

DROWNING PREVENTION



BE WATER AWARE



Northern Ireland
Fire & Rescue Service



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Many people accidentally drown in the UK each year and more than half of those people had no intention of entering the water.

What to do if someone falls into deep water

- Call 999 to inform the emergency services. If you don't have a phone, shout for help - but do not enter the water.
- Encourage the person in the water to try and float on their back and if there is rescue equipment nearby, throw it to them.
- Never ever enter the water to try and save someone. If you go into the water you are likely to suffer from cold water shock which will leave you unable to help, even if you are a strong swimmer.

What to do if YOU fall into deep water

- If you fall into deep water, you should lie on your back and float.
- Fight the instinct to panic or swim - it's better to just float.
- Lie back and keep your airways clear, push your stomach up and extend your limbs, moving hands and feet to help you float.
- Try to control the effects of cold water shock such as the gasping reflex. Once your breathing is controlled, call for help and, if possible, try making your way towards safety.

Don't drink and drown

- 20% of drowning victims have consumed alcohol before entering the water.
- Don't let a night out end in tragedy; take a safe route home, away from water.
- Avoid walking near water even if the path is lit. You may not see trip hazards or even the water's edge in the dark.
- If you're with other people, stay with your group and don't wander off if you become separated.

Safety advice for runners and walkers

- Stick to proper pathways.
- Avoid walking or running near water in the dark.
- Don't walk or run next to water if levels are high.
- Look out for trip or slip hazards - pay attention to your footing.
- When running or walking next to water, stay clear of the edges.

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