



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.
5. 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.

