

SURVIVAL PAPER

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Staying Afloat In A Survival Boat

By Jim Jones

While water is essential to survival, too much water in the wrong place can be deadly. Flash floods are a real danger in many areas. Storms, hurricanes and tsunamis kill thousands each year. Terrorists could easily target flood control dams to wipe out large areas down stream. The changing climate makes coastal areas and lowlands high-risk areas. You could be trying to evacuate an area struck by chemical, biological or nuclear contamination and find that the bridges are blocked by the military or by gangs. In such cases the ability to float yourself, your family and your survival gear will save your life. You need a boat! Not everyone can afford to have that 60-foot cabin cruiser sitting in the driveway. Even small boats and canoes are costly and difficult to transport under emergency conditions. Fortunately, most sporting-goods stores and surplus stores sell small one, two and three-man inflatable rubber boats. These are designed for hunting and fishing and are usually camouflaged and well built. They are equipped with rubber oarlocks and handling lines. While the one-man models are lighter to carry, they are very small so I would recommend the two-man models for each person and their gear. The two-man boat is about 18 x 18 x 1 inches and 5-pounds deflated. This gives you a 75-inch long by 45-inch wide craft capable of carrying two people with a little gear or one person with full survival gear for a long distance. The boats cost around \$25 to \$50 dollars. That's not much cost considering the survival advantages they can provide. Three-man boats are a bit heavier but inflate to a 90-inch x 53-inch craft to carry two people and all their gear. You could inflate these boats by mouth but you really should have a good foot pump if you can afford the weight. Oars can be improvised if you cannot carry them. A patch-kit and 100-feet of rope is a wise addition. There are many survival uses for these handy craft. Here are the top ten.

1. Obviously useful to get across rivers and canales when bridged routs are unavailable.'

2. A lifesaver when flooding occurs in your area
3. Gives you the capacity to rescue others trapped in flooded homes or sinking vehicles, etc.
4. Gives you the option of using navigable stream, rivers, lakes and marshes for evacuation, escape and evasion if necessary.
5. Gives you the ability to reach remote areas and islands to establish safe survival camps
6. Gives you an advantage in foraging, hunting and fishing for food.
7. Can be used as a quick shelter or bed
8. Can be used to gather rainwater
9. Can be used as a rescue litter to carry injured victims
10. And last but not least! You now own a boat so you can call yourself "Captain"



Typical two-man inflatable sports boat has many survival applications