

PADDLE SMART

**WEAR A
LIFEJACKET**



**CARRY
COMMUNICATION**



**KEEP A GOOD
LOOKOUT**



**BE SEEN,
BE SAFE**



**CHECK THE
WEATHER**



**STAY ATTACHED
PADDLE /LEASH**



**KEEP CLEAR
OR TO THE RIGHT
OF VESSELS**



**LET SOMEONE
KNOW BEFORE
YOU GO**

L.S.K.B.Y.G.

**KNOW YOUR
LIMITS**



**MARITIME
SAFETY
VICTORIA**



PADDLE SAFE BY FOLLOWING THESE SIMPLE STEPS



WEAR A LIFEJACKET

Being safe on the water starts with always wearing your lifejacket. A properly fitted lifejacket feels snug and comfortable to wear. Find one that suits you and your needs.



BE SEEN, BE SAFE

Paddle craft sit low to the water and can be difficult for other boats to see. Make yourself visible by wearing bright clothes and using fluorescent paint on your paddle. Consider fitting a flag to your kayak, and use a bright all-round light at night.



STAY ATTACHED PADDLE/LEASH

Stay attached - using a paddle leash will help prevent you being separated from your paddle if you capsize. If you do end up in the water, stay with your craft as it will be easier for rescuers to see you.



KEEP A GOOD LOOKOUT

Keep watch as to what is ahead, behind and to either side of you. Look out for other vessels, swimmers and potential danger at all times.



CARRY COMMUNICATION

You may need to communicate in an emergency or advise someone of a change of plan. Your means of communication can range from a mobile phone, flares or a distress beacon.

Mobile Telephone: Carry a mobile phone in a waterproof bag. In an emergency you can dial 000.

Marine Radio: Marine radios are an important way of notifying others in an emergency. They can also be used to stay updated on the latest weather conditions.

- Use VHF channel 16 to listen out for weather broadcasts.
- Know the procedures and keep your message clear.
- In an emergency use VHF channel 16 or on 27MHz use channel 88.

Distress beacons: A registered 406 MHz distress beacon with GPS is your best chance of being rescued.

- In an emergency, activate your beacon to alert search and rescue services.
- For the best chances, choose a beacon with GPS, deploy it correctly, and look after it by storing it safely and keeping your batteries in date.

Flares: Ensure your flares are in date and only activate when you believe that you will be seen.



KEEP CLEAR OR TO THE RIGHT OF VESSELS

Stay clear of large vessels and keep out of shipping channels. Learn the right of way rules. You must always navigate on the right (starboard) side of a river or channel.



LET SOMEONE KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Let someone know before you go and tell them where you are going, your departure point and when you intend to return. If you change your plans, let them know.



CHECK THE WEATHER

Take note of these five vital checks when planning your boating trip:

- Warnings current for your boating area
- Weather conditions affecting safe navigation and comfort
- Wind conditions
- Wave conditions
- Tide times

Be prepared to defer your plans until another day if the winds are too strong and the waves are too big.

Check the weather at bom.gov.au/marine



KNOW YOUR LIMITS

Paddle within your limits - and that includes your craft, your experience, the conditions on the day and your level of skills. Be realistic about your fitness and capabilities and save strength for the return journey.

GET THE SKILLS

Capsize and self-rescue

- Learn how to avoid ending up in the water by using support and bracing techniques.
- Learn how to use a paddle float and stirrup.
- For decked kayaks the Eskimo roll is the best and fastest self-rescue.

These skills must be practised before they are really needed.

Assisted rescue

Using another craft to steady, empty and re-enter an upturned craft is much easier than doing it alone. A second craft can also tow you and your overturned craft to safety.

A 15 metre length of rope is useful for this.

Join a club or enrol in a course to gain expert instruction before you start, and to guide you until your skills develop.

IDENTIFY YOUR VESSEL

Put a name or number on your craft which can identify you. Your car registration or telephone number will help emergency services find you.



For more information visit
transportsafety.vic.gov.au