



Institut luxembourgeois de la normalisation  
de l'accréditation, de la sécurité et qualité  
des produits et services

## ILNAS-EN 13138-3:2014

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

Aides à la flottabilité pour  
l'apprentissage de la natation - Partie 3:  
Exigences de sécurité et méthodes  
d'essai pour les sièges flottants devant

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

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## National Foreword

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

Aides à la flottabilité pour l'apprentissage de la natation -  
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

This European Standard was approved by CEN on 16 August 2014.

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EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR STANDARDIZATION  
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EUROPÄISCHES KOMITEE FÜR NORMUNG

**CEN-CENELEC Management Centre: Avenue Marnix 17, B-1000 Brussels**

# Contents

Page

Foreword.....	5
Introduction .....	6
1 Scope .....	8
2 Normative references .....	8
3 Terms and definitions .....	9
4 Classification.....	10
4.1 General.....	10
4.2 Categorization .....	11
5 Safety requirements .....	11
5.1 General.....	11
5.2 Design .....	12
5.2.1 Avoidance of similarities to aquatic toys .....	12
5.2.2 Innocuousness.....	12
5.2.3 Edges, corners and points.....	12
5.2.4 Buckles, zippers and other fixings .....	12
5.2.5 Small parts.....	13
5.2.6 Valves and stoppers .....	13
5.3 Sizing .....	13
5.4 Materials .....	13
5.4.1 Thread .....	13
5.4.2 Resistance to puncturing.....	14
5.4.3 Resistance of foam and other inherent buoyant material to water absorption .....	14
5.4.4 Resistance of foam and other inherent buoyant materials to compression .....	14
5.4.5 Migration of certain elements.....	14
5.4.6 Resistance to chlorinated salt water .....	14
5.4.7 Material used for markings .....	14
5.4.8 Resistance of the markings to perspiration.....	15
5.4.9 Adhesion of markings .....	15
5.5 Strength .....	15
5.5.1 Strength of entire seat.....	15
5.5.2 Seam strength and durability of inflatable devices.....	15
5.6 In-water performance .....	15
5.6.1 Residual buoyancy .....	15
5.6.2 Fit and positioning.....	15
5.6.3 In-water behaviour, static stability.....	16
5.6.4 In-water behaviour, static stability, capsizing under extreme condition (option 1 to 3).....	16
5.6.5 Escape from the swim seat (body entrapment, leg / foot entanglement) .....	16
5.6.6 In-water behaviour, static stability retention of function .....	17
5.6.7 Swim seats with special seat designs .....	17
6 Test methods.....	17
6.1 Enhanced conditioning .....	17
6.2 Test apparatus and procedure .....	17
7 Warnings and markings .....	18
7.1 General.....	18
7.2 Warnings and markings on the product.....	18
7.3 Information supplied by the manufacturer .....	19

<b>7.4</b>	<b>Consumer information at the point of sale.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Annex A (normative)</b>	<b>Test manikins I to III.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>A.1</b>	<b>Dimensions .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>A.2</b>	<b>Specifications .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>A.3</b>	<b>Density of components.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>A.4</b>	<b>Centre of gravity .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>A.4.1</b>	<b>Location.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>A.4.2</b>	<b>Calibration on land (dry).....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>A.4.3</b>	<b>Calibration in water (wet).....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>A.4.4</b>	<b>Test manikins I ... III, variant: upright sitting manikin .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Annex B (normative)</b>	<b>Test procedures for swim seats .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>B.1</b>	<b>Fit and positioning .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>B.1.1</b>	<b>General .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>B.1.2</b>	<b>In-water behaviour, static stability in calm water .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>B.1.2.1</b>	<b>Static stability of inflatable swim seats .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>B.1.2.2</b>	<b>Static stability of swim seats made from inherent buoyant material, e.g. foam.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>B.1.3</b>	<b>Efficiency of residual buoyancy and retention of function.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>B.2</b>	<b>Self-righting test, options 1 to 3 .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>B.2.1</b>	<b>General .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>B.2.2</b>	<b>Escape test.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>B.3</b>	<b>Strength of entire seat (weldings, sewings, straps etc.).....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Annex C (normative)</b>	<b>Procedures for testing resistance of markings to saliva.....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Annex D (normative)</b>	<b>Procedures for testing efficiency of valves of inflatable devices .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Annex E (normative)</b>	<b>Security of the pressure release of buckles.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Annex F (normative)</b>	<b>Procedures for testing non-objectively measurable features like donning, adjustability, retention of function, edges, corners and points by panel assessment.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>F.1</b>	<b>General .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>F.2</b>	<b>Assessment of risks .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>F.3</b>	<b>Guidance to panel assessment of complete device .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>F.4</b>	<b>Re-assessment of instructions supplied with the device .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Annex G (normative)</b>	<b>Test procedures for seam strength and durability of inflatable devices .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Annex H (normative)</b>	<b>Test procedures for determining the puncture resistance of inflatable devices .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Annex I (normative)</b>	<b>Test procedure for size of leg holes .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Annex J (normative)</b>	<b>Test procedure for seat depth adjustment of swim seats of sizes I; II; III related to equal height of centre of gravity .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>J.1</b>	<b>Dimensions .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>J.2</b>	<b>Testing.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>J.2.1</b>	<b>Marking a reference point.....</b>	<b>45</b>

<b>J.2.2</b>	<b>Measurement.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Annex K (informative)</b>	<b>Significant technical changes between this document and the previous edition EN 13138-3:2007.....</b>	<b>46</b>

## 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.

## 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).