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10 things to do if you are the 'Man' Overboard

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'Swim to the nearest flotation device - NOT after the boat'

Obviously, the best way to avoid MOB situations is to ensure your on-board systems don't allow you to go overboard. However, have you thought through how actions you take in an overboard situation can increase your chance of recovery? Think it through now, before you are in a life challenging situation.

Man Overboard Victim Tips:

If you go overboard, what can you do to increase your chances of recovery?

The first answer is that if you are wearing flotation a Lifejacket, also called a Personal Flotation Device (PFD), your chances of recovery are 12 to 15 times better than if you don't have one on. That's an awesome fact!

If you aren't wearing flotation there are several things that you can do to improve your chances of being seen in the water and getting back aboard safely.

1. Make sure you are seen and heard as you go over.
2. Get rid of heavy non-buoyant items including boots that fill with water
3. Keep clothing on, trapping air inside it if possible.
4. Don't swim after the boat. Swim to any flotation that is thrown in the water.
5. Try to make yourself visible (put hood up on foul weather gear, splash water around you, wave arms)
6. Conserve energy. Don't shout. Blow a whistle, if you have one. Blowing a whistle is more likely to be heard aboard the rescue vessel.
7. Float in the HELP position.
8. Wait for the boat to circle and return to you.
9. Look for the Lifesling and its retrieval/trailing line or a throw rope in the water.
10. Learn how to get into and fasten yourself into the MOB Recovery equipment on your boat.

Sail-World would like to thank [US Sailing](#) for the information contributed to this article from their 'Safety at Sea' lectures.

by US Sailing/Sail-World

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