

# SEA KAYAKING



**A BASIC GUIDE TO  
SAFE SEA KAYAKING**

# SEA KAYAK TERMS & EQUIPMENT

## SEEK ADVICE

Seek advice from instructors & experienced sea kayakers before buying your boat

## IN THE BOAT

Waterproof Torch  
Emergency food  
Change of warm dry clothes in a dry bag  
Thermal space blanket or survival bag  
Waterproof matches or lighter  
Sunscreen  
First Aid Kit  
Survival Kit  
Repair kit  
Water/drink bottle

## INSIDE THE KAYAK

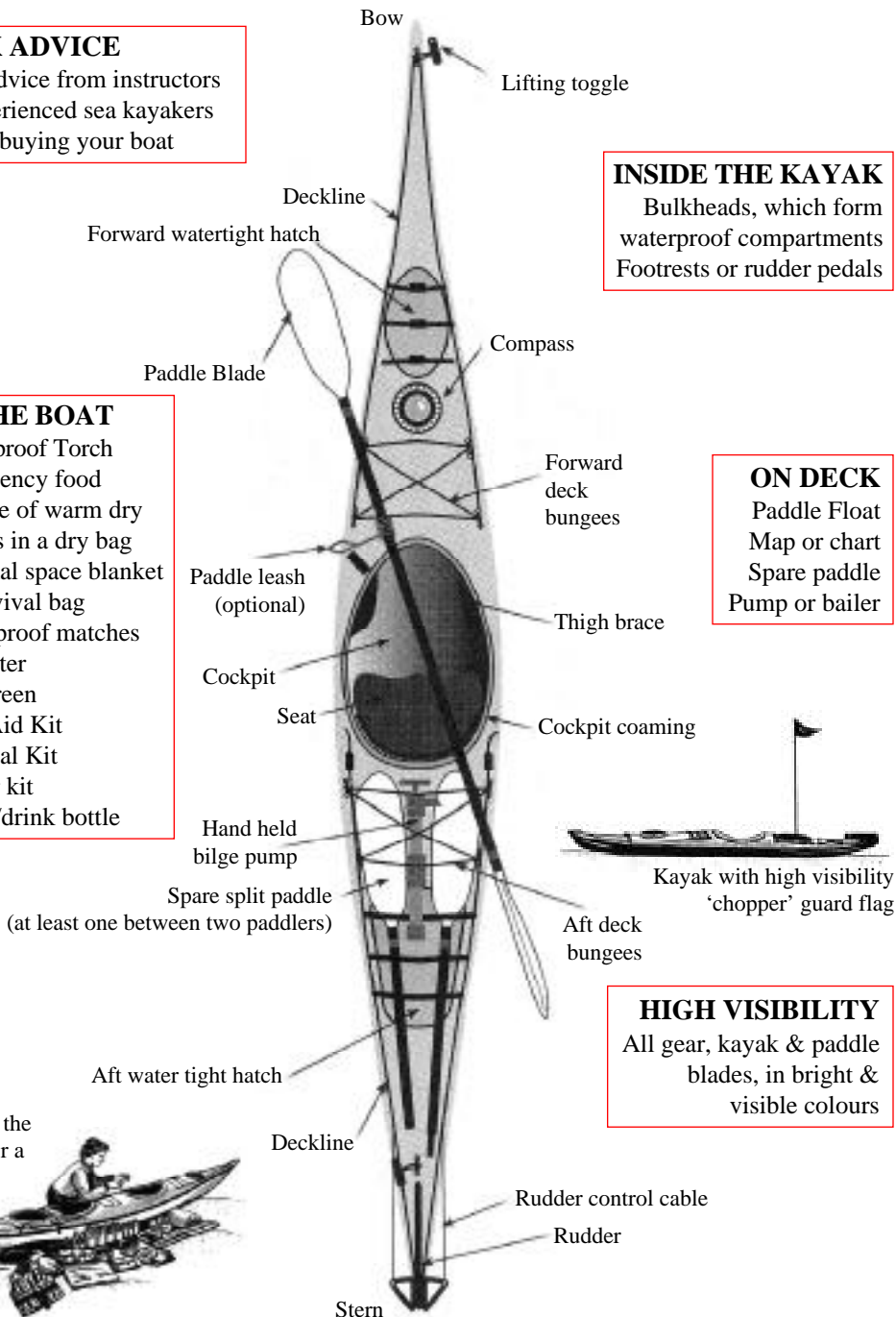
Bulkheads, which form waterproof compartments  
Footrests or rudder pedals

## ON DECK

Paddle Float  
Map or chart  
Spare paddle  
Pump or bailer

## HIGH VISIBILITY

All gear, kayak & paddle blades, in bright & visible colours



## THE PADDLER

### ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

- Lifejacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD)  
(Always to be worn)
- Towline
- Water container
- Sprayskirt
- Pump



### CLOTHING

- Synthetic fibres, polypropylene, polyester longjohns and top.
- Multi layers of thin clothing allow more flexibility.
- Sun hat with chin tie or warm hat
- Sunglasses (with cord loop)
- Waterproof outer jacket
- Suitable footwear, such as wetsuit booties, that you can swim in.

### COLD WATER PADDLING

- Long John wetsuit, dry suit or 'goretex' immersion suit
- Neoprene booties
- Neoprene hood or balaclava
- Pogies or neoprene gloves

### SIGNALING DEVICES

- (To be carried on your person or lifejacket)
- Whistle
- Signal mirror
- Day/night flares
- Emergency light
- VHF Radio & or Mobile Phone  
(in a sealed plastic bag or waterproof container)

Good timing in a surf breakout - cresting a wave before it breaks.



# HAVE SEA KAYAK AND KIT WHAT NEXT?

## To Gain Experience

Join a local sea kayak club or sea kayak network.  
See KASK Website for address details



Double sea kayak

## What You Need to Learn

- Adjusting the foot pedals, so the rudder works correctly for you
- Ensuring the cockpit and knee braces fit; pad where necessary.
- Paddle strokes: forward, backward, stop, turning & support strokes.
- Practise capsizing in calm water, and leaving the cockpit (Wet exit).
- A self rescue technique such as the paddle-float rescue is essential to be able to re-enter your kayak without assistance.
- How to rescue a capsized paddler.

## PRACTISE YOUR SKILLS

### Before You Go on the Water

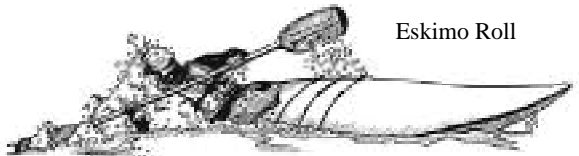
Check the local area marine forecast, for wind speed and direction, sea state, any gale warnings or expected changes in the weather.

It's useful to talk to Coastguard, boaties or other paddlers re local conditions.

Have a topographical map or marine chart for the area and the relevant tide tables.

Ensure signalling devices are carried, to allow calling up a rescue:

- VHF radio and or cell phone
- Day / night flares
- Torch
- Signal mirror



Eskimo Roll

Designate a party leader

Leave your trip intentions with a reliable friend or relative; include the following:

- Number in the party, and their details
- Launching from where, and expected return time
- Overdue action time, to contact Coastguard and Police.



Paddle Float Rescue

## ON THE WATER

### Paddle in a Pod

A pod is a group of paddlers who stay close together. Pods allow for quick action in the event of a capsize, or other emergency.

Paddle at the pace of the slowest paddler.

If conditions deteriorate, beyond the parties's skill levels, seek shelter on shore by the shortest route.

### Keep Alert for Other Vessels.

Always be on the lookout for approaching vessels.

Never assume an approaching vessel has seen you.

Keep clear of shipping lanes, or cross in tight formation by the shortest most efficient route, checking clear passage.

Turn away quickly if a vessel is on a collision course.

### Optimize Visibility on The Water

Choose bright fluoro colours for your:

- Sea kayak
- Paddle blades
- Lifejacket

In high density boating areas, mount a 'chopper' guard flag on your kayak stern.

### Visibility at Night

You are required by law to have an all round white light or torch capable of signalling an approaching vessel in time to prevent a collision.

Do not use a flashing or strobe light.

### If you have Capsized

Stay with your kayak. It is more visible than a paddler swimming in the water, and does provide you with more buoyancy than your lifejacket.

Utilise the H.E.L.P. and Huddle positions for reducing hypothermia if in the water.



Brightly coloured kayak and lifejacket. Spare split paddle on foredeck; VHF radio on the lifejacket; high visibility 'chopper' guard flag on the stern.

## ON LAND

### Secure your Sea Kayak

Ensure you tether your kayak at night, well above the high tide mark.

### Respect the Environment

- If you paddle in, paddle your rubbish out.
- Take nothing but photos and leave nothing but footprints.

# DON'T BECOME A STATISTIC

Many recent serious sea kayaking accidents, resulting in either fatalities or major search and rescue operations, have involved either solo paddlers or groups being caught by severe weather changes and blown out to sea by strong offshore winds.

Marine weather forecasts must be listened too before launching, and particular note taken of the timing and nature of any impending changes.

A critical factor in many accidents was the failure to carry appropriate signaling devices for calling up a rescue. Also critical in several accidents was the failure to leave a trip intentions form with a friend or family, with a party overdue time noted.

## MORE INFORMATION

**The Aims of KASK, Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (NZ)Inc, are to:**

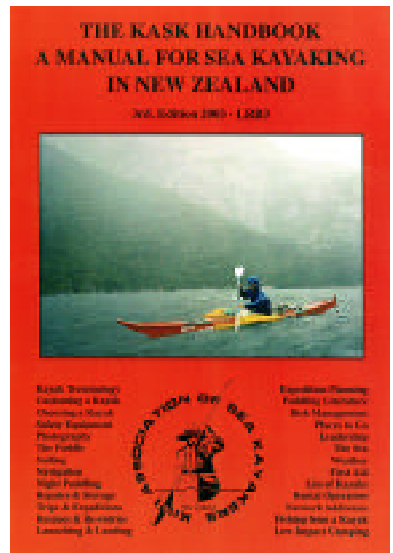
1. promote and encourage the sport of sea kayaking
2. promote safety standards
3. develop techniques & equipment
4. deal with issues of coastal access and protection
5. organize an annual sea kayak forum
6. publish a bimonthly newsletter.

### The KASK HANDBOOK

The 146 page KASK Handbook, 'A Manual for Sea Kayaking in New Zealand' is supplied free to new joining members. It is a comprehensive guide to all aspects of sea kayaking in New Zealand. Sections include:

- the kayak, paddle & equipment
- techniques and skills
- the elements (sea, tidal streams & weather)
- places to go
- resources section with contact addresses.

The Handbook is available from sea kayak retail outlets or the KASK address below.



## WEBSITES - KASK ADDRESS

KASK

[www.kask.co.nz](http://www.kask.co.nz)

KASK Administrator:

PO Box 23, Runanga, 7854. West Coast.

Water Safety New Zealand

[www.watersafety.org.nz](http://www.watersafety.org.nz)

Coastguard Boating Education Service

[www.cbes.org.nz](http://www.cbes.org.nz)

New Zealand Recreational Canoe Association

[www.rivers.org.nz](http://www.rivers.org.nz)

Maritime Safety Authority

[www.msa.govt.nz](http://www.msa.govt.nz)

Cover photo: Melanie Grant off Cape Egmont

Content: I. Bailey, S. Cade, T. Dumper, A. Hall

Photos: P. Caffyn, J. Kirk Anderson, M. Grant (cover)

Design/content: P. Caffyn - Sketches: Nicola Johnson