

BUOY WATER CLUB PADDLING BEST PRACTICES

Always wear a lifejacket (personal flotation device—PFD) and dress for protection from sun, heat, rain, and cold. A properly fitted lifejacket is essential.

Preparation and knowledge will make a big difference in the quality of your trip and the safety of participants.

- 1. You must be 18 years or older to rent a kayak or SUP.
- 2. Previous paddling experience is required.
- 3. Know waterway characteristics before launching, including water level, water temperature, current speed, tidal influences and the presence of hazards such as surf, other boaters or dams.
- 4. Plan for emergencies. Always know where you are and how to contact emergency services. Cell phones are unreliable, especially in remote areas.
- Paddle INTO the wind at the beginning of your session while you are "fresh" and use it to help you return towards the end of your paddle. DO NOT paddle downwind first.
- 6. Inspect equipment prior to every trip. Don't use the equipment if it is damaged.
- 7. Be a competent swimmer
- 8. Never boat under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

PADDLING TIPS

- Yield to other boats, stay to the right
- Boats can create large wakes, the best way to handle these is to paddle perpendicularly into the wave.
- Constantly scan for potential hazards and be aware of changing weather conditions.
- Make sure you know how to right and re-enter your craft in the event of capsize.
- Inform others (friends, family) of your trip plan. Trip plans include: number in party, route information and anticipated time of return.
- Know your skill level and avoid weather or water conditions that exceed your skill.
- If the wind becomes too strong, consider paddling to the nearest shore and walking your equipment back to the rental location.
- Avoid paddling alone.
- Pay attention to signs and safety warnings.
- Use whistles and hand signals to communicate effectively on the water.
- Sun and wind can be very dehydrating—make sure you drink plenty of water.
- Never litter, and always pack out trash.
- Do not disturb wildlife

IF YOU FALL OFF/OUT

Maintain contact with your equipment:

• Wind will often blow your kayak or paddleboard away faster than you can swim. Since your boat or board is your ticket home, don't lose it.

Always stay aware of you, your boat, and surrounding hazards:

- If you get caught between your boat and another boat or a rock or a wave, you risk serious injury.
- Quickly move to the "ocean side" of the kayak or board when in the surf zone. This way the surf will push the gear away from you rather than into you.

Keep hold of your paddle:

• Your PFD will keep you floating, so you can concentrate on getting back in your kayak using the BBF (bellybutton-backside-feet) recovery: The name is derived from the main parts of the technique. 1) Reach over and right your kayak if flipped. 2) lay flat at the surface of the water, kick, and pull up to get your bellybutton over your seat 3) After balanced, flip over and put your backside in your seat. 4) When balanced, bring your feet in one at a time.

ON WATER EMERGENCIES

Although very rare, sometimes on water emergencies occur and you need to be prepared:

- Most importantly, use good judgement, and stay well within your abilities
- Plan an "escape" route an alternative place to get off the water should environmental conditions suddenly change.

Universal Distress Signals may be able to contact nearby help and Include:

- Waiving paddle/ arms back and forth rapidly overhead (not very effective in foggy conditions or when very far from help)
- 3 whistle blasts repeated over and over (not very effective in strong winds)
- If the above attempts at contacting someone nearby for help are not effective, CALL 911.
- Be prepared to report your location as accurately as possible (GPS coordinates from a cell phone work well) and the nature of your distress.
- Stay with your boat or board. Search and Rescue professionals typically always find the boat/board eventually. You will typically be warmer on your boat/board (even if it is upside-down) rather than in the water.
- Try to stay calm and make yourself visible using the Universal Distress Signals while Search and Rescue professionals are looking for your location.

Know and follow the Navigation Rules

For a complete listing of the navigation rules, refer to the document "Navigation Rules of the Road" published by the U.S. Coast Guard (COMDTINST 16672.2 Series) and available on the web at www.navcen.uscg.gov. For State specific navigation requirements, refer to the state laws where you intend to paddle.

Take a Course

Learn essential information and practice paddling and rescue skills by taking an on-water class from an ACA certified instructor.

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Source

"Best Practices for Paddlers and Paddlesport Programs." www.americancanoe.org, American Canoe Association, https://americancanoe.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/sei-educational_resources/best_practices.pdf.

"UCSB Campus Point Paddling (Kayak & SUP) Safety Guidelines." recreation.ucsb.edu, 14 May 2019, https://recreation.ucsb.edu/sites/default/ files/2020-01/cprc-paddling-safety-information_c2120484-88ec-4755-bb2c-b405f15bad14.pdf.