**Helicopter Rescue**

VHF channel 16

Wear life jacket

One person (best with maneuverability) at the helm (Stay highly focused)

* Engines on
* Steer vessel as instructed by Coast Guard
  + May be to motor upwind as fast as safely can

One person remains at the helm and stays in communication via the VHF radio

* Record all instructions from Coast Guard
* Keep crew informed of the plans
* Will be difficult to hear when it approaches so important to understand all instructions before they arrive

Person who will take the hi-line dropped from the helicopter (Select physical strong person)

* Put on gloves
* Locate and prepare where to put the slack I.e. large filled bucket

Clear the deck

* Put away any loose items
  + Cushions
  + Pillows
  + Enclosures
  + Portable chairs
  + Clothing (including clothes pins)
  + Kayaks, paddleboards, etc. on side that could blow away
  + Canopee, tarps, sunshades
  + Lines
* Lower and secure obstructions
  + Flag and flagpole
  + Antenna
  + Outriggers
  + Sails
* Add extra lines to better secure sails
* Lower boom, move to starboard side, secure

Turn on deck lights (at night)

* Coast Guard can assess damage and conditions

Prepare means for rough waters (if too dangerous from vessel)

* Life raft
  + Located under the helm steps (by cockpit refrigerator)
  + Use knife to cut straps
  + Move to port side sugar scoop
    - It is about 100 pounds
  + Attach to vessel with a long painter (line)
  + Have in a position ready to be deployed
* Dingy
  + Attach to vessel with long painter (line)
    - Cleat on starboard sugar scoop
  + Have ready to be lowered and for people to board

Be on lookout for helicopter and provide signals to help them locate you

* Orange flares during day
* Pinpoint flare at night
* Wave high visible life jackets or other bright rescue items (i.e. Activate Dan buoy)
* If no response on VJF channel 16, try VHF channel 67
* Do not
  + Fire flares at helicopter
  + Shine lights

Communication with VHF not working

* Look for written signs from the helicopter (i.e. VHF 67)
* Use hand gestures

Winchman may enter by jumping into water or lowered with the hi-line heaving in-line technique.

Hi-line

* Helicopter drops the hi-line
  + Light line with a weight
  + Line used to transfer people to helicopter
* You grab the and maintain the hi-line
  + DO NOT secure the hi-line to the vessel
* Winchman descends on the hi-line
  + Take up slack (as instructed)
  + Second person should coil the slack line (i.e. into a bucket)
* May need to give a heft pull to help heave the winchman aboard.
  + Do not assist unless the winchman instructs you to
  + **DO NOT** touch the winchman.
    - Electrical shock can occur if winchman has not touched the boat first
    - Winchman will earth the static electricity
      * There may be an earthing wire dropped to the water
* Winchman is in charge, follow all instructions
  + Do not be afraid to put ear close to him in order to hear

Life strop and stretcher

* Make sure earthing wire has touch water before you touch life strop or stretcher
* Evacuees
  + Do not take unnecessary items
  + Order of evacuation
    - Unconscious
    - Injured
    - Weakest
    - Strongest
  + Put on life strop
  + Tighten toggle
  + Keep your arms to your side
  + Do not extend arms or legs when boarding until instructed since there can be pinch points
* Winchman (or crew on vessel)
  + Thumbs up is signal to hoist
  + Helicopter will descend to one side of the vessel
  + Pay out (ease out) on the hi-line, keeping enough tension to stop the lift from swinging wildly
    - Make sure it is clear of outboard
  + Maintain the hi-line until instructed by Coast Guard to release it
    - May be needed for next evacuee
* Note: helicopter winch can hoist 2 life strops

Rough waters (hi-lining is dangerous)

* Prepare dingy and or life raft with a long painter (line)
  + Crew instructions
    - Stationed on top of the life raft, not inside
      * Keep windage lower
* Only enter when instructed
  + Want time in water to be as short as possible to reduce hyperthermia

**Resources**

[Helicopter rescue at sea (yachtingmonthly.com)](https://www.yachtingmonthly.com/sailing-skills/helicopter-rescue-at-sea-30559)

[Preparing for a Helicopter Hoist | Boating Safety (boatingsafetymag.com)](https://www.boatingsafetymag.com/safety-tips/preparing-helicopter-hoist/#:~:text=U.S.%20Coast%20Guard%20helicopters%20create%20hurricane-force%20winds.%20Clear,way%20of%20something%20being%20lowered%20to%20your%20boat.)

Hi-line technique: Marine Notice #3 of 2017

[MGN 161 - Hi Line Technique - [PDF Document] (vdocuments.site)](https://vdocuments.site/mgn-161-hi-line-technique.html?page=1)

[49 rescue techniques 3 - Bing video](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=hi-line+technique&&view=detail&mid=C4CE1CF7486808628059C4CE1CF7486808628059&&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dhi-line%2Btechnique%26FORM%3DHDRSC4) Nauticallive.com