



LOST AT SEA

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You have chartered a yacht with three friends, for the holiday trip of a lifetime across the Atlantic Ocean. Because none of you have any previous sailing experience, you have hired an experienced skipper and two-person crew.

Unfortunately in mid Atlantic a fierce fire breaks out in the ships galley and the skipper and crew have been lost whilst trying to fight the blaze. Much of the yacht is destroyed and is slowly sinking.

Your location is unclear because vital navigational and radio equipment have been damaged in the fire. Your best estimate is that you are many hundreds of miles from the nearest landfall.

You and your friends have managed to save 15 items, undamaged and intact after the fire. In addition, you have salvaged a four man rubber life craft and a box of matches.

Your task is to rank the 15 items in terms of their importance for you, as you wait to be rescued. Place the number 1 by the most important item, the number 2 by the second most important, and so on through to number 15 for the least important.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Provide a 'lost at sea ranking chart' for every member of your group.
2. Ask each young person to take 10 minutes to decide their own rankings, and record the choices in the left-hand column (my ranking).
3. Invite everyone to get into teams of 4. Encourage the group to discuss their individual choices and work together to agree an improved collaborative list. Allow 20 minutes for this section. Record the group rankings in the second column (team rankings).
4. The correct answers were suggested by the US Coastguard. Display the 'expert' rankings on a PowerPoint presentation, whiteboard or photocopy. Compare your individual and group answers with the correct answers and determine a score.
5. For each item, mark the number of points that your score differs from the Coastguard ranking and then add up all the points. Disregard plus or minus differences. The lower the total, the better your score.
6. As the young people work together in a team, sharing thoughts and ideas, this should produce an improved score over the individual results. Discuss with your group why the scores were different? What changed their minds? And was this enough to survive?

**SCORES**

- 0 - 25** **Excellent.** You demonstrated great survival skills. Rescued!
- 26 - 32** **Good.** Above average results. Good survival skills. Rescued!
- 33 - 45** **Average.** Seasick, hungry and tired. Rescued!
- 46 - 55** **Fair.** Dehydrated and barely alive. It was tough, but rescued!
- 56 - 70** **Poor.** Rescued, but only just in time!
- 71 - 112** **Very poor.** Oh dear, your empty raft is washed up on a beach, weeks after the search was called off.

LOST AT SEA RANKING CHART

My ranking	Salvaged items	Team ranking
	A sextant	
	A shaving mirror	
	A quantity of mosquito netting	
	A 25 liter container of water	
	A case of army rations	
	Maps of the Pacific Ocean	
	A floating seat cushion	
	A 10 liter can of oil/petrol mixture	
	A small transistor radio	
	20 square feet of Opaque plastic sheeting	
	A can of shark repellent	
	One bottle of 160 per cent proof rum	
	15ft nylon rope	
	2 boxes of chocolate bars	
	A fishing kit	
Score		Score

COASTGUARD EXPERT ANALYSIS

According to the experts, in this case the US Coastguard, the basic supplies needed when a person is stranded mid-ocean are articles to attract attention and aid survival until rescue arrives. Articles for navigation are of little importance since even if a small life raft were capable of reaching land, it would be impossible to store enough food and water to survive for that amount of time. Without signaling devices, there is almost no chance of being spotted and rescued.

So, the list below is the ranking order of the items according to their importance to your survival:

Item	Coastguard Ranking	Coastguard Reasoning
A sextant	15	Useless without the relevant tables and a chronometer.
A shaving mirror	1	Critical for signaling.
A quantity of mosquito netting	14	There are NO mosquitoes in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean and the netting is useless for anything else.
A 25 liter container of water	3	Vital to restore fluids lost through perspiration.
A case of army rations	4	This is your basic food intake
Maps of the Atlantic Ocean	13	Worthless without navigation equipment.
A floating seat cushion	9	Useful as a life preserver if someone fell overboard.

A 10 liter can of oil/petrol mixture	2	Critical for signaling. The mixture will float on water and could be ignited using the matches.
A small transistor radio	12	You would be out of range of any radio station.
20 square feet of Opaque plastic sheeting	5	Can be used to collect rain water and shelter from the wind and waves.
A can of shark repellent	10	To repel sharks, of course!
One bottle of 160% proof rum	11	Contains 80% alcohol, which means it can be used as an antiseptic for any injuries, otherwise of little value. It would cause dehydration if drunk.
15ft nylon rope	8	Could be used to lash people or equipment together to prevent being washed overboard in a storm.
2 boxes of chocolate bars	6	Your reserve food supply
A fishing kit	7	Ranked lower than the chocolate as there is no guarantee you will catch any fish.