



NSAI
Standards

Irish Standard
I.S. EN 13138-3:2014

Buoyant aids for swimming instruction - Part 3: Safety requirements and test methods for swim seats to be worn

I.S. EN 13138-3:2014

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Buoyant aids for swimming instruction - Part 3: Safety requirements and test methods for swim seats to be worn

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Partie 3: Exigences de sécurité et méthodes d'essai pour
les sièges flottants devant être portés

Auftriebshilfen für das Schwimmenlernen - Teil 3:
Sicherheitstechnische Anforderungen und Prüfverfahren für
Schwimmsitze, die am Körper getragen werden

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Foreword

This document (EN 13138-3:2014) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC 162 “Protective clothing including hand and arm protection and lifejackets”, the secretariat of which is held by DIN.

This European Standard shall be given the status of a national standard, either by publication of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by June 2015 and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by June 2015.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. CEN [and/or CENELEC] shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

This document supersedes EN 13138-3:2007.

Annex K provides details of significant technical changes between this European Standard and the previous edition EN 13138-3:2007.

This European Standard is one of a series consisting of three standards dealing with buoyant devices for swimming instructions for the various stages of the learning process.

- EN 13138-1, *Buoyant aids for swimming instructions – Part 1: Safety requirements and test methods for buoyant aids to be worn*
- EN 13138-2, *Buoyant aids for swimming instructions – Part 2: Safety requirements and test methods for buoyant aids to be held*
- EN 13138-3, *Buoyant aids for swimming instructions – Part 3: Safety requirements and test methods for swim seats*
- prEN 13138-4, *Buoyant aids for swimming instruction – Part 4: Test manikin for in water performance testing of buoyant aids to be worn*

According to the CEN-CENELEC Internal Regulations, the national standards organizations of the following countries are bound to implement this European Standard: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

EN 13138-3:2014 (E)**Introduction**

The entire process of learning to swim is considered to include two stages:

- getting familiar with the water environment and movements in it;
- acquiring skills in standard swimming strokes.

Buoyant aids for swimming instructions (in brief: swimming device(s)) are intended to assist users (in particular children) to learn to swim. The design and purpose of the devices are related to the above stages.

Swimming devices are intended to give the user positive buoyancy in the water while maintaining the correct body position for swimming. However, it should not be assumed that standard conformity of the devices will by itself eliminate the risk of drowning as this depends also on the behaviour of the user and any supervision.

Although this European Standard sets performance requirements to ensure that swimming devices perform appropriately, it is essential that the devices are used correctly and under constant and close supervision. It is important to ensure that they are securely fitted to the appropriate size of user and that when correctly fitted, they cannot become displaced. Swim seats however should allow immediate escape in case of capsizing. Therefore the use of these devices is recommended to be restricted to water out of standing depth of the user.

The highest degree of protection against drowning can only be achieved by using lifejackets. It is essential that there is a clear distinction between devices intended to preserve life and those which are intended only to assist buoyancy for the user when learning to swim. As swimming devices are not life preservers, they should only be used in swimming pools and other situations free from current, tides and waves.

The bulk storage of some types of swimming devices could, under certain conditions, result in a potential fire hazard. The perceived risk of such a hazard was evaluated against the actual risk to the user from materials treated with certain known toxic fire retardant chemicals. However, the fire hazard is less of a problem to the user than the risk associated with the swimming devices being put in the mouth, especially by children. For this reason, flammability requirements do not apply to this European Standard.

For the above reasons and to differentiate these devices from aquatic toys, advisory safety measures, including marking, warning notices and user instructions are included in this standard.

The range both of the design and function of buoyant aids for swimming instruction varies considerably and for this reason, the standard for swimming devices has been prepared in three parts, namely devices that are intended to allow the user to become familiar with water (passive user), devices that are worn (active user) and those devices that are held by the user to improve swimming strokes.

Part 1 of this European Standard is only for devices that are securely attached to the body (class B devices = for an active user). They are intended to introduce the user to the range of swimming strokes.

Part 2 of this European Standard is for devices that are held either in the hands or by the body (class C devices = for an active user) and are intended to assist with improving specific elements of the swimming stroke. For adult beginners or more advanced users they can also be used for further stages of the process to learn to swim.

Part 3 of this European Standard deals only with swim seats to assist children up to 36 months in their first attempts to learn to swim (i.e. to get familiar with the "in water environment" and moving through it). The child is positioned inside the buoyant structure, which provides buoyancy and lateral support to the body, thereby keeping the child's head above water level (class A devices = for a passive user).

Swim seats allow young children to experience the water environment and being moved through it. Movements of lower limbs and arms are possible. The use of swim seats does however not replicate any form of a correct swimming stroke.

Swim seats complying with this standard provide a stable, floating position for a child sitting in the swim seat and avoids entrapment in case of capsizing. Children in swim seats do however require very close parental supervision. Overload beyond specified body weight, breaking waves and violent external forces are remaining risks that can cause capsizing. Use of these devices in water that is of the child's standing depth will increase the risk of capsizing and will hinder or block the escape from the seat in case of emergency.

Buoyant swimming aids should be only a class A or a class B or a class C device.

EN 13138-3:2014 (E)**1 Scope**

This part 3 of EN 13138 specifies safety requirements for design, sizing, materials, strength and in-water performance as well as provisions for marking and the information supplied by the manufacturer for swim seats. It also specifies the relevant test methods. This standard is not applicable to products covered by EN 13138-1 and EN 13138-2.

This part 3 of EN 13138 applies only to devices into which the user is placed and which have either inherent buoyancy or can be inflated or a combination of both. It only applies to Class A devices intended to introduce the user to the range to the water environment. These devices are only intended for children aged up to 36 months with a body mass less than or equal to 18 kg. It does not apply to Class B or Class C devices, to pull buoys, swim rings, lifebuoys, buoyancy aids, lifejackets or aquatic toys.

2 Normative references

The following documents, in whole or in part, are normatively referenced in this document and are indispensable for its application. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

EN 71-1, *Safety of toys — Part 1: Mechanical and physical properties*

EN 71-3, *Safety of toys — Part 3: Migration of certain elements*

EN 15649-1:2009+A2:2013, *Floating leisure articles for use on and in the water — Part 1: Classification, materials, general requirements and test methods*

EN 15649-2:2009+A2:2013, *Floating leisure articles for use on and in the water — Part 2: Consumer information*

EN 20105-A02, *Textiles — Tests for colour fastness — Part A02: Grey scale for assessing change in colour (ISO 105-A02)*

EN ISO 105-E03:2010, *Textiles — Tests for colour fastness — Part E03: Colour fastness to chlorinated water (swimming-pool water) (ISO 105-E03:2010)*

EN ISO 105-E04, *Textiles — Tests for colour fastness — Part E04: Colour fastness to perspiration (ISO 105-E04)*

EN ISO 105-X12, *Textiles — Tests for colour fastness — Part X12: Color fastness to rubbing (ISO 105-X12)*

EN ISO 3696:1995, *Water for analytical laboratory use — Specification and test methods (ISO 3696:1987)*

EN ISO 12402-9:2006, *Personal flotation devices — Part 9: Test methods (ISO 12402-9:2006)*

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