



Rescue and Re-entry Preparation

You are about the practice how to help yourself and others following a capsize.

You will need:

1: **Kayak**

Preferably an open cockpit K1 but any single kayak used in club TT's would be OK.

Kayaks should be prepared with additional buoyancy front and rear so they float flat (ask Tony if you need additional buoyancy material).

Kayak should definitely have some deck-to-hull flotation material behind the cockpit to support a paddler's weight on the back deck.

Please ensure that no decomposing foam material especially eps (styrofoam) will leave your boat...if so, it is time to replace it with a better product.

2: **Surf/Ocean racing ski**

Must have a leg leash fitted

Or 1&2: **BOTH!**

3: Suitable clothing/hat and sunscreen for sun protection

4: Footwear/booties if that is your normal paddling attire

5: Lifejacket (aka PFD)

6: to check out the video links below for some useful visuals.

7: to read all the session details to get a feel for what will happen on the day.

6: Patience and a good sense of humour!



Rescue and Re-entry Training

When can capsize happen?

Usually when conditions exceed those we are used to, comfortable with or competent in paddling, or something unexpected happens.

We have usually capsized because conditions are worse than normal:

- Higher waves/swell/wind direction
- More wind strength
- Less energy/tired
- Colder air temperatures
- Colder water temperatures
- Other factors (impact with/by objects, boat wash)
- Inappropriate craft selection for ability/conditions

What are the personal dangers resulting?

- Ingest water/drowning
- Hypothermia
- Impact from other craft
- Injury preventing self-rescue
- Exhaustion

How to avoid a bad outcome:

- Wear appropriate clothing
- Wear a bright coloured lifejacket
- Have several methods of alerting others incl
 - Whistle
 - Smoke flare
 - Mobile phone/radio
 - Tracking device
 - Paddle wave (see below)
- Paddle with buddies
- Check weather forecast, particularly wind and current/tide direction
- Ensure someone on land knows your plans

You have capsized, so what do you do?

Safety Step 1: Ensure that you are safe

- You are not tangled up in any ropes/spray-skirts/paddle or leg leashes
- You are not likely to be impacted by another floating object/boat/rocks
- Your lifejacket is supporting you as it should, and not riding up your chest
- If you are in a double, is your partner OK?
- You are upwind or upstream of your craft?

- Are you floating on your back with your legs pointing downwind/downstream?

Safety Step 2: Check your craft and equipment.

- Is your craft floating right side up? If not, right it immediately.
- Is it in one piece?
- If you have a leg-rope is it still attached?
- Have you still got your paddle in your hand?

Safety Step 3: Decide on the method of rescue.

This means choosing either self-rescue, assisted rescue or evacuation rescue.

- **Self rescue:** The process of either re-entering your craft without assistance or using your own craft to make your way to a place you can re-enter.
- **Assisted Rescue:** The process of re-entering your craft with the assistance of another person or craft (your buddy or possibly a coach boat/safety boat)
- **Evacuation rescue:** Making your way to safety from the capsize area via another craft, whether it is on a safety boat or holding /climbing onto another craft (usually your buddy's).
- ***Remember with a buddy system, **the rescuer buddy issues the instructions*****

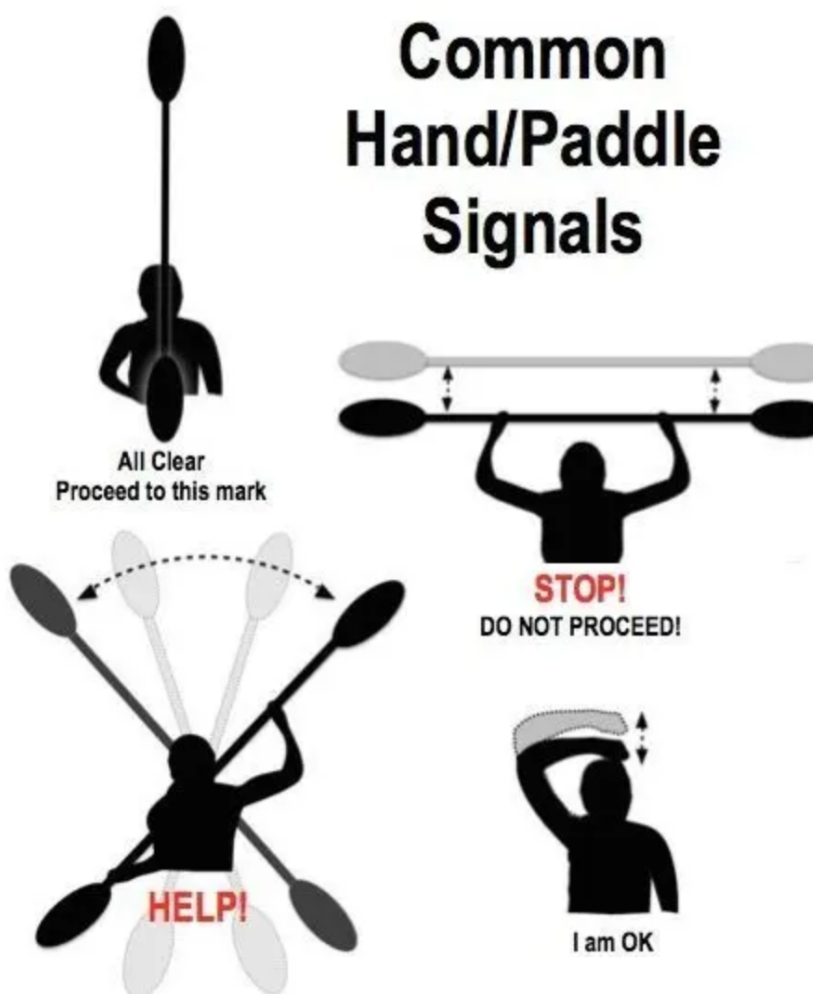


Illustration courtesy of Paddle.com

Ski Rescue

Skilldrill 1: Basic self-rescue

- Tip out of your boat on the downwind side
- Check you are safe (Safety Step 1, page 2)
- Check your equipment (Safety Step 2, page 3) especially the routing of your leg leash
- Position yourself on the upwind side by swimming under your boat if necessary
- If your leg-leash is wrapped under your craft, roll your craft over till your leash is on the correct side
- Wave your paddle to alert rescuers and other watercraft. If no assistance is available...
- make sure there are no obstructions on the rear deck
- go to the rear of your ski and drag yourself forward over the rear deck till you are close to the cockpit
- Dog paddle the craft to a place you can re-enter

Skilldrill 2: Basic seal style self-remount (mastering this is mandatory!)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jxk126VDtNM>

- Tip out of your boat on the downwind side
- Check you are safe (Step 1)
- Check your equipment (Step 2) especially the routing of your leg leash.
- Position yourself on the upwind side by swimming under your craft
- If your leg-leash is wrapped under your craft, roll your craft over till your leash is on the correct side
- Hold your paddle over the craft on the far side, or across your craft over the footwell (whatever you find easier).
- Holding each side of the bucket, seal-hop on your belly across the hump (between bucket and footwell) till your bellybutton is directly over the hump.
- Your head and your toes should be touching the water.
- Half-roll toward the rear of the craft till your bum is in the bucket, sitting up and as close to forward as possible. Try this move several times...from prone to sitting and back again. (Off the water, a park bench is ideal...)
- Use your paddle to assist you positioning yourself correctly, getting the feet in the bucket and paddle forward.

Skilldrill 3: Assisted rescue

You will select a buddy to work with and practice

- One of your pair will capsize. Go through the check steps as per skilldrill 1
- The capsized paddler will follow the procedure to position themselves on the upwind side, leg-leash positioned appropriately till their buddy has arrived to help.
- The buddy paddler will paddle alongside the capsized paddler on the downwind side and hold the ski firmly
- The capsized paddler will hold their paddle on the upwind side on this occasion
- Using the seal style method, the capsized paddler will straddle both craft so their torso is over their craft and their head is over the rescuers craft.

- Ensure hands and fingers don't get caught between the two craft during the rescue procedure
- Your buddy will check that you are OK, and also check you regularly while you paddle to safety.
- Reverse roles and repeat

Skilldrill 4: Evacuation rescue

You will select a buddy to work with and practice

- One of your pair will capsize. Go through the check steps as per skilldrill 1
- The capsized paddler will follow the procedure to position themselves on the upwind side, leg-leash positioned appropriately till their buddy has arrived to help.
- The capsized paddler will unclip their leash
- The buddy paddler will paddle alongside the capsized paddler and assist them to climb onto the back of the buddy's ski, lying flat to assist balance. Take care with fragile decks.
- Your buddy will check regularly that you are OK while they paddle you to safety.
- Reverse roles and repeat

Skilldrill 5: Basic straddle style self-remount

- Tip out of your boat on the downwind side
- Check you are safe (Step 1)
- Check your equipment (Step 2) especially the routing of your leg leash.
- Position yourself on the upwind side by swimming under your craft
- If your leg-leash is wrapped under your craft, roll your craft over till your leash is on the correct side
- Straddle-mount your craft from the rear, lying flat as you move toward the bucket, with paddle in hand.
- When over the bucket, sit up and back into the bucket while using the paddle for support
- Use your paddle to assist positioning yourself correctly in the bucket, and paddle forward.

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Kayak Rescue

Skilldrill 1: Basic self-rescue

- Tip out of your boat on the downwind/downstream side
- Check you are safe (Safety Step 1, page 2)
- Check your equipment (Safety Step 2, page 3)
- Position yourself on the upwind side
- Wave your paddle to alert rescuers and other watercraft
- If no-one sees your distress signal, place your paddle in the cockpit, (so the paddle is under the rear deck if possible)
- make sure there are no obstructions on the rear deck such as number boards
- go to the rear of your kayak and drag yourself forward over the rear deck till you can easily reach the cockpit. Legs can dangle in the water
- Dog paddle the craft to a place you can re-enter

Skilldrill 2: Evacuation rescue

You will select a buddy to work with

- Practice lifting your feet out of your kayak one at a time and dangle them in the water
- One of your pair will capsize. Go through the check steps, then place your paddle in the cockpit as per skilldrill 1
- Your buddy will paddle alongside your empty kayak (nose to nose) and place one leg in that cockpit
- You will go to the rear of your buddy's kayak and hold on
- Your buddy will paddle both kayaks back to shore
- Your buddy will check regularly that you are OK
- Reverse roles and repeat

Skilldrill 3a: Over boat assisted rescue

- As a pair, one paddler will tip out. Go through the safety steps
- Request assistance from your buddy.
- Buddy will position their kayak nose to tail on the opposite side (downwind side) to you
- Place paddle in the water within easy reach of buddy
- Buddy will hold cockpit firmly, making sure fingers are clear of pinch-points.
- Paddler will leap out of the water and seal-hop over the cockpit of their craft, bellybutton directly over the seat. It is a big hop! The paddler should then be well balanced over their boat, nose and feet both touching the water.
- Holding each side of the coaming to keep the craft flat, twist into the seat side-saddle style.
- Spin to face the front, get legs in the boat and collect paddle from buddy
- Swap paddlers and repeat

OR:

Skilldrill 3b: Between boats assisted rescue

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILR2RvDFEME>

- As a pair, one paddler will tip out. Go through the safety steps
- Request assistance from your buddy.
- Buddy will position their kayak nose to tail on the opposite side (downwind side) to you
- Give your paddle to your buddy
- Buddy will hold cockpit firmly, making sure fingers are clear of pinch-points.
- Paddler will swim between the boats, and holding on to the centreline parts of each cockpit, lay on your back with feet pointing towards buddy.
- Place feet inside cockpit from horizontal position and arch pelvis up while pushing down on coamings.
- Slide into boat and collect paddle from buddy
- Swap paddlers and repeat

Skilldrill 4: Emptying the boat

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKH-OnQ0918>

- Buddies paddle out, one tips in and the craft half fills with water.
- Go through safety steps
- Buddy positions themselves at 90 degrees to the capsized boat at its nose (T shape)
- Buddy asks for capsized paddlers paddle.
- Buddy instructs capsized paddler to swim to the back of the capsized boat and hold it straight.
- Buddy pushes the nose of the capsized boat down to allow water to go to the nose of the boat. The capsized boat will provide plenty of stability for this.
- The buddy will then lift the nose of the other boat and at the same time both paddlers flip it to empty it with the help of the capsized paddler pushing down on the back of the boat.
- It is not necessary to completely empty the boat. Just get enough water out to make it paddleable.
- Proceed with an assisted rescue re-entry.

Skilldrill 5: Self rescue diploma!

- Paddle to a deep enough area.
- Abandon your craft

Either:

- Swim around to the back of your craft, paddle in hand
- Drag yourself up the back of the boat all the way to the cockpit, keeping your legs (or knees) in the water and your body as low as possible. You might be able to leave your paddle in the water next to you or pop it in the cockpit first.
- Keep moving forward over the cockpit (this bit might be uncomfortable) until you can quickly sit up and plonk into the seat, legs out. Then get your legs in. Use your paddle for support if needed. Those with smaller cockpits may find getting the legs in first is easier.

Or:

- Go to the cockpit, and hold onto both sides of the coaming of the boat with paddle on opposite side of boat
 - While pushing down on the coaming evenly, straddle the boat belly down, bellybutton over the seat. A few swim kicks might help. Keep your head down at water level so you end up balanced over the cockpit.
 - Roll over to plonk into the seat sidesaddle, lifting your knees as you roll. You will be facing sideways.
 - Steady yourself with your paddle, and gradually rotate facing forward so you can get your legs into the cockpit.
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