

# Survival Tips

Titanic, 1912

George survived the 1912 sinking of Titanic by a combination of luck, quick thinking, and bravery. Although his story is at work of historical fiction, the disaster of the Titanic was a very real event. If you were to find yourself on a rapidly sinking ship, you should remember the following:



**Grab your life jacket, a heavy wool coat, and a snack.**

In 1912, life jackets were made out of cork wrapped in heavy canvas. These jackets, called “life belts”, were usually bulky and could cause injury if worn incorrectly. Today’s life jackets are made of foam core or inflated using air—they’re easier to swim in and more buoyant. It will be just as cold as it was in 1912, though, so be sure to grab your biggest wool coat! Wool, unlike cotton, keeps you warm even when you’re wet. And before you evacuate, tuck a high-calorie snack in your pocket. A chocolate or granola bar is a good choice.



**Get into a boat!**

Your best bet for survival is getting into a lifeboat. Despite her size, the Titanic only had 20 lifeboats for all of her 2,228 passengers. Following the 1912 sinking, marine laws were changed and required that all ocean liners have enough boats for all passengers aboard. Most boats will allow women and children to board first, followed by all other passengers.



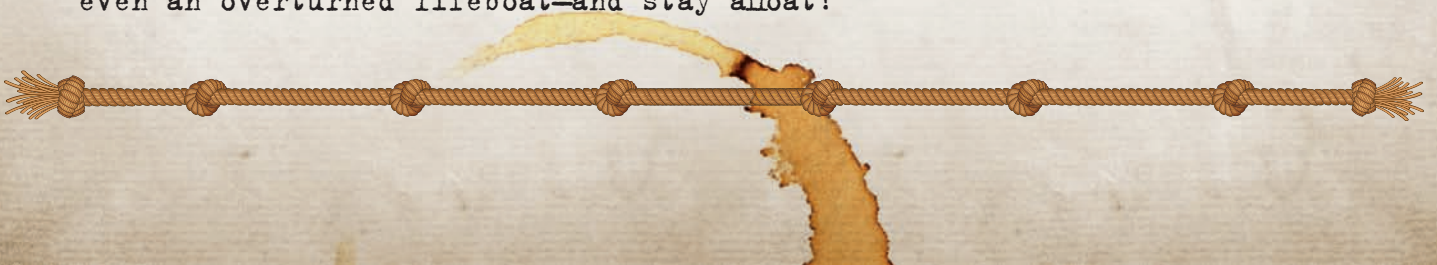
**If you can't get into a boat...**

Remain on the highest deck of the ship and don't get into the water until the very last moment. The North Atlantic Ocean is usually freezing (32°F) or colder during the fall, winter, and spring months. Humans can only survive about thirty minutes in freezing cold water—much less if they are panicking.



**If you find yourself bobbing in sub-zero waters...**

If luck really isn't on your side, try to find something to float on. If your body is completely underwater, hypothermia (when your body's natural temperature drops below 95 degrees Fahrenheit) is an unavoidable outcome. Look for something to make a raft out of—an old door, a large piece of wood, or even an overturned lifeboat—and stay afloat!







**Stay calm, don't move, and wait for rescue.**

The best way to maintain body temperature is to stay still, but you'll need to move a little bit—try to wring out your clothes to get rid of excess water, and tuck your knees to your chest, taking extra care to keep your hands warm. Frostbite (when the skin freezes) is a scary possibility and you want to make sure your hands, feet, arms, legs, and nose are kept as warm as possible. Once a rescue boat arrives, calmly try to signal them towards you. Don't move too much—you don't want to lose too much body heat.



**Warm up!**

Once rescued, make sure to discard fully soaked clothing and wrap yourself in warm, dry blankets. Avoid warm beverages with caffeine, such as coffee or tea. Drinks with caffeine will just contribute to dehydration, a serious condition when the body doesn't have enough water. Don't massage or rub your limbs to warm up—this can cause damage to your nerves and muscles. And see a doctor as soon as possible! You've survived, but you've been through quite an ordeal!

