

QUICK STARTER GUIDE TO

KAYAKING

LAST UPDATE - JUNE 2017

18 KAYAKING TIPS FOR
BEGINNERS

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EASY-TO-READ KAYAK-
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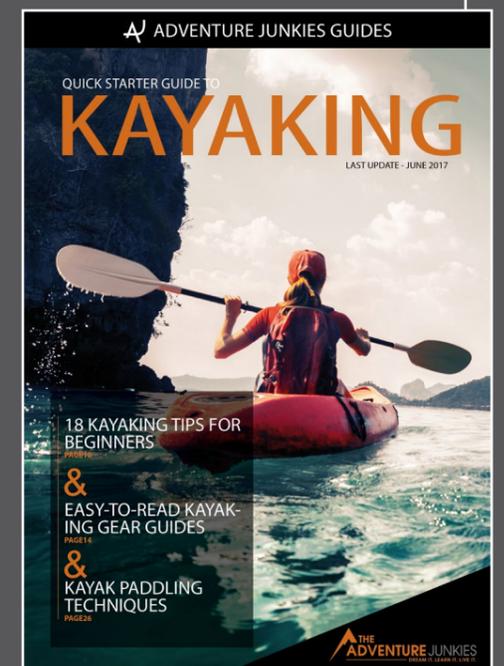
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Dream it. Learn it. Live it.



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Dream it. Learn it. Live it.



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MESSAGE FROM **THE EDITORS**

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Welcome to The Adventure Junkies Kayaking Quick Starter Guide!

You've probably found your way to this ebook through our website, or maybe a friend passed it along to you. Either way, we're happy you're here.

We wrote this guide because when we were just starting out kayaking we couldn't find a single easy to read resource about how to get into the sport. The techie articles from magazines and websites just made us more confused. Also, none of our friends were kayakers so we had to go ask around to find the answers we needed. The process left us feeling lost and overwhelmed, we don't want that to happen to you.

The Adventure Junkies was created to inspire you and give you the right tools to explore the outdoors. We call it the dream it, learn it, live it process. First, you get inspired by others. Then, you learn the basics of the sport. And finally, you do it yourself. We do this by providing you with high quality and practical education, and connecting you with a community of like minded adventures from all over the world. And, because you are reading this right now means you're well on your way to achieving your goal!

This eBook is a quick starter guide, and the purpose of this guide is to do just that - get you started fast. It is not a kayaking manual and we won't cover every aspect of the sport. It will, however, take you through the basics and give you the tools you need to take the first steps in becoming a kayaker.

To all of our subscribers, followers and friends out there, thank you for the gift of your support. We only hope that this free guide can begin to repay you for the time you've given us. Here's to you and your many years of kayaking adventures to come!

Antonio & Amanda





ALL YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED KAYAKING FAQ

AUTHOR: **Natalie Patterson** [INFO](#)

Have you ever longed to spend a day on the water in a kayak, but don't know the kayaking basics?

Kayaking is beneficial to both body and mind as it's a wonderful way to get exercise, offering beautiful scenery on lakes, rivers or the open ocean. From a distance, the sport of kayaking seems rather simple. While there's no steep learning curve, kayaking is actually more technical than its sister sport, canoeing. A basic understanding of proper procedures will ensure that your first kayaking experience goes smoothly.

BEGINNER QUESTIONS

Do I need to buy a kayak before my first trip?

No. It's best to either take lessons or rent equipment at a lake with a lifeguard on duty.

Do I need to take lessons?

It's not absolutely necessary, but we recommend that you do. While friends who own kayaks will be able to get you out on the water, there's no guarantee they'll be able to teach you proper technique which is a huge part

of enjoying kayaking.

Many first-time kayakers use unsuitable technique and consequently strain their neck, back and uselessly tire their arms. These errors eventually leave them feeling discouraged. As with any endeavor, if you're going to do something, do it right.

I don't want to take lessons. Where can I rent equipment?

Most lakeside rental booths will be able to hook you up with all the necessary equipment. The basic package includes a kayak, personal flotation device (PFD) and one double-sided paddle for each kayaker.

Sometimes, outfitters offer tandem kayak rentals for those who are more

comfortable being together in one vessel. Just make sure to seat the heavier person in the back. Also, never leave the shore if PFDs aren't provided.

OUT ON YOUR OWN

Where should I go on my first trip?

It's best to practice on lakes. Rivers with even a mild current can overwhelm those new to the sport. Once you feel comfortable on your own, consider signing up for an outdoor group excursion where necessary equipment will be provided as well.

If group activities aren't your thing, rent your own gear and plan a trip on a scenic lake or lazy river.

What should I take when kayaking?

Take plenty of water, a snack, sunscreen, a hat and extra layers of clothing on your first trip even if it is just a lesson. Good habits last a lifetime. A drybag will come in handy if you plan to take your cell phone or other electronics and is a good asset to have for many different water

sports and activities.

Drybags are sealable, waterproof bags designed to keep electronics and valuables safe should the bag be exposed to water such as when the kayak tips.

TECHNIQUES TO MASTER

How do I get in and out of a kayak?

AT THE SHORE

Hold your paddle in the center with one hand and place it across the kayak a couple of feet in front of the seat, where your knees or shins would be if you were sitting. Place your other hand on top of the seat's back.

Your body should be anchored perpendicularly to the kayak. Step in first with the foot closest to the seat. Do this at an angle where you can sit down immediately without having to adjust your feet. Adjusting your feet could rock the kayak.

The paddle acts as a handrail and stabilizes the kayak as you step in, so feel free to put weight on both the paddle and the seat back.

AT THE DOCK



“IT'S BEST TO PRACTICE ON LAKES. RIVERS WITH EVEN A MILD CURRENT CAN OVERWHELM THOSE NEW TO THE SPORT.”

NATALIE PATTERSON

TECHNIQUE MATTERS

Learn how to properly paddle for a more effortless day on the water.

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“CHOOSE A PLACE ON THE DOCK IF YOU CAN WHERE THE KAYAK IS AS CLOSE TO THE DOCK AS POSSIBLE, MINIMIZING THE DISTANCE YOU HAVE TO STEP DOWN.”

NATALIE PATTERSON

Choose a place on the dock if you can where the kayak is as close to the dock as possible, minimizing the distance you have to step down. Hold on to the dock with one hand and the seat back with another. Step in at an angle and sit down smoothly.

If you're having trouble visualizing the descriptions, KayakPaddling.net offers some great animations on entering and exiting a kayak.

What is the proper paddling technique?

HOLDING THE PADDLE

Paddles typically have the brand logo on one side and not the other. You want to be able to read the brand logo from your seat in the kayak.

If you are holding your paddle properly, the longest edge of the paddle blade will be on top. It will curve down to a shorter edge on the bottom, with a legible brand logo printed somewhere on the blade.

USE YOUR CORE

It's important you understand that the most efficient paddlers use the least amount of energy. Sit up straight and face forward. Keep your hands

and wrists in line with your arms.

Lightly grip the paddle with your hands approximately shoulders' distance apart and equidistant from the center of the paddle on both sides. Over-gripping will waste energy.

It may seem natural to mainly use your arms to make the strokes, but your core is stronger and will last much longer. Instead, rotate your torso from left to right while keeping your arms slightly bent and fixed.

To ensure you're properly balanced, not overextending or wasting energy, be sure to keep your back pressed against the seat.

Sitting forward will not only shift your center of gravity, making it easier to tip the kayak over, but also cause you to use excess energy, stabilizing your weight with your core while tiring your arms.

MAKE A STROKE

To make your first stroke, rotate your torso to the right while reaching forward with the left side of the paddle until you are at about 50 percent extension. Dip the paddle blade into the water no more than halfway up the height of the blade.

Pull firmly back while rotating your torso to the other side. The left paddle

blade should exit the water at the line of your hips. Immediately afterwards, the right paddle blade should enter the water on the opposite side, repeating the progression.

Read our article on kayak paddling technique for more information on the perfect stroke.

How do I turn around in a kayak?

There are three ways to turn around in a kayak. The first is to use the paddle as a rudder. In a moving kayak, dip the blade in the water on the side of the side you want to turn towards and drag it through the water until the kayak starts to turn to that side.

The second way to turn around is to use the pedals located near your feet on both sides of the boat, which power a rudder at the rear. This works like the previous method described.

The third way to turn around is by utilizing a reverse stroke. Paddle backwards on the side you want to turn on and the kayak will rotate on an invisible axis.

I'M READY TO BUY MY OWN EQUIPMENT. WHAT DO I NEED?

Kayak

Inflatable kayaks can be a good place to start since they are lightweight and affordable. Many will come with one or two paddles.

If you prefer a solid-bodied kayak, sit-on-tops are great for beginners because you cannot sink them. There is no internal cavity to fill with water should you capsize. Sit-on-top kayaks are easier to get in and out of and can be used at the beach or on very small rapids.

Lucky for you, we have a guide on the best sit-on-top kayaks. The last type of recreational kayak is called a sit-in, which does have an enclosed cavity.

Paddles

The best paddle for you will be the one based on your height and the width of the kayak. The wider the kayak and the taller the kayaker, the longer the paddle needed.

If you're touring with a guide, they'll help you choose an appropriate pad-



dle. If you intend to purchase a kayak or two for your family, REI has reviewed the basics of kayak paddles. We have also compiled a list of the best paddles the industry has to offer.

Stay safe

The most important piece of equipment on any kayaking trip is a PFD. There are a handful of different types of PFDs, but Type III is the way to go if you're new to the sport.

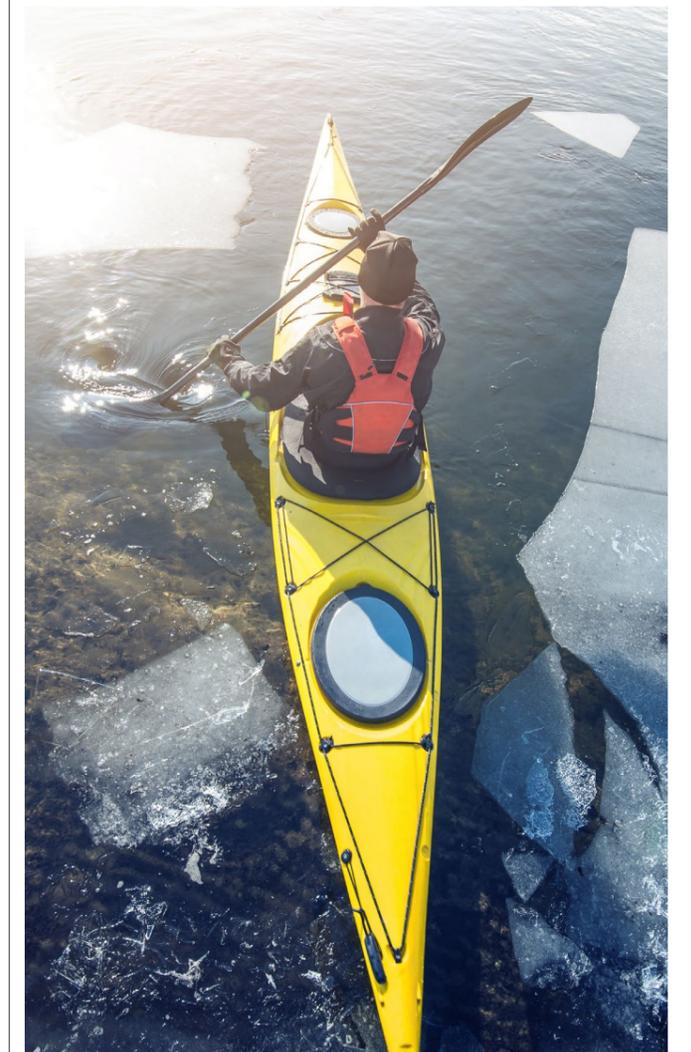
You should look for a vest that is comfortable, fits well but not too tightly and offers enough buoyancy to float your body weight. If you're taking lessons, the guides will supply a PFD and even a helmet if you're on whitewater. Never attempt to kayak whitewater without a helmet.

ADVENTURING

What are the best destination kayaking vacations?

The world is yours to explore and learn from. Check out our bucket list of best kayaking trips around the world for some stellar ideas.

Whether it's whale watching in the Pacific Ocean or jumping waterfalls in New Zealand, there's no limit to your adventures. The earth's surface is, after all, 71 percent water. ♦



BEGINNER ESSENTIALS

AUTHOR: Matt Charnock INFO

18 KAYAKING TIPS FOR BEGINNERS

Jumping into any new sport or hobby can be not only daunting, but downright confusing. If you've never rowed or paddled before, your first time nestled within the bowels of a kayak may leave you feeling like a fish out of water. Especially if you haven't yet received any kayaking tips. Here at The Adventure Junkies, we pride ourselves on providing you with the tips and know-how on how to experience your favorites outdoor activities in the best ways possible.



Whether or not you're looking to take on class-four rapids or just paddle through a glass-smooth lake, there are some key kayaking tips you should take into account before pushing off the shoreline. In this guide, we'll go over everything from paddling techniques and stretching, to equipment care and proper attire. Follow these rules, and you'll get the maximum benefits provided by kayaking.

BEFORE YOU SET OFF

1 DRESS FOR THE WATER, NOT THE WEATHER

Regardless of whether it's a cold near-winter morning or a hot mid-summer afternoon, dress for the water. For example, if you'd normally wear a wetsuit in those waters, wear one kayaking. If it's more board shorts appropriate water, a well-fitting swimsuit will suffice.

2 INVEST IN WATER-PROOF STORAGE CASES

There's nothing that can ruin your kayaking adventure more than coming back to find your expensive smartphone is now water damaged. While press-and-seal storage container will work just fine for your food and wallet, we'd recommend investing in something more sturdy to store your electronics and clothing. These dry-bags from REI are highly recommended.

3 LEARN RAPID SAFETY PRACTICES

If you're going down white waters, we'd highly suggest you touch-up on rapid safety practices from Raft Masters. A quick flip of your kayak can suddenly put you in a life-or-death situation. And every decision counts.

4 RENT IF YOU CAN

Get a feel for kayaking first before investing in any equipment, if you can. Kayak renting services have become more and more popular in the past decade. Be sure you to also rent helmets and life vests in addition to the kayak and paddles.

5 KNOW RIVER LANGUAGE

There's actually a series of

hand signals and gestures that help kayakers communicate with each other. After all, rapids can be quite noisy and distracting. If you're kayaking in a group, it may be helpful to brush up on these simple signals, like these as found at Paddling.com.

6 KNOW PADDLING STYLE

We recommend getting a feel for how you paddle-stroke before hitting the water. Simply straddle an armless chair while holding a broomstick or hockey stick, and imagine yourself paddling from side to side. Depending on how you hold paddle and stroke will determine your style. For more information, watch the video below.

7 PHYSICAL MAPS

Like we've touched on before, you should either leave your electronics on dry land or sealed in a dry-bag. Print-out or check-in with a visitor center for any maps or guidebooks on the area they may have available.

8 CHECK THE FORECAST

Kayaking through a lite drizzle won't raise too much of a problem. But trying to paddle through a heavy rain will fill your kayak's cockpit with water and render it unstable. Make sure to check all weather conditions where you're kayaking before heading out. Also, take note that heavy rains from a day or two prior will make for more turbulent waters too.

9 DUCT TAPE IS YOUR FRIEND

You really should never leave home without it. Having a roll of the versatile adhesive on hand can come in handy in a pinch. Has the shaft of the rod cracked? Tap it up. Want to secure gear from rolling around your kayak seat? Secure it.

ON THE WATER

10 SIT TIGHT, SIT STRAIGHT

While sitting with your back supported in the kayak, place the balls of your feet in the foot guides. Some kayaks have pegs, instead. Your toes should be pointed outward and your heels should be

“PRINT-OUT OR CHECK-IN WITH A VISITOR CENTER FOR ANY MAPS OR GUIDEBOOKS ON THE AREA THEY MAY HAVE AVAILABLE.”

MATT CHARNOCK



found in the center of the kayak. The knees should have an upward and outward bend to them allowing the legs to contact and apply pressure to the thigh braces.

11 PACE YOURSELF

Don't be a rabbit right out of the dock. Enjoy the scenery, get a feel for how your body rests in the kayak and how you paddle through the water. Focus on technique, not speed. The turtle wins in the end, after all.

12 STAY ALERT

Rocks and animals can seemingly pop-out of nowhere. Kayaking is no time for your favorite playlist. Take advantage of being outside, and enjoy nature's playlist.

13 STAY IN CONTACT WITH OTHERS

Like we've said before, if you're traveling in a group, it's best for everyone to stay in contact with one another. Especially if you're traveling down any white waters. The general rule of thumb is no one should be further than earshot from each other.

14 MOVE WITH YOUR KAYAK, NOT AGAINST IT

If you've ever experienced a spin while driving, you know exactly what we're talking about. Don't fight the vessel, go with it. If you spin your kayak, follow through with the motion and adjust accordingly. Use the kayak's kinetic energy to your advantage.



“BEFORE STEPPING INTO YOUR CAR AND HEADING OFF INTO THE SUNSET (OR SUNRISE), CHECK YOUR GEAR.”

MATT CHARNOCK

GEAR UP

Find out what type of kayaks are available and which one you should get.

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15 BRING BINOCULARS
There are few places better to wildlife watch than from the seat of a kayak. Bringing a pair of light, durable binoculars will only enhance that. Look for water-resistant and portable binoculars—See our article all about binoculars. Scratch resistant lenses are ideal.

BACK ON SHORE

16 STRETCH IT OUT
Odds are, you've been sitting in one upright position for an hour or two. Maybe even more. And now your body is quite tight and settled in that position. To avoid cramps and aches throughout the rest of the day, do some light stretching. It's also beneficial to do these before kayaking, as well. We'd recommend doing the ones found in this video below.

17 DRY YOUR THINGS
One of the cardinal rules of any water sport is to never pack gear or clothing while it's wet. If you do, mold, rust, and other unwanted surprises will be quick to follow. If you're in a rush and can't spare the time, leave the damp packed gear uncovered.

18 DOUBLE-CHECK YOUR GEAR
Before stepping into your car and heading off into the sunset (or sunrise), check your gear. Be sure you haven't caused any accidental dings, holes, tears, you name it. Also, pay special attention to your paddle and kayak seat. Then, after that, do it all again. ♦





SIT ON TOP KAYAKS 101

AUTHOR: **Chantae Reden** [INFO](#)

Do you daydream about paddling around rivers and streams from the comforts of a kayak?

Maybe you're a wildlife photographer, a fisherman, a diver, an explorer, or a swimmer who needs a kayak to pursue your passions. Sit on top kayaks are often better than other enclosed or traditional kayaks because they're easier to get in and out of, and generally more durable.

PURPOSE

The benefit of a sit on top kayak compared to traditional kayaks, where your legs are enclosed in the hull, is that sit on top kayaks are generally safer. If you fall off or tip over, you can simply swim away from the sit on top kayak and climb back on. Traditional kayaks require self-rescue techniques and are meant for more advanced paddlers. Before buying a sit on top kayak, think about what you'll mainly use it for.

KAYAK FISHING

Are you a fisherman? Then you'll want a sit on top kayak that is capable of carrying gear, has fishing pole holders, and is comfortable to sit in for long periods of time. Check out our guide on the best fishing kayaks.

KAYAKING WITH DOGS & PARTNERS

If you want to paddle with a partner or bring your pet and kids along for the ride, a sturdy, two to three seat kayak is the best option. This way, you can spend one on one time while exploring with your family. If the thought of paddling with your pooch makes your heart sing, you'll have to read our guide on how to kayak with a dog.

KAYAKING EXPEDITIONS

Or maybe you want to go on a full-blown expedition, packing all of your supplies and food with you. A sit on top kayak is a great choice for this as well, thanks to its durability and size. In an article by Tim Holtey, you can learn all about packing your kayak for a camping trip.

DIVING & SWIMMING

Divers, swimmers, and spearfishermen will do well with a sturdy and durable overall kayak. Scuba divers, like fishermen, will want a kayak with ample storage space. Even if you get a sit on top kayak that's specifically for one purpose, you can easily use it for many more as they're all pretty versatile.

SIZE AND WEIGHT

As a general rule, longer and narrower kayaks tend to be great for speed while shorter and wider kayaks tend to be better for stability. Kayakers wanting to speed over flat water should choose a longer kayak while those paddling in the surf should opt for the shorter kayak.

Most paddlers learn to stabilize quickly, so it's not too important to choose a very wide and stable kayak unless you're carrying children or a lot of gear. Choose a kayak that is a little bit beyond your ability level, even if you're a beginner, so that you can grow into it. REI has a great resource on paddling techniques that will help you progress quickly.

If the kayak is too heavy, you might have trouble transporting it alone — keeping you out of the water. Kayaks around the 40-pound range tend to

be shorter and easier to maneuver, so go for a smaller one if you're planning solo expeditions. If you do get something heavy, save your back by investing in a kayak trolley. Fortunately, we've written an entire guide that shows you all the ways you can transport your kayak.

NUMBER OF PADDLERS

Some kayaks accommodate multiple people. This is a great option for families, couples, and those wanting to take their pets and children for a paddle. Many two-person kayaks can be adjusted to just suit one paddler. You can also find solo kayaks that have a small space for a child or dog that work well for when you want to paddle with a pal, too.

Don't choose a multi-person kayak if you won't be kayaking with multiple people most of the time. In many cases, having two solo kayaks is better than having one two-person kayak. Then, you can carry more gear on two solo kayaks than on one tandem kayak, and won't be paddling a clunky, slow, kayak during the times you're solo paddling a tandem kayak.

COMFORT

You can have the best, most expensive, and fastest kayak on the market, but if it's not comfortable, you won't be using it. Check that the kayak has a supportive seat and plenty of foot space. Many kayaks now even have options to in other positions than just sticking your legs straight forward. It's even worth investing in extra seat padding if you know you'll be kayaking often.

Small kayaks are great for transport and agility, but might be too cramped for taller or larger paddlers. Likewise, shorter paddlers might be scooting around a kayak that's too big. Don't make the mistake of choosing something based on price or size if you'll want to turn back after fifteen minutes of paddling because of discomfort. The only pain you should feel is the burning in your arms and abs from a killer workout. ♦

[CLICK THIS LINK FOR OUR REVIEWS AND PRICES ON DIFFERENT SIT ON TOP KAYAKS:](https://www.theadventurejunkies.com/best-sit-on-top-kayak/)
<https://www.theadventurejunkies.com/best-sit-on-top-kayak/>



SEA KAYAKS 101

AUTHOR: **Matt Charnock** [INFO](#)

If you're reading this, you're likely ready to move on from renting your kayak.

Maybe you want the freedom of being able to go for a paddle whenever you want. Or perhaps you are planning a long kayaking expedition. What ever the reason, we're here to help you find the best sea kayak for you.

LOOK FOR A SUITABLE SINKAGE LEVEL

Whether you're a beginner paddling through flatwater or an advanced kayaker capable of handling choppy currents, it's good to have a kayak with high sinkage level. The sinkage level of a kayak is determined by how much weight is needed to make it sit an inch lower in the water.

The higher the capacity, the more weight the sea kayak can bear. If you're using your sea kayak for sport, a lower capacity will suffice.

If you're using your sea kayak for recreation, you'll want one with a high value. That way, you can rest easy and not worry about tipping your kayak.

LOOK FOR BUILD MATERIALS

Most sea kayaks from popular brands are made from materials that can sustain different weather conditions. However, lesser known budget brands tend to cut corners when it comes to this aspect.

Even some major brands, which offer budget-friendly sea kayaks, have been known to use sub-par materials. Be on the look out for exposed steel and unsealed wood components.

Keep in mind that Acrylonitrile-Butadiene-Styrene (ABS) plastics and polyethylene are great. Take a look at Kayarchy.com to see a full list of recommended build materials.

V-SHAPED OR ROUNDED HULLS

Since sea kayaks will be in more turbulent water, they need to be able to cut through those wakes with ease. Unlike freshwater kayaks, which can have rounded and flat hulls, sea kayaks should have v-shaped hulls.

This will ensure they can literally cut through waves, big and small. V-shaped hulls help with stability as well. But, rounded hulls are also acceptable under certain conditions like kayaking through closed coves, coastal flat waters and estuaries.

LENGTH AND WIDTH OF KAYAK

For open-ocean coastal kayaking, narrow, medium-sized kayaks perform best. Their slim widths allow them to navigate through calm and somewhat rough waters with ease.

Having a sea kayak between 11 and 14 feet will help keep it steady as well. Kayaks used for flatwater can perform fine at shorter lengths. Tandem style sea kayaks can measure upwards until 20 feet long. Check out this guide to widths and lengths for more details.

SMALL COCKPITS

Unlike other general purpose or modular kayaks, sea kayaks need to have small cockpit openings. In fact, the cockpit should be just wider than your waist.

It should be comfortable enough for you to sit in and move around about, but not too tight as to be uncomfortable or inhibit movement. These small cockpit shapes will help prevent seawater from coming in. Sea kayaks used for recreation in flatwater can have larger openings though.

FLATWATER VS. CHOPPY CURRENTS

The type of water you'll be kayaking through plays a big part in your decision-making process. For flatwater, like the ones found around mangroves and closed-off coves, budget and sit-on-top kayaks are fine.

However, only kayaks with waist cockpits and V-shaped hulls should be considered if you plan to tackle choppy currents. ♦



CLICK THIS LINK FOR OUR REVIEWS AND PRICES ON DIFFERENT SEA KAYAKS:
<https://www.theadventurejunkies.com/best-sea-kayak/>



INFLATABLE KAYAKS 101

AUTHOR: Antonio Cala [INFO](#)

Back in the days, the best inflatable kayak you could find was a cheap floating toy for your kid to play around on the beach shore. Made with poor materials and not with the best design either, they were the last thing you wanted to sit on while paddling in remote rivers, fishing on a lake or on a multi-day expedition in the mountains.

But fortunately for outdoor lovers like you and me, those days are behind us. The advancement in technology allows the current manufacturers to build pretty solid inflatable kayaks with durable and resistant materials that you can take out for your outdoor activities. The main advantages are clear: weight and packing size. Forget about carrying a heavy boat or having to buy roof racks to carry it on top of your car. A compact inflatable kayak can be carried even inside your backpack if you want it.

PRICE

Your budget will be one of the most important factors when choosing an inflatable kayak. With all the different models and manufacturers out there competition is fierce. Although you can find inflatable kayaks for as low as 80 bucks, a decent model will cost you between \$200 and \$600.

USAGE

Together with price, how you plan to use your kayak is important. Are you going to use your kayak for whitewater paddling, fishing or sea kayaking? Are you looking for a single or double kayak? Every activity requires completely different features so before you dig into the specifics I recommend you to get this one sorted first.

MATERIALS

There are 3 types of materials used to build inflatable kayaks.

PVC

This material is normally used as coating on polyester or nylon to increase the strength and tear resistance. It's cheap, durable, easy to patch and comes

in many different colors. But PVC isn't as resistant to chemicals and high temperatures as Hypalon and UV rays can damage it a lot. These days there's a big controversy over the harmful effects PVC has on the environment.

HYPALON

It's the chosen material by many inflatable boat manufacturers as an exterior coating. It's the most durable choice available and resists UV rays and environmental factors better than any other. The downside is performance comes at a cost and hypalon is also the most expensive material.

NITRYLON

Some manufacturers have begun phasing out the use of PVC and using Nitrylon instead as it's a more eco-friendly material. It's also stronger and more resistant to punctures than PVC, but it's heavier.

WEIGHT

If you plan on hiking with your kayak into the wilderness then weight is crucial. The lighter models weigh around 17 pounds (7 kg), but the average weight of a fully deflated kayak is around 30 pounds (13 kg). For ultra-light solutions check

Alpacka rafts, specifically designed for hiking & paddling trips.

LENGTH

Most models aren't longer than 14 feet (4 meters) as the boat would be very unstable and that's the last thing you want when you're in the water. Even with the best inflatable kayak it's easier to flip over, so keep length in mind.

STORAGE

How much gear are you going to bring paddling? The best inflatable kayak to carry lots of things is a canoe-type kayak, especially if you'll be using it on your own without a tandem paddler. Sit-inside kayaks also allow you to clip on additional storage around both hulls which can also be handy.

TYPES OF INFLATABLE KAYAKS AVAILABLE

These days you can find inflatable kayaks of any shape, color and size. Depending on the specific use and where you plan to paddle, there are different types to better suit your needs. Generally speaking, there are 5 types of inflatable kayaks:

SIT-ON-TOP KAYAKS

This is the best and most comfy model for paddling on calm water. Forget about getting into a hole, cramping your legs and think about how old you've become because your back hurts as hell as you paddle. With these type of kayaks you sit "on top of it", normally on a full size seat with a proper back rest and you can change your position as much as you want.

SIT-IN KAYAKS

The traditional type of kayak where the lower body sits inside the boat. The fit is tighter, not as comfy as the sit-on-tops, but it's a better design for paddling in choppy waters or white-water paddling.

CANOE TYPE

These kayaks are normally very flat on the bottom, with higher walls and plenty of space to move around and carry supplies. It's the best type for fishing as it can carry 2 or 3 people, a cooler full of beers and all the equipment you need.

SUP KAYAKS

The new sensation at many beaches around the world. These models are rigid enough that allow the paddles to stand up while paddling. You've

probably seen these. And yes, there are also inflatable models available. **SELF-BAILING KAYAKS** These are the cheap models you can find at most of the general stores. They're designed with lower quality materials and have potholes in the base so it doesn't get flooded.

These kayaks are made to have fun in shallow waters but not a good option for sea kayak or river adventures. ♦

[CLICK THIS LINK FOR OUR REVIEWS AND PRICES ON DIFFERENT INFLATABLE KAYAKS:](https://www.theadventurejunkies.com/best-inflatable-kayak-review/)



ACCESSORIES KAYAK PADDLES 101

AUTHOR: **Matt Charnock** [INFO](#)

As the adage goes: You can't travel too far up the creek without a paddle.

Sure, you can contort your hands into diminutive kitchen spoons and inch yourself through a slow-moving stream — but that's no fun. Or practical. But good news: the best kayak paddle is out there, just for you! One of our goals at The Adventure Junkies is to provide you with not only practical information, but insight into what products are out there that will help you make the most out of any outing. Big or small; domestic or international. We just want to see you succeed in your odyssey travels.

PADDLING STYLE

There are two kinds of people in this world: ones that row high, and ones that row low. Determine if you're a low-angle or high-angle rower before you move from renting to purchasing. The following descriptions and basics on paddling article from REI.com help tell you which group you fall into.

HIGH-ANGLE PADDLERS

If you position your upper-hand above shoulder-height, then you're angling the shaft at a steeper angle. Higher-angled stroking styles cause the blade to enter the water column at a higher angles. Because of the paddles alignment with the water column, shorter paddle lengths and wider blade widths are recommended for high-angle paddlers.

LOW-ANGLE PADDLERS

If you position your upper-hand below shoulder-height, then you're angling the shaft at a more gradual angle. Lower-angled stroking styles cause the blade to enter the water at lower angle. Because of the paddles alignment with the water column, longer paddle lengths and narrower blade widths are recommended for low-angle paddlers.

PADDLE LENGTH

No two paddles are created equal—especially for you. Feel free to reference this sizing chart from REI.com to what your ideal paddle length may be. (Reminder: be sure you've identified your paddling style first before anything else.)

BLADE MATERIAL

From carbon fiber to polyurethane, we're in a day-and-age where the fin-like extension on your paddle (the blade) can be made from a litany of materials. While carbon fiber is the most sought after medium, it's pricey. For a more affordable blade materials, look toward plastics.

SHAFT MATERIAL

Shafts can be made from anything like aluminum, fiberglass, and carbon fiber. Unlike blades where the lighter is better, shafts need to have some weight to them to attain a balanced feel.

FREQUENCY OF USE

Whether you're a once-a-month kayaker or someone who takes-out your vessel almost daily, how often you kayak will play a role into which paddle is right for you. While plastic and off-brand paddles will be cheaper, odds are the carbon fiber, name-brand examples will outlast the more affordable options by a long ways.

RECREATION VS. SPORT

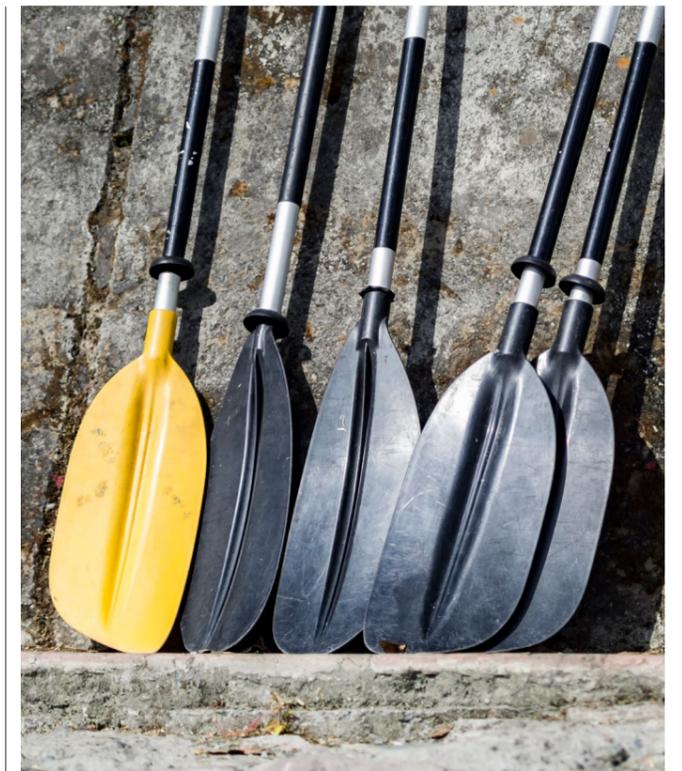
Are you someone who's competing in kayaking and canoeing sprints or marathons? Then you'll need to best, lightest, most durable paddle for your style and size. But, if you're more into fishing from your kayak, fiberglass and plastics will do. We'd also recommend investing in a kayak anchor for recreational use, too.

WATER TYPE

Kayaking in freshwater doesn't raise too many concerns in regards to rust and weathering. However, that completely changes when you begin paddling through brackish and oceanic waters. These two saline waters will wreck havoc on the wood, steel, and aluminum elements of any paddle.

WHITE-WATER VS. SLOW-MOVING-WATER

If you're tackling level-four rapids, you're going to need the strongest, most durable paddle you can find. But, if you're primarily kayaking through the calm waters of a lake or slow-moving creek, a more affordable, less rigid paddle will suffice. ♦



[CLICK THIS LINK FOR OUR REVIEWS AND PRICES ON DIFFERENT KAYAK PADDLES:](https://www.theadventurejunkies.com/best-kayak-paddle/)
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ACCESSORIES

KAYAK SEATS 101

AUTHOR: **Chantae Reden** [INFO](#)

Did you know that having a comfortable and supportive kayak seat can make a huge difference in your kayak session?

Many kayakers turn back early not because their bodies are tired, but because their backs are aching or their bottoms are sore. If this sounds like you, then it might be time to invest in a new kayak seat. With so many models, features, and different materials though, finding the best kayak seat can be a huge challenge. In this guide, we'll show you what features to look for in a kayak seat.

SUPPORT AND COMFORT

Kayak seats come in various back lengths and structural supports. Generally, the higher the back, the better support and comfort it will provide especially for long paddles. You'll want a seat specifically with lumbar or lower back support to protect your spine over the long run.

Sometimes, kayak seats with high backs can be limiting for kayakers who need to be agile and able to navigate through tight spaces or caves. If this sounds like your kayaking style, opt for a kayak seat with a flexible frame and lower back.

The amount of padding in a kayak seat also affects its comfort level. Thicker

cushioning tends to be more comfortable, but can soak up water and takes longer to dry. If you find yourself constantly shifting in your kayak to relieve soreness, then you're probably due for a more cushioned kayak seat. The best kayak seat will offer a balance of softness and support.

FEATURES

Kayak seats are typically made from foam cushioning, neoprene, mesh, rubber and other materials that are durable yet flexible. Though the specifics usually do not matter too much, there are a few key features you'll want to look out for when choosing your new kayak seat

Ideally, the backrest should have a mesh panel so that humidity and moisture

have room to escape. If your seat gets too wet, you might chafe or find it uncomfortable to sit for a long time. Besides, nobody likes a soggy backside. You'll want the back to offer support but still remain breathable. All fabric should be water resistant or water repellent, especially if it's covering foam.

You might also want a kayak seat that comes with adjustable straps so that you can adjust the angle of the backrest easily to suit the type of kayaking you're doing on a specific outing.

Other fun and practical features that some kayak seats come with are pockets, which are perfect for fishermen, and bottle holders. These really aren't essential, but they do come in handy.

Of course, the kayak seat should also be comfortable with your life jacket. This guide on Canoe and Kayak Magazine shares that "the first sign of a rookie kayaker is someone who isn't wearing a life jacket or is wearing one that doesn't fit properly."

USE

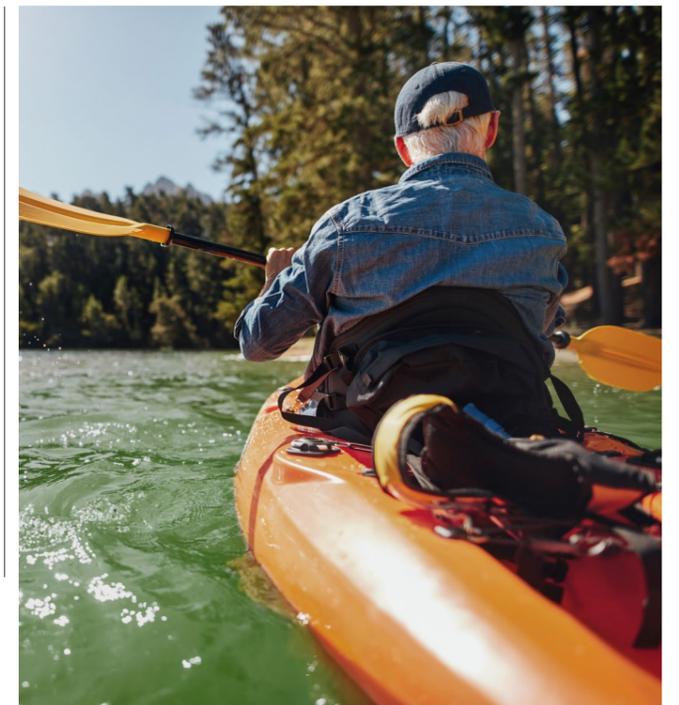
There are many different types of kayaks, and several will require their

own specific kayak seats. Before buying a kayak seat, you'll want to double check that it's compatible with the make of your kayak.

Sit-on-top kayaks typically accept most makes of kayak seats. Meanwhile, sit-in kayaks, fishing kayaks, touring kayaks, sea kayaks, whitewater kayaks and other performance-focused kayaks might need seats with custom dimensions.

If you're confused on what type of kayak to buy, the experts at REI have put together a guide on choosing the right one for you. No matter what type of kayaking you plan to do, you'll need a comfortable seat for the best setup to get all the benefits of the sport! ♦

CLICK THIS LINK FOR OUR REVIEWS AND PRICES ON DIFFERENT KAYAK SEATS:
<https://www.theadventurejunkies.com/best-kayak-seat/>





ACCESSORIES

KAYAK PFDs 101

AUTHOR: **Matt Charnock** [INFO](#)

As any experienced kayaker already knows, a personal flotation device (PFD) is one of the most important pieces of equipment a paddler needs. No matter if you kayak long-distance or around as a leisurely hobby or fish while you paddle, there's definitely a perfect PFD out there for you. But, how do you know you're getting the best kayak PFD for your paddle style? Here at The Adventure Junkies, we take pride in finding the best outdoor gear on the market. In this guide, we'll walk you through how to choose the right kayak PFD for you and show you our favorite finds. This way, you'll have all the essentials you need to know before buying your own PFD.

SAFETY CERTIFICATION

In the United States, many states require kayakers – especially those aged 12 and younger – to wear a PFD approved by the U.S. Coast Guard. This means that the jacket is certified to be safe enough for kayakers to wear when they paddle.

You'll want to check that your PFD is Type III U.S. Coast Guard approved, a certification that is specifically for kayakers and other specialized boaters who need flotation for safety but without the bulk of many other PFDs. For this guide, all kayak PFDs featured are Type III U.S. Coast Guard approved. You can read more about the different types of approval in this guide on PFDs published by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Other safety features you'll want on your PFD are reflective strips, so that others can easily spot you and a place to secure a GPS or radio. A brightly colored PFD also makes you easier to spot by other boaters and rescue crew.

A report from the American Canoe Association revealed that "drownings accounted for 71% of recreational boating fatalities in the United States and approximately 86% of drowning victims were not wearing a life jacket" from 2000 to 2014. A PFD reduces the risk of drowning immensely.

BUOYANCY AND FLOTATION

Most adults need about seven to 12 pounds of extra buoyancy or flotation to

keep their heads out of the water. The technology of modern kayak PFDs often gives over 15 pounds of buoyancy while still being low-profile and easy to move around in.

When choosing a PFD that's right for you, you'll want to read the label to see that it's compatible with your body composition and weight before buying it. In general, the higher buoyancy or flotation featured on the PFD, the higher you'll be lifted out of the water.

To check if your PFD has enough flotation, put it on and take it in shallow water. Relax your body completely – no treading whatsoever. If you can float comfortably with your mouth completely out of the water, then the PFD is buoyant enough for you to kayak with.

KAYAK STYLE

The great thing about kayak PFDs is that they come with so many extra features that cater to different types of paddlers.

For example, white-water or long-distance kayakers might want a low-profile PFD with minimal pockets and loops. If you're constantly paddling, you won't want a PFD that

chafes or catches on the edges of your kayak.

Fishermen often kayak with a ton of gear. They likely could use as many pockets and attachment loops as they can get. Some PFDs created with fishermen in mind will have loops to hang tools, a display for a fishing license and pockets that fold out into a small table.

Since kayakers who fish tend to stay more stationary than performance kayakers, they can handle the extra weight and bulk. You can check out our favorite fishing kayaks of the year, too.

If you're a kayaker who dabbles in various types of kayaking, there are many overall PFDs that have just enough pockets and features to be useful without adding too much bulk.

FIT AND COMFORT

When choosing the best PFD for your size, you'll want to first measure your chest. PFD brands and models vary when it comes to sizing – one brand's small could be another brand's medium – especially since most PFDs are unisex sized.

Keep in mind that the diameter of your chest grows when you put on your paddling clothes, so measure around your nipple line after you put on your kayaking outfit. Fit the PFD by first loosening all the straps and then tightening them from the waist up.

You want to make sure that the PFD can't rise past your nose. If that happens, then the PFD is too large for you. Do arm circles and watch for places where your arms rub or catch against the side of the PFD.

Did you know that many drowning victims owned a PFD but drowned because they weren't wearing it? If your PFD is uncomfortable, you're less likely to put it on when you go for a paddle. This naturally increases your chances of injury or death.

[CLICK THIS LINK FOR OUR REVIEWS AND PRICES ON DIFFERENT KAYAK PFDs:](https://www.theadventurejunkies.com/best-kayak-pfd/)
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A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO KAYAK PADDLING TECHNIQUES

AUTHOR: **Bram Reusen** [INFO](#)

Are you completely new at kayaking and want to learn the basics? Or are you a recreational kayaker who wants to up your game? Everyone from beginning to experienced kayakers will want to make sure that they use the proper kayak paddling techniques. Not only will this make you less sore afterward, it will also increase your speed and grace on the water. If you want to learn about what are good kayak paddling techniques, you've arrived at the right place. At The Adventure Junkies, we strive to offer our readers the best information about all things outdoors. In this guide, we'll teach you all about how to paddle a kayak.

KAYAK PADDLING TECHNIQUE: THE BASICS

SIZE YOUR PADDLE

Before we get to how to execute the perfect stroke, you need to know a couple of essentials with regards to paddling. You should make sure that your paddle is the right size for you.

The ideal distance between your hand positions on the paddle is a

bit more than your shoulder width. If your hands are too close to each other, there will be no power behind your stroke. If they're spaced too far, your stroke will be powerful, but you will tire out much faster.

An easy way to figure out where to place your hands is by resting your paddle on your head. Place your hands so that your elbows form a 90-degree angle.

RELAX YOUR GRIP

Also, don't squeeze the shaft of your paddle. Holding it too tightly strains your arm and hand muscles. Instead, hold it loosely, with slightly opened fingers and a relaxed grip. A good tip is making an O shape with your thumb and index finger with which you hold the shaft.

SIT UP STRAIGHT

Good posture is key if you want to use your body efficiently, as KayakPaddling.net tells us. Sit up with your back straight and make sure your shoulders are relaxed. Do not lean back.

Place your feet against the foot pegs and keep your legs together. This is to allow your torso to rotate better, which makes paddling easier. Ensure that your knees are bent a little bit. You should be able to spread your legs and push them against the inner hull for more balance.

It's important to realize that it's your legs and torso that will do most of the paddling work. Your arms and shoulders should just transmit that power. It's really your torso movement that will propel you forward, not pushing and pulling with your arms. Think of it as somewhat of a dance.

KAYAK PADDLING TECHNIQUE: THE PERFECT STROKE

It's pretty easy to learn how to paddle a kayak forward. The forward stroke is the most important of them all. We'll focus on this one in this article. Although everyone can learn how to kayak in one afternoon, there's always room for improvement.

At first sight, there may not be a significant difference between the strokes a complete beginner makes and those made by an experienced kayaker. That's just an illusion, though. Skilled paddlers have perfected their kayak paddling technique with dozens of tiny refinements over time. These small tweaks can be difficult to detect.

However, if you watch a beginning and experienced kayaker for a longer period of time, you'll clearly notice the remarkable difference in performance. Together, those tiny refinements result in more speed, endurance and control.

When you focus on the correct kayak paddling technique, you are able to go faster, be more efficient in your energy usage and cause less strain on your muscles. Below, we'll look at the steps involved in the perfect forward stroke, as laid out by REI.com. Note that these tips are ap-



plicable to all types of kayaks, from wooden to inflatable kayaks.

PHASE 1 – WIND-UP

Start your stroke by winding up your torso in such a way that you can put the paddle's blade into the water near your feet. If the stroke is on your right side, the right side of your torso should be twisted toward the front of your kayak, also known as the bow. Keeping your lower arm nearly straight, your upper arm will be bent and your upper wrist near your face.

PHASE 2 – CATCH

Then, spear the blade into the water and begin the stroke by unwinding your torso. Keep your lower arm straight. Press your foot on the side of the stroke against the foot peg for more support and power. Make sure to use your core muscles during this movement instead of pulling with your stroke arm.

It's important to generate most of the power at the start of your stroke. This way, you'll use the strongest muscles in your torso to generate power. This is also when the blade is at its best angle.

Keeping your upper arm relaxed during the entire movement allows it to rest. Also, remember to hold the paddle loosely.

PHASE 3 – RECOVERY

When the stroke is completed, lift the blade out of the water. Moving it up and away from the hull, use your elbow to direct the movement. Allow your wrist to follow. Make sure to keep your elbow below shoulder level.

As the blade moves up on the previous stroke's side, it'll move down on the side of the next stroke. The other side of your torso will now face forward to the bow. It's wound up and ready for the following stroke.

The perfect forward stroke is a continuous motion. It's the most important kayak paddling technique to master. When executed correctly, you're able to cover greater distances in less time and with less effort. Again, remember to use your torso to propel you forward, using your arms only to add slight pushes and pulls whenever necessary.

There are a couple of extra things you can do to improve your forward stroke. It helps to think about the paddle as an extension of your body. Imagine it's a part of your body and your movements will be much smoother.

Another tip is to imagine that you throw a punch with your hand, followed soon by the other. A great punch, like a good stroke, is powered by a recoiling torso, not by arm strength. ♦

“SKILLED PADDLERS HAVE PERFECTED THEIR KAYAK PADDLING TECHNIQUE WITH DOZENS OF TINY REFINEMENTS OVER TIME. THESE SMALL TWEAKS CAN BE DIFFICULT TO DETECT.”

BRAM REUSEN



A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO KAYAK SAFETY

AUTHOR: **Bram Reusen** [INFO](#)

Are you planning an adventurous kayaking trip? Or are you simply going for a leisurely afternoon paddle in a nearby pond? It doesn't really matter what you're up to, whenever you take your kayak out onto the water, there's nothing as important as kayak safety. If you're interested in learning more about how to stay safe while kayaking, you've arrived at the right place. Here at The Adventure Junkies, we're dedicated to offering our readers all kinds of useful information and tips. In this article, you'll learn basic kayak safety.

10 TIPS TO STAY SAFE ON THE WATER

Injuries can occur when kayaking, and even drowning is a real risk, especially if you're trying to conquer rapids. That said, the chances that you'll actually get hurt during a kayaking outing are pretty low.

Safety is always a concern, though. As Paddling.com says, you're dealing with water and if things do go wrong, they can go wrong very quickly and very badly. Because of this reason, it's critical that you understand and are aware of the hazards and risks that come with kayaking. Expect the best, prepare for the worst. On the water, you should always have a conservative attitude toward everything you do.

By following the kayak safety tips below, you'll drastically reduce the chance of getting hurt while paddling.

1. ALWAYS WEAR A LIFE JACKET

According to The American Canoe Association, 48% of all kayak fatalities are due to not wearing a life jacket. With regards to canoeing, that percentage is a remarkably high at 85%. This means that you can cut your risk of dying when kayaking in half simply by wearing a life jacket.

This is without question the most important kayak safety tip we can give you. If you find that wearing a life jacket is uncomfortable when paddling, consider purchasing a kayaking specific life jacket, or PFD. Those are designed specifically to be less restricting and to allow for greater range of movement.

2. DRESS ACCORDING TO THE WEATHER CONDITIONS

Remember that it's better to overdress than to be too cold. Check the weather forecast before you go. Even checking the water temperature is a good idea. Better safe than sorry, right? Be prepared for sudden changes in the weather.



If kayaking in colder weather, wearing a wet or dry suit does a great job at keeping you warm, even if you fall into the water. On sunny days, consider wearing long sleeves and a hat to protect your skin from the sun. It's important to invest in appropriate kayaking clothes. Your own safety depends on them.

If rain is expected, bring a rain jacket and stay warm by wearing wool or synthetic thermal base layers.

Also, be aware of local wind patterns. Off-shore winds may make it difficult to get back on shore.

3. FOLLOW THE LOCAL BOATING RULES

Make sure that you know the local boating rules. If you're the only person boating, you're in luck for two reasons. You'll be able to enjoy your surroundings in peace and solitude, and you won't have to pay attention to other watercraft. If you're not alone, though, there are a few things you should take into account.

It's important to "see and be seen". Wear bright clothing, use reflective tapes on your paddles, keep a whistle within easy reach. This is especially important if you're

kayaking in busy waters that have motorized boat traffic. If they're present, check what the colors of buoys mean. Be aware of the rules of the road—essentially traffic rules on waterways.

4. CONSIDER WEARING A HELMET

If you're kayaking rougher water, such as fast-flowing rivers and rapids, it's a solid idea to wear a helmet. In places, you might even be required to wear a helmet when boating.

5. PICK A SUITABLE KAYAKING LOCATION

Depending on your skill level, experience, abilities and ambitions, the most suitable kayaking location will vary. However, every great kayaking location has plenty of spots to go ashore, easy launching access and low boat traffic.

Always start off in shallow water, in calm bays or quiet lakes or rivers. Once you improve your skills and gain confidence, you can move to less stable waters, such as rivers with waves and windy lakes. Don't be overconfident, though! It's important to know your limits.

6. DON'T DRINK AND PADDLE

Alcohol, and physical exercise and mental awareness don't go together. Don't drink any alcohol (or do drugs) when you're on the water. On-shore, after setting up camp, having a beer while watching the sunset is, of course, okay.

7. PRACTICE RE-ENTERING YOUR KAYAK FROM THE WATER

This is a critical kayak safety tip. You will already know how to get in a kayak and out again. Getting back in a kayak after falling into the water, however, is a whole other ball game. Make sure to practice re-entering from the water before you go.

If you flip over, it can be a challenge to turn over your kayak, empty it out and climb back in. Before going on a serious kayaking trip, spend some time in a shallow spot on a quiet lake practicing your re-entering skills.

8. TELL SOMEONE ABOUT YOUR PLANS/ITINERARY

Before you head out, tell someone—a relative or friend—about your kayaking plans. This includes your location, your itinerary, your planned camping spots, how long you think you'll be gone and how many people are in your group.

Then, obviously, it's essential that you stick to that plan.

9. LEARN ABOUT COLD WATER SAFETY

Cold water safety is extremely important with regards to kayaking. Cold water is dangerous, period. It impairs your judgment, reduces coordination and decreases your muscle strength. Even immersion in 50-60-degree water can cause so-called cold water shock.

Falling in cold water can make you incapacitated within mere minutes. This is also why it's vital to wear a life jacket. You may literally not be able to swim in cold water. If you're kayaking on water that's colder than 60°F, wearing a wetsuit is a must and wearing a dry suit is recommended. You can learn the basics of cold water safety in this document from the American Canoe Association.

10. CHECK YOUR EQUIPMENT BEFORE YOU GO

Unless your kayak and equipment are brand new, it's wise to check everything for wear and tear before you head out. Ensuring that everything works like it should will only make your kayaking outing safer. ♦



THANKS FOR READING



We would like to thank you again for taking the time to check out the Kayaking Quick Starter Guide! We hope you've found some value in it and can use it as a guide to help you get into snow sports and explore the outdoors. Lots of great adventures are lying ahead waiting for you!

If for whatever reason you got this guide without ever subscribing to our email list (which is totally okay because we realize people love to share things like this), then please head on over to TheAdventureJunkies.com and subscribe to our email list there.

We would also suggest you to check out the other [Quick Starter Guides](#) for snow sports, climbing, hiking, scuba diving, and bicycle touring.

And lastly, if you enjoyed this book, please feel free to share it on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#)

Cheers, best of luck and we look forward to helping you out again soon!

Antonio & Amanda
Founders of The Adventure Junkies

