

CANOE / KAYAK TOURING CHECKLIST

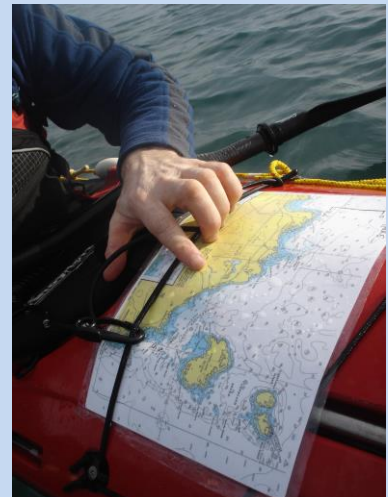
Preparation for canoe/kayak touring

Training

- Ensure that your upper body is fit enough for the trip planned
- It is recommended before going touring in a canoe or kayak that you take part in a training course to develop the basic skills as follows:
 - How to control your craft and paddle in a straight line with minimum effort
 - How to turn and do support strokes
 - How to navigate in open water
 - How to cope with changing weather conditions and the importance of accessing sheltered environments
 - Having an efficient and effective paddling style
 - How to do a kayak/canoe rescue
- Warm up appropriately before your trip

Safety

- Make sure that you are aware of the water conditions, any tides or currents and regulations for boat traffic beforehand
- Check weather forecast and sea state for the area
- **Plan your route according to your skill level, the environment and the conditions.**
- Never paddle alone, go with a friend or a group (the adage “less than 3 there should not be” is useful).
- Ensure that you have a **complete** change of clothes with you in a dry bag in case you get wet.
- Take a (warm) drink and snacks for during your paddle.
- Download a smart phone emergency application, which allows for direct and geographically pinged emergency calls.
- On the sea carry a VHF radio and learn how to use it. (Ensure that you have the appropriate license for your country)



Before your Canoe trip

Eating and drinking

- Ensure that you are well hydrated (especially in warmer climates)
- Eat suitably before your trip so you have enough energy to paddle and maintain your body temperature.

Equipment

- Always wear a life jacket or buoyancy aid
- Ensure that you carry and/or wear a waterproof and windproof jacket
- Dress appropriately for the conditions. In colder climates layering with thermals/fleece can be important
- Pack a dry-bag with:

- A drinking bottle or flask and some food
- A complete change of clothes and a warm hat
- A mobile phone, navigation device
- Medicine you might need, i.e. an inhaler for asthma
- A first aid kit with waterproof plasters / tape and bandages (blisters can make paddling very uncomfortable)
- Use waterproof sun block cream and sun hat when the weather dictates it. Wear a warm hat in cold conditions.
- Carry a towline in case a colleague gets tired.
- Carry a throwline in case it is needed for a rescue or tow.

Informing

- Tell a shore based contact how long and where you are going to paddle.
- Inform the coastguard and / or police if you will be away for more than one day and where your vehicle is parked.



During your trip

Start gently

- It is a good idea to do a warm up before getting on the water but even so also start gently and build up your speed gradually. Try to start in more sheltered environments where you do not have to paddle hard to counteract wind or tide.

Stops and resting

- Break your journey into stages and find appropriate landing points to stretch your legs
- Drink regularly and have a drink accessible in the boat
- In colder climates keep stops relatively short in order to avoid getting cold

Be ready to

- Wait and help other paddlers
- Go on shore and call for help
- Finish while you still have energy left to continue paddling

After your trip

- Inform your shore based contact and the coastguard / police (if appropriate) that you have finished your trip and are safely off the water.
- Take off wet gear and put on warm clothes
- Rinse your boat and any equipment used.