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› [Icom IC-M88 Handheld VHF Marine Radio User Manual](#)

## ICOM IC-M88

# Icom IC-M88 Handheld VHF Marine Radio User Manual

Model: IC-M88

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Icom IC-M88 is a robust handheld VHF marine radio designed for reliable communication in demanding marine environments. This manual provides essential information for the proper setup, operation, and maintenance of your IC-M88 radio, ensuring optimal performance and longevity.

Key features include a waterproof housing, comprehensive channel access for marine and land mobile use, and versatile operating modes.

## 2. PACKAGE CONTENTS

Verify that all the following items are included in your product package:

- IC-M88 Radio Unit
- Lithium-ion Battery Pack
- Drop-in Charger
- AC Adapter
- Swivel Belt Clip
- Hand Strap
- Antenna
- User's Manual

## 3. PRODUCT OVERVIEW



Front view of the Icom IC-M88 Handheld VHF Marine Radio, showing the display, speaker grille, and control buttons. The display shows 'WATERPROOF', 'TAG', '16', and 'IC-M88'. Buttons include 'TAG', 'U/I/C/L', 'CH/WX', 'DUAL', 'SCN', '16', 'H/L', and up/down arrows.

The IC-M88 features an intuitive layout for ease of use. Key components include:

- **Power/Volume Knob:** Located at the top, used to turn the radio on/off and adjust audio volume.
- **Antenna Connector:** For attaching the supplied antenna.
- **LCD Display:** Backlit for visibility, shows channel number, status indicators (e.g., waterproof, tag, battery level).
- **Speaker/Microphone:** Integrated into the front panel.
- **Control Buttons:** Including channel up/down, dedicated Channel 16, CH/WX (Weather Channel), SCN (Scan), DUAL (Dual/Tri-Watch), H/L (High/Low Power), TAG, and LOCK.

## 4. SETUP

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### 4.1 Battery Charging

Before first use, fully charge the supplied lithium-ion battery pack. Connect the AC adapter to the drop-in charger, then place the radio with the battery pack into the charger. The charging indicator will illuminate. A full charge typically takes several hours and provides up to 15 hours of talk time.

### 4.2 Antenna Attachment

Carefully screw the antenna onto the connector at the top of the radio until it is finger-tight. Do not overtighten, as this can damage the connector.

### 4.3 Belt Clip Attachment

Attach the swivel belt clip to the designated slot on the back of the radio or battery pack. Ensure it clicks securely into place to prevent accidental detachment during use. Periodically check the security of the clip.

## 5. OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

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### 5.1 Power On/Off and Volume Control

To power on the radio, rotate the top-mounted knob clockwise. Continue rotating to adjust the audio volume. To power off, rotate the knob counter-clockwise until it clicks.

### 5.2 Channel Selection

Use the **Up** and **Down** arrow buttons to change channels. The IC-M88 supports various channel groups:

- **US Channels:** For use in United States waters.
- **International Channels:** For use in international waters.
- **Canadian Channels:** For use in Canadian waters.
- **Land Mobile Channels:** 22 free channels (146 to 174 MHz) for commercial use (requires FCC license).

Press the **U/I/C/L** button to cycle through these channel groups.

### 5.3 Transmit Power Level

Press the **H/L** button to toggle between High (5W) and Low (1W) transmit power. Use low power for short-range communication to conserve battery life and reduce interference. High power is for maximum range.

### 5.4 Scanning Functions

The IC-M88 offers multiple scanning functions to monitor channels:

- **Tag Scan:** Scans channels that have been marked as 'tag' channels. Use the **TAG** button to mark or unmark channels for scanning.
- **Priority Scan:** Monitors selected tag channels while also continuously checking Channel 16 for distress calls.
- **Auto Scan:** Automatically initiates scanning when no signal is detected on the current channel.

Press the **SCN** button to initiate or stop scanning.

### 5.5 Dual Watch and Tri-Watch

These functions allow you to monitor multiple channels simultaneously:

- **Dual Watch:** Monitors a selected working channel and Channel 16.
- **Tri-Watch:** Monitors two selected working channels and Channel 16.

Press the **DUAL** button to activate these modes. These functions are crucial for ensuring you do not miss important emergency calls while engaged in other communications.

## 5.6 Weather Channels and Alerts

Press the **CH/WX** button to access NOAA weather channels. The radio can also provide weather alerts, automatically switching to the appropriate weather channel when a storm warning or other alert is broadcast.

## 5.7 Instant Access to Channels 16 and 9

The IC-M88 features dedicated buttons for instant access to critical channels:

- Press the **16** button for immediate access to Channel 16 (distress and calling channel).
- Press the **9** button (often combined with Channel 16 button) for instant access to Channel 9 (non-commercial calling channel).

## 5.8 Key Lock Function

Press the **LOCK** button to prevent accidental changes to settings or channels. Press it again to unlock the keypad.

## 5.9 Battery Save Function

The radio includes a battery save function to extend operating time. While beneficial for battery longevity, some users have reported that enabling this feature may occasionally lead to missed calls. If you experience missed communications, consider disabling this function in the radio's settings.

## 5.10 Self-Check Function

The IC-M88 features a self-check function that monitors internal temperature, connected battery voltage, and water intrusion. Consult the comprehensive user manual for detailed instructions on accessing and interpreting the results of the self-check function.

# 6. MAINTENANCE

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## 6.1 Cleaning

Regularly clean the radio with a soft, damp cloth. Ensure all caps and covers, especially for external ports, are securely closed to maintain its waterproof integrity. Do not use harsh chemicals, abrasive cleaners, or solvents, as these can damage the radio's finish and seals.

## 6.2 Battery Care

To maximize the lifespan of your lithium-ion battery, avoid fully discharging it frequently. Recharge the battery before it is completely depleted. When storing the radio for extended periods, ensure the battery is partially charged (around 50%) and store it in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight.

# 7. TROUBLESHOOTING

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This section addresses common issues you might encounter with your IC-M88 radio.

- **Radio not powering on:** Ensure the battery pack is fully charged and correctly installed. Verify that the power/volume knob is rotated clockwise past the 'off' position.
- **Missing calls or poor reception:** Check that you are on the correct channel and within range of the transmitting station. Ensure the antenna is securely attached. If the battery save function is enabled, consider disabling it as it may occasionally affect reception sensitivity.

- **Poor transmission range:** Confirm the transmit power is set to High (5W) using the H/L button. Ensure the antenna is properly connected and undamaged. Obstructions or environmental factors can significantly affect range.
- **Battery detaching from belt clip:** Ensure the belt clip is securely latched to the radio or battery pack. If repeated detachment occurs, some users have found success by applying a small amount of silicone rubber to the battery latch switch to increase friction, ensuring it can still be removed for battery replacement or service.
- **Water intrusion warning:** If the self-check function indicates water intrusion, immediately power off the radio and consult a qualified service technician.

## 8. SPECIFICATIONS

Feature	Specification
Model Number	M88 01
Product Dimensions (W x H x D)	2.44 x 3.81 x 1.53 inches (approx. 1.5 x 2.4 x 3.8 inches)
Item Weight	2 pounds
Water Resistance Level	Waterproof (JIS7 submersible)
Number of Channels	57 U.S., 61 Canadian, 57 International, 10 NOAA Weather, 22 Land Mobile
Frequency Range	156-174 MHz
Transmit Power	5W / 3W / 1W selectable
Battery Type	Lithium-ion
Voltage	3.7 Volts
Manufacturer	ICOM
Date First Available	July 1, 2003

## 9. WARRANTY AND SUPPORT

The Icom IC-M88 Handheld VHF Marine Radio is backed by a three-year warranty from the date of purchase. This warranty covers defects in materials and workmanship under normal use.

For technical support, service, or detailed operational questions not covered in this manual, please refer to the comprehensive user manual included with your product or visit the official ICOM website for further assistance and contact information.