

PADDLESPORTS AMERICA

Chapter Summaries

Chapter One Summary

- The two primary types of paddlecraft are canoes and kayaks.
- Before you go paddling, you select the type of paddlecraft for the type of outing you are planning, the waterway where you will be paddling, and your level of experience.
- Other factors you should consider include durability, maintenance, weight, cost, speed, and maneuverability.
- You also must select the correct paddle for your canoe or kayak.
 - For canoes, consider the length and shaft.
 - For kayaks, consider the feathering, length, and blade width and shape.

Chapter Two Summary

- Don't exceed the maximum capacity for your paddlecraft.
- Leave a float plan with a responsible person before you going out on the water.
- Use a cartop carrier rack to transport your canoe or kayak on top of a vehicle, and fasten the boat securely to the rack and vehicle in at least three places.
- Dress in layers so that you can add or remove layers as necessary. Also, wear a hat or helmet, appropriate footwear, and gloves.
- Load your gear and supplies into your paddlecraft properly to avoid unexpected capsizes or steering difficulties.
- Keep your boat well-maintained and store it properly to extend its life and help prevent leaks.
- When paddling with others, make sure that everyone understands common rules and communication methods.

Chapter Three Summary

- To avoid capsizing, you should learn the correct way to board and exit a paddlecraft from a shoreline and from a dock.
- When not in use, be sure to secure your paddlecraft on shore or at a dock to keep it from drifting away.
- It is your responsibility to keep a sharp lookout and avoid a collision when sharing a waterway with others.
- Make sure you know the meanings of the lateral and non-lateral markers on your waterway.
- Always check a marine chart or ask another boater or a marina for information on local hazards before you boat on a new waterway.
- If you are hunting or fishing from your paddlecraft, you should obey all boating laws and take extra precautions to avoid falling overboard.

Chapter Four Summary

- If you are required to have a Certificate of Number (registration), always keep it on board your paddlecraft.
- Reckless operation, such as overloading your paddlecraft, is not only dangerous but is also illegal.
- Operating a paddlecraft while intoxicated is illegal and dangerous.
- All life jackets must be U.S. Coast Guard–approved, in good condition, the proper size for the intended wearer, and readily accessible.
- All paddlecraft must have at least one wearable life jacket for each person on board.
- Paddlecraft operated between sunset and sunrise must have and use a lantern or a flashlight with a white light.
- Paddlecraft also are required to have a sound-producing device.
- It is illegal to dump trash into federally controlled or state waters.
- Do your part to prevent the spread of aquatic nuisance species and to protect SAV.
- You are required to report serious boating accidents.

Chapter Five Summary

- To minimize the risk of drowning if your boat capsizes or is swamped or if you fall overboard, wear your life jacket.
- If your boat capsizes, stay with the boat.
- Cold water immersion can kill, and it is critical that you know how to:
 - Prevent it by reducing the likelihood of capsizing and
 - Respond if your canoe or kayak does capsize.
- For safety, be sure you know how to prevent, recognize the symptoms of, and treat heat exhaustion, heat stroke, heat cramps, and dehydration.
- Be alert to changing weather conditions, and head for shore if a thunderstorm is approaching.