

Survival at Sea

- You and your team have chartered a yacht.
- None of you have any previous sailing experience, and you have hired an experienced skipper and two-person crew.
- As you sail through the Southern Pacific Ocean a fire breaks out and much of the yacht and its contents are destroyed.
- the yacht is slowly sinking.
- Your location is unclear because vital navigational and radio equipment has been damaged.
- The yacht skipper and crew have been lost whilst trying to fight the fire. •
- Your best estimate is that you are approximately 1000 miles South West of the nearest landfall.
- You and your friends have managed to save the following 15 items, undamaged and intact after the fire.

ITEMS	Individual Ranking	Group Consensus Ranking	'Official' Ranking	Individual Difference Score	Group Difference Score
A sextant					
Fishing kit					
Mosquito netting					
2 boxes of chocolate bars					
Small transistor radio					
Shark repellent					
5 gallon can of water					
One quart of 160% proof rum					
Maps of the Pacific Ocean					
Shaving mirror					
<i>15 ft of nylon rope</i>					
2 gallon can of oil/ petroleum mixture					
20 square feet of opaque plastic					
One case of army rations					
Floating seat cushion					
TOTAL					

Lost at Sea Rationale

According to the experts (US Coastguard), the basic supplies needed when a person is stranded mid-ocean are articles to attract attention and articles to 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 the requisite amount of time. Without signaling devices, there is almost no chance of being spotted and ultimately rescued. Furthermore, most rescues occur within the first 36 hours and a person can survive with only a minimum of food and water during that period. So, the following is the order of ranking the items in their importance to your survival:

1. **Shaving Mirror** Critical for signaling
2. **2 gallon can of oil/petrol mixture** Critical for signaling. The mixture will float on water and could be ignited with one of the \$5 bills and a match. What the experts don't say is how you get away from this conflagration or what to do if the wind should push the life raft into the flames!
3. **5 gallon can of water** Necessary to replenish fluids lost through perspiration (that's sweat)
4. **One case of army rations** Basic food intake
5. **20 square feet of opaque plastic** Can be utilised to collect rain water and provide shelter from the elements
6. **2 boxes of chocolate bars** Reserve food supply (what were you going to do with that much chocolate?)
7. **Fishing kit** Ranked lower than the chocolate as 'a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush' There is no guarantee you will catch any fish.
8. **15ft of nylon rope** Could be used to lash people or equipment together to prevent it being washed overboard.
9. **Floating seat cushion** A life preserver if someone fell overboard
10. **Shark repellent** Only has a 50% chance of working
11. **One quart of 160 per cent proof rum** Contains 80% alcohol, which is enough to be used as an antiseptic for any injuries, otherwise of little value – would cause dehydration if ingested (that's drunk to you and me)
12. **Small transistor radio** Of no use without a transmitter. You would also be out of range of any radio station.
13. **Maps of the Pacific Ocean** Worthless without navigation equipment. It does not matter where you are but where the rescuers are!
14. **Mosquito netting** There are NO mosquitos in the midpacific ocean. As for fishing with it? – stick to the fishing kit.
15. **Sextant** Useless without the relevant tables and a chronometer.