

Gear & Paddler's Checklist

The following is a list of the essential items you should carry with you on any paddling trip. Check things off to be sure you don't forget anything.

- Spare paddle
- Whistle and another sound signaling device (little air horn)
- Bilge pump and sponge
- Self rescue gear (paddle float, sling, tow rope)
- Compass and chart of the area you are paddling in
- VHF Radio and/or cell phone
- Tow rope or throw bag
- Knife
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Hat
- Spare dry clothing
- Lights and signaling devices
- Repair kit and duct tape
- First aid kit and matches
- Water and food
- Extra water and food
- Dry bags

As a paddler please keep the following checklist in mind when heading out on any trip.

- Always wear a properly fitted PFD (lifejacket)
- Be comfortable in the water, know how to swim (can't swim? Take a lesson!)
- File a float plan (where and when you are leaving, where and when you are returning, file this with family, friends or the authorities in your area)
- Always dress for immersion in the water (dry suits, wetsuits, etc.)
- Always wear appropriate clothing and footwear (no cotton)
- Always check your boats flotation before you depart, check float bags and/or hatch covers to be sure they are functioning
- Paddle with a group
- Know how to rescue yourself and others if there is a capsized
- Always paddle within your limits and skill level
- Know and follow all local, state and federal laws
- Take a lesson