

# PADDLE CRAFT GUIDE

KAYAKS | STAND-UP PADDLE BOARDS | SIT-ON-TOPS | WAKA AMA | CANOES

## PADDLE POWER!

TAKE SAFETY INTO  
YOUR OWN HANDS.

Olympic kayak team member Kayla Imrie.



# BOATING SAFETY CODE



**WEAR YOUR LIFEJACKET**



**TAKE TWO WATERPROOF WAYS TO CALL FOR HELP**



**CHECK THE MARINE WEATHER FORECAST**



**AVOID ALCOHOL**



**BE A RESPONSIBLE SKIPPER**

FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
**SAFERBOATING.ORG.NZ**



## PADDLE SAFELY OUT THERE

Hundreds of thousands of New Zealanders go paddling along our coasts and on our lakes and rivers every year.

Nothing compares to the adrenalin rush of being on the water. But things can go wrong. Very wrong! And they do. On average, 20 recreational boaties die each year on New Zealand's waters. Around 10 percent, or an average of two people, are paddlers.

So whether you're a hardcore sea kayaker or you've just started out on a SUP, be prepared. Know your stuff, check your craft, take the right gear, and understand what to do in an emergency. Don't let one of the statistics be you.

FREE APPS & ONLINE ADVICE



SAFERBOATING.ORG.NZ

Safe boating tips.



METSERVICE MARINE APP

Marine forecasts and tide information.



MARINEMATE

MARINEMATE APP

Local bylaws, boat ramps and boating info.

# WATCH YOU DON'T CAPSIZE

Many boating deaths happen when a small craft (under 6m) is swamped or capsizes.

- Remember powerboat wash can capsize small craft.
- Know how to get back into or onto your boat.
- Always wear your lifejacket. Many people don't survive the first few minutes without one, especially in cold water.
- Call for help on your VHF radio (Channel 16) or cell phone and/or trigger your PLB distress beacon.



## KNOW YOUR STUFF

Many Kiwis and visitors paddle out from shore in inflatables or other craft, not even thinking about potential hazards.

Sometimes it's hard to get back when the wind gets up, and the water gets choppy. Tides and currents also make it difficult to stay on-course and prevent capsizing. Make sure you know the environment and how to use your equipment.

- It's safer to paddle with mates. Join a waka ama, kayak, canoe or SUP club.
- Go to [boatingeducation.org.nz](http://boatingeducation.org.nz) for Day Skipper, a Maritime VHF Radio Operator Certificate, and other courses nationwide and online.

- Into waka ama? Search 'Waka Ama Safety Rules' at [maritimenz.govt.nz](http://maritimenz.govt.nz); or go to [wakaama.co.nz](http://wakaama.co.nz)
- For SUP safety and other tips (such as making sure you wear the right safety leash for flat water, fast-flowing or surf): [www.nzsup.org](http://www.nzsup.org)
- Detailed information about sea kayaking safety and techniques can be found at: [www.kask.co.nz](http://www.kask.co.nz)

Follow Safer Boating on Facebook:



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KAYAKING IS THE MOST POPULAR FORM OF RECREATIONAL BOATING IN NEW ZEALAND.\*

\*Recreational Boating Survey 2017

# TOP 3 SURVIVAL TIPS

## 1. CHOOSE A LIFEJACKET WITH A CROTCH STRAP – ESPECIALLY WHEN IT'S ROUGH

Up your odds of surviving an incident by choosing the right lifejacket for the job, making sure it fits, and keeping it securely fastened. Lifejackets with crotch straps are recommended for adventure sport activities like kayaking – especially in rough water.

INSHORE  
LIFEJACKETS



INFLATABLE  
LIFEJACKETS



BUOYANCY  
VESTS



See 'Lifejackets: choosing the right one to wear' at 'Boatsafetyinnz' on youtube.com

## CHECK IT INFLATES, MATE!

Got an inflatable? Check CO<sub>2</sub> cylinders regularly and change them when they reach their use by date.

Search 'Hutchwilco inflatable lifejacket servicing' at youtube.com

## 2. TAKE TWO WATERPROOF WAYS TO CALL FOR HELP

Want to be rescued? It's your call. Stash your lifejacket pocket with your VHF radio, PLB, or cell phone.

- Marine waterproof handheld VHF
- Personal locator beacon (PLB) Recommended for trips of 2km or more from shore. Register it at [beacons.org.nz](http://beacons.org.nz), make sure the battery is within its expiry date, and carry it in your pocket.
- Cell phone in sealed waterproof lanyard bag (Older cells can be used in a bag, but not all smart phones).
- Flares Choose red hand-held flares for high visibility.

**REMEMBER:**  
TAKE TWO FORMS  
OF WATERPROOF  
COMMUNICATION  
DEVICES TO CALL FOR  
HELP IF NEED BE.





### 3. CHECK THE WEATHER

The marine weather forecast is your friend.

Take note of wind speed over water and the size of waves or swell. If on inland waterways and lakes, check the land or mountain weather forecast.

- Download the free MetService Marine App
- Visit [metservice.co.nz](http://metservice.co.nz)



**MetService**

ALL THE  
**MARINE FORECASTS  
AND TIDES**  
– PLUS HEAPS MORE  
IN ONE HANDY APP

SEARCH:  
**'METSERVICE MARINE'**  
IN YOUR APP STORE



## BE SAFE BE SEEN

1. You're responsible for your own safety, your craft and any passenger, so learn how to paddle safely. Remember, in some areas you can be fined for not wearing a lifejacket.
2. Keep a good lookout at all times and never assume you can be seen. Wear bright clothing and make sure your boat is highly visible with safety flags etc.
3. Wear a white head torch between sunset and sunrise so others can see you. Or even better, display an all-round white light.



## WHAT'S THE PLAN, STAN?

Make sure someone on shore knows what you're up to. Tell a mate or family member where you're leaving from, where you're going, how many people you're with and when you think you'll be back. Tell them what to do if you don't return – call the Police on 111 or \*500 for the Coastguard NZ – and let them know if you're running late.

# KNOW YOUR LIMITS

It's easy to get carried away on the water so stick to your limits. And remember: The further you go the greater the risk, so the more prep you need to do.



## BEGINNERS

limit yourself to flat sheltered waters with light winds

< 11 KNOTS OR  
19KM/HOUR



## PADDLERS WITH SOME SKILLS

limit yourself to moderate conditions with winds

<17 KNOTS OR  
29KM/HOUR AND  
WAVES < 0.5 METRES



## EXPERIENCED PADDLERS

limit yourself to fresh conditions

< 25 KNOTS

# ALL PADDLERS

- If possible, stay close to the shore line.
- If with mates, paddle in tight formation.
- When possible paddle outside the channel – avoid the centre of the channel or river.
- Keep to the right.
- Take care when entering or crossing channels or shipping lanes.
- Keep clear of larger vessels (pass behind them, not in front).
- Aim to paddle against the wind, current or tide so you won't wear yourself out on your return.

# IF IN DOUBT, DON'T GO OUT!



STAND-UP PADDLE BOARDERS ARE LESS LIKELY THAN OTHER PADDLERS TO WEAR A LIFEJACKET. (58% VS 75% OF KAYAKERS), OR CARRY ANY KIND OF SAFETY DEVICE.\*

\*Recreational Boating Survey 2017

# CHECK YOUR CRAFT AND PREP YOUR GEAR

## PADDLE CRAFT

Check your craft for leaks, damage or dodgy cables/ fasteners and anything else that could invite trouble.

## LIFEJACKETS

Check your lifejacket, especially an inflatable, is undamaged and fits. Know how to adjust the fit.

## COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT

Take two – a hand held VHF radio, a personal locator beacon (PLB) or a cell phone in a waterproof lanyard bag. Carry them on you or stash them in your lifejacket pocket.

## PADDLE

Tether your paddle so you don't lose it if you capsize. Know how to get back on and right your paddle craft.

## WETSUIT

Dress for the water temp, not air temp. Cold water shocks and hypothermia can kill.

## WATERPROOF TORCH

Show a bright light from (and during) sunset to sunrise. Check your battery.

## LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Talk to locals about the specific tides, currents and hazards. Check MarineMate for your local bylaws (search 'Marine Mate' in your app store).

## PLENTY OF FOOD, DRINK AND SUNSCREEN

Don't get caught short.

## NEW TO PADDLING?

See: Safety in Kayaks & Canoes at [Boatsafetyinnz on youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Boatsafetyinnz)



THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED 450,000 PADDLERS\* IN NEW ZEALAND.

\*Recreational Boating Survey 2017

# COLD WATER KILLS

## WEARING THE RIGHT GEAR – A WETSUIT WITH YOUR LIFEJACKET – COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE.

Cold water immersion can kill in as little as 30-40 minutes – especially in New Zealand's alpine lakes. It may look sunny, but the lakes are often fed with melted snow from mountains. At sea you also survive longer on an upturned hull than in the water.

If your vessel has sunk or drifted away, huddle to conserve heat and energy.



Hold your arms tight against your chest.

Press your thighs together.

Raise your knees.

# MAYDAY! WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY



1. MAKE SURE YOUR LIFEJACKET IS FASTENED
2. SET OFF YOUR PLB
3. CALL A MAYDAY ON YOUR HAND-HELD VHF RADIO – ON CHANNEL 16
4. CALL THE POLICE ON 111 (ALWAYS CARRY YOUR CELLPHONE IN A WATERPROOF BAG)

Stay with your craft – it's much easier to spot in the water than you are. Never attempt to swim to shore unless you're close and wearing a lifejacket. If you can, keep warm by climbing onto your craft.

Master the Mayday: Search 'Radio a MAYDAY' at [maritimenz.govt.nz](http://maritimenz.govt.nz) or get a Maritime VHF Radio Operator Certificate online through [boatingeducation.org.nz](http://boatingeducation.org.nz)

## REPORT ALL ACCIDENTS

Reporting accidents allows lessons to be shared with the boating community.

You can report accidents online, within 48 hours, at [maritimenz.govt.nz/report-online](http://maritimenz.govt.nz/report-online)



**LESS THAN HALF OF ALL PADDLERS CHECK THE WEATHER\* BEFORE GOING ON THE WATER.**

\*Recreational Boating Survey 2017

# GO FOR GOLD ON THE WATER

Olympic kayaker Kayla Imrie knows a thing or two about staying safe on the water. As a swimmer, surf lifesaver, former Ironwoman champion, and current member of NZ's Olympic kayaking team, Kayla urges paddlers to 'go for gold'. But she also says: "When you're out there, anything can happen. Make sure you know what you're doing and that you're always prepared - then nothing should hold you back".