

5 Important Kayaking Tips for Beginners



Are you new to kayaking? We can help you get off to a fast start with these 5 Important Kayaking Tips for Beginners

Is there anything better than spending a hot [summer day at the beach](#) or on the water? We don't think so either! There are a plethora of ways to have on the lake or ocean and kayaking is fantastic choice!

Kayaking can be a tremendous amount of fun while also allowing you to challenge yourself with no shortage of thrills. An adventure on a kayak is an experience like no other.

You may find you like going for a paddle on your local lake on a warm summer day a great way to kick back. Others may enjoy a thrilling full moon adventure through the mangroves of the Florida Keys. Maybe you like an even bigger adventure? How about kayaking through the whitewater rapids of Colorado or the Grand Canyon. Do you enjoy fishing? Wait until you try kayak fishing, truly amazing!

As you can see, there is no shortage of options for fun kayaking adventures! It is great to get

excited about kayaking, but step one is making sure that you follow basic safety precautions. If you don't know proper safety procedures, a fun day at the beach can become anything but.

In 2019, there were [246 casualties and 125 deaths](#) due to kayak and canoe accidents, with 107 or those being drownings. Many of these deaths could have been prevented with proper training and safety considerations.

Keep reading to find our best beginner kayak tips to ensure that you have a lifetime of safe kayaking adventures.

1. Bring the Right Kayaking Gear

Perhaps the most critical piece of equipment you'll need for kayaking is a personal flotation device (PFD). Even the most competent swimmers should wear a PFD when on the water. When picking your PFD, choose one with the [United States Coast Guard](#) stamp of approval.

Another important kayaking essential is the right clothing for the conditions. If the temperature is cool, you'll want to bring quick-drying clothing if the water is choppy and you may get splashed, or in case you flip your kayak. If the water is cold you should consider investing in a wetsuit or neoprene layers.

Dress for the water and not the weather. Consider the temperature of the water before climbing aboard your kayak. Air and water temperatures can [vary a lot](#), so it's best not to learn that the hard way. You could also get separated from your kayak and have to spend more time in the water than expected.

Opt for a wetsuit if the water temperature is between 55 and 59°F. If it's colder than 55°F, a drysuit will be necessary. Hypothermia can be a serious threat in these conditions and a dry or wetsuit could save the day.

2. Choose the Right Type of Kayak

There are a wide variety of kayaks to choose from. The one that works best for you will depend on what your goals are and what you're using it for. There is a kayak designed for about every adventure that you could imagine.

We are all familiar with traditional kayaks, but the options have greatly increased in the last 20 years. Now you can also find modular kayaks, inflatable kayaks, fold up kayaks, combinations, and more. All offer great kayaking experiences, but our preference has become the inflatable kayak.

Inflatable kayaks are durable, safe, and [have advantages over traditional kayaks](#) in a lot of ways. They are lightweight which makes them easy to carry and easy to store when not in use. Since it's portable, you can take it anywhere you travel. No need for a trailer, you can take inflatable kayaks with you in the backseat of your car or even on a plane!

Modular kayaks are great for those kayakers who prefer a rigid kayak, but also want a kayak that is easier to transport and store. These kayaks are 2 to 3 separate pieces that securely snap together and provide a great kayaking experience. These kayaks are a nice combination of a traditional kayak with some of the benefits of an inflatable kayak.

If you plan to go fishing, a [fishing kayak](#) is an obvious choice. These kayaks help you reach hidden fishing spots that other bigger boats can't get to. Reeling in fish while you are right on top of the water is quite the thrill and an awesome way to experience the sport of fishing.

There are inflatable fishing kayaks, modular fishing kayaks, and traditional fishing kayaks. They often feature built-in accessories for your fishing gear, such as rod holders, depth finders, hooks, and other tools. Most models offer versatility so that you can setup your fishing kayak exactly to your preferences. This is not to be understated and is one of the great unique features of fishing kayaks that really allows you to maximize your fishing experiences.

If you plan on kayaking with a family member or friend, you could consider a couple of solo kayaks or work together in a [tandem kayak](#). These styles can hold up to three people and are also available in inflatable varieties. Sharing the fun, and the paddling, with somebody else can be a great bonding experience.

All of these kayak styles come in sit-in or sit-on-top varieties. Sit-in options feature an open cockpit that allows the paddler to sit inside the hull of the kayak. They can be outfitted with a spray skirt to prevent water splashing in and getting you wet. Sit-in kayaks are great for colder and inclement weather paddling, but they are also generally harder to get back into if they flip.

Sit-on-top varieties have no inside cockpit, but instead a deck on top that the paddler sits on. They are best for warmer weather as there's no protection from waves or water splashes. (Those splashes can actually feel nice on a hot summer day!) Sit-on-top kayaks are simple to climb back onto if you fall off.

If all this information is making your head spin, check out our [kayak buying guide tips](#) for help.

3. Choose the Right Time, Place and Conditions to Kayak

If you're a beginner, choose a day with mild weather. Your first adventures may be less enjoyable and not give you the full kayaking experience if you try more challenging conditions.

Paddling through wind and rain when you are trying to learn can be a real turnoff, and a hot summer day can really take it out of you.

Kayaking through a drizzle could be refreshing and likely won't cause any issues. If the forecast calls for heavy rain or wind, you might want to reschedule for another day. In addition to making it more challenging and being generally less enjoyable, downpours can fill your kayak's cockpit and cause instability.

Your best bet would be to choose a sunny day without any wind. If that's not realistic, try planning your route so the wind is at your back as you paddle back to shore. Paddling into a headwind after a day on the water will be exhausting.

We recommend beginners stick with lakes or ponds until they're comfortable kayaking. The ocean can be a beautiful place to go boating, but the water is often choppy and more dangerous. Save your ocean trips for when you've nailed down the basics of kayaking.

If you are ocean kayaking, look at local [tide times and charts](#) to determine the safest time to head out. Think of the tide as an escalator and choose the route accordingly. You don't want to be fighting against the tide on your way back to shore when you're exhausted.

Before you set sail, ask local paddlers for hazard tips. People familiar with the area you'll be paddling can let you know if there are areas to avoid. They may also lead you to some great spots to check out.

4. Kayak with a Friend

Beginners should never kayak alone. Bring a paddling buddy with you if you're not going with a guide. If you run into problems on the water, the buddy system could prove to be life-saving.

Try to stay within view and within earshot of each other. If something were to go awry, you'd need to be close enough to help.

If you must go alone, there are several precautions you should take to stay safe:

- Pack your cellphone with you and keep it in a waterproof bag that floats.
- Bring a whistle with you so you can signal for help if you need it.
- Never kayak in waters you're not familiar with alone. Stick to places you already know like the back of your hand to avoid any unsavory surprises.
- Let friends and family on land know where you're going and when you should be back.

5. Nail your Kayaking Posture

Knowing how to sit on a kayak will help you get the most from your day on the water. Sitting for a long period of time can be uncomfortable at times and good posture can be a great help. This will allow you to go on longer adventures and get full enjoyment all day long.

Before you get on the water, make sure the cockpit is set up how you like it. You may need a back brace, specific kayak seat, or foot rest for comfort. Adjust the footpegs and paddle to a position that feels best for you.

Focus on sitting tall on your seat, keeping your spine long and head high. Imagine a cord runs from the base of your spine through the top of your head, pulling you upwards at all times.

To really make sure that you get a comfortable kayaking experience we recommend that you stretch your muscles before your adventure. Pay particular attention to your hamstrings, glutes, quads, and back. You may also need to [work on your core strength](#) to stay comfortable on the water all day.

Maximize Your Kayaking Experiences with Our Kayaking Tips

Trying a new sport can be terrifying for the first few times. Kayaking is no exception to this rule. After a few days out on the water, though, you'll be wondering why you waited so long to start.

We hope you use our kayak tips to make the most of your first kayaking excursions.

Let us help you squeeze every last drop out of every day on the water. Check out our [inflatable kayaks](#) to find the one that's best for your needs. If you have any questions you can [contact us here](#) and we would be happy to help you out.

Other Resources to Expand Your Knowledge:

- [6 Advantages of Inflatable Kayaks Blog \(Download\)](#)
- [6 Advantages of Inflatable Kayaks Infographic](#)
- [7 Things to Know when Buying an Inflatable Kayak \(Download\)](#)
- [How to Choose the Best Inflatable Kayak for Your Needs \(Download\)](#)
- [Best Inflatable Fishing Kayak Buyers Guide \(Download\)](#)
- [Inflatable Fishing Kayak Information Graphic](#)
- [Stand Up Paddle Boarding: A Beginners Guide \(Download\)](#)
- [9 Best Water Sport Activities to Enjoy This Summer \(Download\)](#)

- [Do Inflatable Fishing Boats Live Up To The Hype? \(Download\)](#)
- [8 Best Things to do at The Lake or Beach \(Download\)](#)
- [Ultimate Guide to Buying an Under Water Scooter \(Download\)](#)