Subtract the reading from step 2 from the reading from step 1 to get your PFD's floatation in kg force
4. Multiply this by 9.8 to convert kg to Newtons and this is the PFD's buoyancy in Newtons



Make sure the weight/weight and PFD are not touching the sides/bottom of the barrel/pool as this will affect the results



## What does CE (EU) / UKCA ISO 12402-5 on my Buoyancy Aid / PFD mean?

All lifejackets and buoyancy aids have to be CE (EU) (for Europe post Brexit) and UKCA (post 1st January 2022) approved and marked. This shows that the product has been tested and approved to U.K & European standards.

## Why does my Buoyancy Aid / PFD have a smaller number of Newtons printed next to the size than the 50N stated in the UKCA / CE (EU) Standard?

The CE (EU) / UKCA testing standards take into account the size and weight of the user through various float tests. All our buoyancy aids pass with floatation above the minimum required. The internal print shows the minimum floatation required in Newtons for each size, for example SM 45N.

All of our Buoyancy Aids / PFD's are approved printed with a 'greater than symbol' > to indicate it has passed with more Newtons of floatation than the minimum.

Nookie buoyancy aids (PFD's) are approved to the UKCA & European CE (EU) standard ISO 12402-5 50N. They are not tested for US Coastguard Approval. It is legal to sell/purchase/use them in the USA but you should be aware that there may be a legal requirement to carry additional items in order to satisfy local safety legislation.

All Nookie Buoyancy Aids have buoyancy above the minimum floatation required for UKCA / CE (EU) certification. When factoring weight include all the gear you'll be wearing too. A correct fit is more important than choosing the buoyancy category according to your weight.

If you require any further information please contact us at [info@nookie.co.uk](mailto:info@nookie.co.uk)