



OUTDOOR CLUB OF SOUTH JERSEY

PADDLER'S GUIDE

WWW.OCSJ.ORG

SAFETY FIRST

PFD- (PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICE)

Your most important piece of equipment.

83% of all canoeing fatalities were not wearing a PFD at the time of the accident.

Pick one that fits and feels right and wear it. Some are gender specific.

Proper Footwear:

Nearly 90% of all paddling injuries occur from walking around with bare feet. Don't wear flip-flops.

Clothing: Select Synthetic fabrics, popular for their wicking qualities (drawing water away from your skin) synthetic fibers dry quickly and help keep your body warm in when it's cold out, and not Cotton.

In Water the body loses heat 25 times faster than in Air.

Even on a relatively warm day it is important to wear clothes that dry quickly. This prevents both chilling and chafing.

Use a dry bag for storing extra clothes, dry towel etc.

One rule to follow: always expect to get wet and dress and pack accordingly.

Sunscreen & A brimmed Hat: Being on the water often means 100% sun exposure. Using a waterproof sunscreen with a high SPF is essential. UV rays are just as severe reflecting up from the water.

Water Bottle with Water & a First Aid Kit

Don't paddle alone.

The paddler is ultimately responsible for his or her safety by the decisions they make in three critical areas.

1- Have you the skills and physical condition?

2- Are environmental conditions favorable?

3- Is your equipment selected sufficient and is it in good condition?

Take a lesson offered by many Clubs, Parks, Paddling Associations and **Outfitters and some Schools.**

A- ex Outdoor Club of South Jersey - WWW.OCSJ.ORG

B- ex Burlington County College *indoor classes*

C- ex. Ocean County Parks Department - WWW.CO.OCEAN.NJ.US/PARKS/DEFAULT.HTM

Start out on a Lake or a shorter trip.

Some helpful hints for beginners

When you come to a problem don't paddle faster, paddle smarter.

Avoid hitting an obstruction sideways

Don't hold onto overhead branches

Take the inside of a curve - current is slower and usually less debris

If you encounter waves - paddle into them at a slight angle

You fell in, now what?

1- Remember that you are worth more than your equipment.

2- You are wearing a PFD so you should float - * note (not automatically face up. Don't paddle alone)

3- You are with a group who can help

4- Try to stay with you boat .It should float even if filled with water

5- Make sure you are on the upstream side of you boat. A swamped boat will weigh more than an equal volume of wood (wood floats)

6- Float with you feet forward to deflect obstacles

7- Don't try to stand in fast moving water

8- Once you reach shore use that towel in your dry bag and change into those dry clothes

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Kayak or Canoe?

Paddling is an activity that attracts a wide range of people who all are different in their own way and also have different wants and needs. So how do you go about choosing the proper canoe/kayak for your paddling needs? Take a few factors into consideration before making your decision.

-The location at which you are going to be using your kayak –lake, stream, back bay, ocean or whitewater

-Your experience level

-How durable you need your canoe/kayak to be

-Transporting / storing your canoe/kayak

Foam blocks to hullavator and no storage area to a rack.

Price of kayak **The best time of the year to buy at the end of the season

A solo kayak in the 9 ft to 12 ft ranges is preferred by most paddlers for paddling in the Pinelands. It is easy to maneuver, lighter to load, and there is no need for a partner *This saves many relationships* recommend foot braces /deck straps

For families: A Canoe no longer than 15 ft. is a good choice.

Canoes have the advantage of being able to carry more gear -especially useful if you like to camp.

Paddling with a group offers the chance to see, learn about, and try various equipment.

Selecting a paddle

Canoe and Kayak Paddles have a few things in common the ideal kayak paddle is (1) light, (2) strong, (3) comfortable, and (4) cheap. No paddle will be ultra-light, super strong, and cheap. You'll have to decide what's most important to you, and what you can afford. Comfort is important to everyone, however.

If you have small hands, and if your paddle shaft is too thick, you'll have difficulty hanging on. Boat control will suffer as a result, and long days on the water won't be any fun. A final consideration: shafts can be oval or round. Most people find oval shafts more comfortable.

Kayakers in general, prefer 220- to 240-cm paddles (roughly, 7 to 8 ft long). These are just right for most adults in most touring and recreational kayaks. The wider your kayak, all other things being equal, the longer your paddle should be.

Whitewater boaters, on the other hand, will go shorter, starting at 205 cm (6¾ ft) and moving down from there. If possible try before you buy.

MY FAVORITE PADDLING GUIDES FOR THE PINELANDS

Garden State Canoeing: A Paddler's Guide to New Jersey

Second Edition September 2002

by Edward Gertler

This paddling "Bible" (New Jersey testament) contains descriptions of 105 brooks, creeks, rivers and other bodies of water, all in New Jersey.

•Canoeing the Jersey Pine Barrens by Robert Parnes, Fran Braley and Al Braley

•This book includes only 14 rivers but includes historical, botanical, geological, information plus information on outfitters and some paddling basics

MY FAVORITE INTERNET SITES FOR PADDLING INFORMATION

<u>OUTDOOR CLUB OF SJ</u>	<u>OCSJ WEBSITE</u>	<u>WWW.OCSJ.ORG</u>
<u>BEST REVIEWS OF GEAR</u>	<u>PADDLING .NET</u>	<u>HTTP://WWW.PADDLING.NET/</u>
<u>BEST SITE FOR KIDS</u>	<u>BOATING SIDEKICKS</u>	<u>http://www.boatingsidekicks.com/kidsite/08ty-index1024.htm</u>
<u>GENERAL INFORMATION</u>	<u>ABOUT PADDLING</u>	<u>HTTP://PADDLING.ABOUT.COM/</u>
<u>WATER LEVELS</u>	<u>USGA WEBSITE</u>	<u>HTTP://WATERDATA.USGS.GOV/NWIS/RT</u>
<u>TIDE INFORMATION</u>	<u>NOAA TIDES & CURRENTS</u>	<u>http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/tide_predictions.html</u>

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