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What is National Paddling Week?

This special week has been created to boost awareness of our national recreational paddling sports, safety measures, skill development and heritage! Go canoeing, kayaking or stand-up paddleboarding during National Paddling Week to show your commitment to the fun, benefits and challenges of paddling.

FUNDING PROVIDED IN PART BY:



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THIS GUIDE

This guide is for those just getting into paddling, parents raising independent paddlers, and those paddlers preparing to take a paddling trip. Being ready for anything will let you enjoy more of everything.

This guide cannot replace the curriculum of a formal paddling preparedness course, or a lifetime of experience. We highly recommend you invest in your development of skills and abilities through a recognised paddling school, club or organization. See page 14 for a list of paddling organizations offering courses and resources in your area.

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Introductory Paddling Skills



So you want to get on the water and have some fun. To prepare for paddling comfortably and safely you should learn the basics while under supervision of an experienced instructor or fellow paddler.

The basics include:

- Getting into and out of a canoe/kayak or on and off a paddleboard without injuring yourself or damaging the boat or board.
- Getting back into the boat or onto the board in water alone and with a partner after a flip or fall.
- Being able to turn, move forward, move backward and slip up to a dock or shore.

It is important to know how to move a boat. It is even more important to know when you shouldn't move: when it is too wavy or windy; when the weather is too threatening to be on the water; or when the conditions are just too much for your new paddling abilities. Always err on the side of caution.

Don't worry too much if your strokes aren't pretty. In the beginning, it is more important to get the boat where you want it. Any safe and successful stroke or method is acceptable. You have the rest of your paddling life to perfect efficient and beautiful strokes. Enjoy paddling now and forever.



Safety Tips for Paddlers



Things the law says you need to have on board:

- Personal flotation devices (PFDs) or lifejackets approved for use in Canada and of a suitable size for each person on board.
- A buoyant heaving line at least 15 metres long, usually in a throwbag.
- A paddle.
- A bailer or manual water pump for removing water.
- A sound-signaling device. Most paddlers use a whistle.
- A waterproof light. Between sundown and sunrise, or when visibility is reduced, a white light visible over 360-degrees is preferable.
- A waterproof flashlight and six Type A, B or C flares must be carried by larger canoes, between six- and eight-metres long (unless the boat is used on rivers, canals or lakes in which they can at no time be more than one mile from shore).

The dos and don'ts of safe paddling:

- Do make an effort to be visible. Even in bright, calm conditions a canoe, kayak or SUP board isn't visible more than two nautical miles away—the distance a large vessel covers in four minutes.
- Do learn to perform CPR, maintain an open airway and place someone in the recovery position.
- Do learn to swim. Or, if you can't swim, learn to swim 25 metres in a PFD.
- Do learn to throw a line or reaching assist.
- Do know your navigational aids and what they identify, e.g., channels, isolated dangers, and special areas.
- Do carry a VHF radio, and take a radio operators course, if you are paddling in coastal waters.
- Don't go paddling without the proper training, equipment and clothing.
- Don't drink and boat. Not only does alcohol impair your judgment, in some provinces paddling under the influence can cost you your driver's license and result in criminal charges.



Day Trip Paddle Equipment and Clothing Checklist



EMERGENCY PACK

- ☐ Phone numbers, e.g., police, weather, kin, etc.
- ☐ Emergency money
- ☐ Signaling devices, e.g., mirror, flares, whistle, flagging tape
- ☐ Weatherproof matches
- ☐ Knife
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Medical info and any medications
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Tarp

CANOE/KAYAK/SUP

- ☐ Personal flotation devices (PFDs) or lifejackets approved for use in Canada and of a suitable size for each person
- ☐ Throw bag of buoyant heaving line at least 15 metres long
- ☐ A paddle for every paddler, plus one spare per boat
- ☐ A bailer or manual water pump for removing water
- ☐ Whistle or other sound-signaling device
- ☐ Watertight flashlight or other signaling device
- ☐ Duct tape

NAVIGATION

- ☐ Set of waterproof maps or charts per boat
- ☐ Compass with string/cover/float per boat
- ☐ Weather forecast
- ☐ Logbook

EQUIPMENT PACK

- ☐ Drinking water jug
- ☐ Water purification, e.g., pump or chemical
- ☐ Biodegradable detergent/soap
- ☐ Food in waterproof packs
- ☐ Toilet paper
- ☐ Garbage bags

CLOTHING

- ☐ Appropriate paddling clothing for both air and water temperatures
- ☐ Spare, warm clothes in a waterproof bag
- ☐ Rain gear
- ☐ Sun hat
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Walking footwear
- ☐ Bug protection



For a day trip, or even an afternoon on the water, paddlers require a number of items to make a trip a safe and enjoyable outing. Begin with our suggested list and add to it to suit your own needs, environment and preferences.

Before you go, remember all your safety gear is required by law. Always let someone know where you are going and when you are coming back. Leave your route plan. If paddling in a national or provincial park, register at the park office. If in a remote area, register with the local police, RCMP or Coast Guard.

Planning an Extended Paddling Trip



One of the easiest ways to enjoy an extended paddling trip is to book with a reputable outfitter or guiding service. They will handle most of the logistics and provide trained and experienced guides. Much can be learned from these outdoor professionals. If, eventually, you choose to strike out on your own, there are a number of things to consider.

THE GROUP

- Keep your paddling team to 12 people or fewer.
- Know the fitness level, preparedness, skills, experience and needs of each paddler.
- Know the composition and personality balance of your group and how they fit with each other.

LEADERSHIP

- Designate two leaders for the trip—one as a back up.
- Agree on the roles and responsibilities of the leaders.
- Leaders must have the training, skills, fitness, experience and leadership abilities to handle the trip.

ROUTE PLANNING

- Gather important route information including: length, access and exit points, probable weather, portages, water levels and conditions and temperature, campsites, emergency communication and fire restrictions.
- Confirm that the route is compatible with the participants' abilities, objectives and expectations.
- Allow a minimum of one rest day per seven days of travel.
- Obtain permits and authorizations before leaving.
- Register your route itinerary with the authorities.

ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

A pre-trip meeting is essential. Not only does it get the group excited about the trip, it allows the leaders and the group to assess the group's skills and to review the itinerary, expectations, equipment lists, menus and any medical issues, such as allergies or conditions. It is better to know and plan than to be surprised in the backcountry.

TRANSPORTATION

Often the most daunting and dangerous part of paddling trips is the travel to and from the water. Consider the following:

- Vehicles and equipment must be in good working order.
- Ensure drivers are insured and licensed to handle the vehicle class.
- Check hitches, tie-downs and directional signals at departure and en route.
- Carry usable spare tires, for vehicles and trailers.
- Confirm everyone knows the pick-up and delivery times and places.

EQUIPMENT

Outdoor and safety equipment is essential to a successful paddling trip.

Things to consider:

- All camping and paddling equipment is checked before departure, including: repair kits, flares, stove, tents and radios.
- Ensure boats are capable for the most demanding water conditions and rescue procedures.
- Boat capacity in relation to the weight of the passengers and equipment is confirmed as safe.
- Do you have everything required by law?
- Everyone must have an approved and fitted personal flotation device.

PAPERWORK

Even though your goal may be to leave the world behind, there may be some paperwork required on your trip. Papers may include:

- Permits for access, camping or filming
- Emergency contact numbers
- Medical records
- Licenses, e.g., fishing, radio operator
- First aid notes
- Logbook

Be Environmentally Friendly



The basic rule of camping is: Take out what you take in. Enlightened outdoor users, with a feeling of stewardship for the land, travel and camp with minimum impact on the natural environment and clean up after those who are less environmentally sensitive.

Things to consider:

BRING WHAT YOU NEED

- Do not rely on the environment to provide a food supply.
- Carry proper equipment, including: shelter, adequate warm clothing, washing equipment and foam sleeping pads.
- Comply with national, provincial and local laws and regulations.

TRAVELLING

- Keep the group size small.
- Use existing trails and portages, staying within their confines.
- Use switchbacks on trails. Do not create shortcuts.
- Follow game trails where possible and when necessary.
- Study the implications for the environment before blazing new portages.

FIRES

- Use stoves where required and when possible to minimize impact.
- Keep fires small.
- Use existing fire pits.
- Use only deadfall for firewood. Do not cut down trees.
- Where a fire pit is lacking, build a no-trace fire.
- Use birch bark only from dead and fallen trees.
- Burn to a cold white ash. Pack out non-burnable foil, tin cans, plastics, glass, etc.
- Extinguish fires completely.

CAMPSITES AND SHELTERS

- Use existing campsites.
- Do not expand the campsite.
- Refrain from using natural materials for shelters, except in emergency situations.
- Refrain from landscaping campsites.
- Use natural drainage. Do not dig trenches.

HUMAN WASTE

- Use existing outhouses or equivalent.
- If necessary, bury human waste in a small shallow cat-hole (10 to 15 centimetres deep), well away from campsites and trails and 35 metres from any water source.
- Burn toilet paper and/or use single-ply biodegradable toilet paper and bury it completely.

OTHER WASTE

- The motto: Burn it, stash it, bag it, bring it back out.
- Wash dishes, clothes and yourself using a dishpan, not in the lake or stream. Rinse away from open water.
- Use sunlight-biodegradable soap.
- Dump dishwater in a latrine, at least 20 metres from shoreline.



PHOTO: ONTARIO TOURISM

Paddling Associations in Canada



Paddle Canada

www.paddlecanada.com

CanoeKayak Canada

www.canoekayak.ca

Recreational Canoeing Association of British Columbia

www.bccanoe.com

CanoeKayak BC

www.canoekayakbc.ca

Paddle Alberta (PA; formerly ARCA)

www.paddlealberta.org

Alberta Whitewater Association

www.albertawhitewater.ca

Canoe Kayak Saskatchewan

www.saskcanoe.ca

Paddle Manitoba (PM)

www.paddle.mb.ca

Manitoba Paddling Association

www.mpa.mb.ca

Ontario Recreational Canoe and Kayak Association

www.orcka.ca

Whitewater Ontario

www.whitewaterontario.ca

Fédération québécoise du canot et du kayak

www.canot-kayak.qc.ca

Association québécoise de canoë-kayak de vitesse

www.canoe-kayak-quebec.qc.ca

Fédération québécoise de canoë-kayak d'eaux vives

www.federationkayak.qc.ca

Atlantic Division, CanoeKayak Canada

www.adckc.ca

Canoe Kayak New Brunswick

www.canoekayaknb.org

New Brunswick Competitive Canoe Association

www.sportnb.com

Newfoundland and Labrador Paddling Association (NLPA)

www.kayakers.nf.ca/nlpa/

Canoe Kayak PEI

www.windsinc.com/canoekayak/canoekayak.htm

Canoe Kayak Nova Scotia (CKNS)

www.ckns.ca

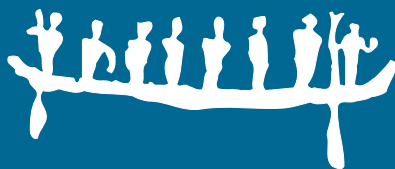
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Mondays to Saturdays 10 - 5
Sundays 12 - 5
910 Monaghan Road
Peterborough



705.748.9153 www.canoemuseum.ca

paddling all year

We're pretty excited about National Paddling Week. Like you, we feel that one week just isn't enough. To help you paddle more we're giving you **free one-year digital subscriptions to our magazines**. They're full of trips, boats, gear, techniques and adventure stories to help keep you on the water. Paddle for seven days, then paddle forever.



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