BS EN 13138-2:2021

BSI Standards Publication

Buoyant aids for swimming instruction

Part 2: Safety requirements and test methods for buoyant aids to be held

bsi.

National foreword

This British Standard is the UK implementation of EN 13138-2:2021. It supersedes BS EN 13138-2:2014, which is withdrawn.

The UK participation in its preparation was entrusted to Technical Committee SW/136/8, Swimming pools and aquatic equipment.

A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its committee manager.

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Buoyant aids for swimming instruction - Part 2: Safety requirements and test methods for buoyant aids to be held

Aides à la flottabilité pour l'apprentissage de la natation - Partie 2 : Exigences de sécurité et méthodes d'essai pour les aides à la flottabilité à tenir

Auftriebshilfen für das Schwimmenlernen - Teil 2: Sicherheitstechnische Anforderungen und Prüfverfahren für Auftriebshilfen, die gehalten werden

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European foreword

This document (EN 13138-2:2021) 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of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by April 2022 and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by April 2022.

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

This document supersedes EN 13138-2:2014.

Annex G provides details of significant technical changes between this European Standard and the previous edition EN 13138-2:2014.

EN 13138, *Buoyant aids for swimming instruction* consists of the following parts dealing with buoyant swimming devices for swimming instructions for the various stages of the learning process:

— *Part 1: Safety requirements and test methods for buoyant aids to be worn*

— *Part 2: Safety requirements and test methods for buoyant aids to be held*

— *Part 3: Safety requirements and test methods for swim seats into which a user is positioned*

Any feedback and questions on this document should be directed to the users’ national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found on the CEN website.

According to the CEN-CENELEC Internal Regulations, the national standards organisations of the following countries are bound to implement this European Standard: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, 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, and

— acquiring skills in standard swimming strokes.

Buoyant aids for swimming instruction (in brief: swimming device(s)) are intended to assist users (in particular children) to learn to swim. The design and purpose of the swimming 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 swimming devices will by itself eliminate the risk of drowning as this depends also on the behaviour of the user and any supervision.

Although this document sets performance requirements to ensure that swimming devices perform appropriately, it is essential that the swimming 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 swimming 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 rescue 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 are not included in this document.

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

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 swimming devices that are intended to allow the user to become familiar with water (passive user), swimming devices that are worn (active user) and those devices that are held by the user to improve swimming strokes.

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

— Part 2 of this series is for products 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 series deals only with products (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 swimming 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 document provide a stable, floating position for a child sitting in the swim seat and avoid entrapment in case of capsizing. Children in swim seats do however require very close parental supervision. Overload beyond specified body mass, breaking waves and violent external forces are remaining risks that can cause capsizing. Use of these swimming 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.

1 Scope

This document specifies safety requirements for construction, performance, sizing and marking for swimming devices intended to assist users with movement through the water in the early stages of water awareness, while learning to swim or while learning part of a swimming stroke. It also gives methods of test for verification of these requirements.

This part 2 of EN 13138 applies only to class C swimming devices that are designed to be held in the hands or by the body. Typical swimming devices include kick boards and pull/kick boards. These swimming devices are used to assist in learning to swim or to assist with swimming strokes and improving specific elements of the stroke, which have either inherent buoyancy or can be inflated.

It does not apply to pull buoys, swim rings, lifebuoys, buoyancy aids, lifejackets or aquatic toys.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

EN 71-1:2014+A1:2018, *Safety of toys — Part 1: Mechanical and physical properties*

EN 20105-A02:1994, *Textiles — Tests for colour fastness — Part A02: Grey scale for assessing change in colour (ISO 105-A02:1993)*

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-E04:2013, *Textiles — Tests for colour fastness — Part E04: Colour fastness to perspiration (ISO 105-E04:2013)*

EN ISO 105-X12:2016, *Textiles — Tests for colour fastness — Part X12: Colour fastness to rubbing (ISO 105-X12:2016)*

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

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— IEC Electropedia: available at https://www.electropedia.org/

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

3.1
buoyancy
resultant upthrust of a swimming device when totally submerged in fresh water with its uppermost part just below the water surface

3.2
inherent buoyancy
upthrust provided by material which is less dense than water or by sealed chambers that are not inflatable and are filled with air or gas