

# PS Shopping List for the Ideal Handheld VHF Radio

**W**e put together a list of features that our ideal handheld VHF radio would have. Some of these features are absolute necessity while others are nice-to-have items.

**1. Rugged, waterproof construction:** The nature of handheld marine electronics require that they be able to withstand being dropped—on decks, cabin soles, docks, etc.—and being splashed, used in the rain, or accidentally dipped in the drink.

**2. Excellent transmit and receive properties:** All the features in the world won't help if the radio doesn't operate well.

**3. Long battery life:** The longer the better—10 to 12 hours is acceptable, 15+ is preferred.

**4. Quick recharging:** Anything more than overnight (10 hours) is too long.

**5. Reasonable replacement battery cost:** It's always a good idea to keep an extra battery on hand and fully charged.

**6. Optional AA or AAA battery tray:** VHF's usually don't operate as well when using AAs or AAAs, but these are easier—and cheaper—to stock up on for emergencies.

**7. Readable display screen** in all lighting conditions.

**8. Features:** While we find some features to be over the top, others add to the safety benefits of a handheld VHF. A radio with DSC capability, built-in GPS receiver, SOS strobe light, and aviation-band reception will serve well in an emergency.

**9. Long warranty,** backed by good customer service.