

Charles River Canoe & Kayak wants you to have a safe and fun paddleboard excursion. However, without appropriate experience and judgment, things can go wrong. Here's our top ten tips for SUPers!

1. Wear a Life Jacket

One of the easiest ways to minimize your chance of drowning is to wear a lifejacket. In the State of Massachusetts, 85% of the victims who died in boating accidents in the last 10 years were not wearing lifejackets. You must wear a Coast Guard Approved lifejacket for the duration of your outing.

2. Plan on Getting Wet

If you are stand-up paddleboarding you should always be dressed with the expectation of going in the water! Even when the air temperature is warm, water temperatures in New England can be cold enough to rapidly bring on hypothermia. Avoid wearing cotton clothes, and wear a wetsuit or drysuit when the water temperature is below 60 degrees.

3. Wear a Leash

If you find yourself in the water, a leash is the easiest way to make sure you will always be able to get back to your board. A seemingly light wind can carry a board away from you faster than you can swim after it. Also, when in the surf zone, an unleashed board is a major hazard to other surfers and swimmers.

4. Know How to Get Back on Your Board

If you have not practiced climbing back onto a board, do this before you paddle. It can be surprisingly difficult if you are a tired and cold.

5. Know the Hazards of Where You're Paddling

Is there boat traffic? Will it be windy? Are there any tidal currents that you need to plan for, including strong tidal currents that you can't paddle against? Will there be waves? What is the marine weather for today? An understanding of the ocean environment is critical for your enjoyment and safety, so take classes with experienced guides and don't venture into an area without researching it first.

10 Things To Know Before You SUP

6. Have a Signaling Device

Three long whistle blasts is a universal signal for help/emergency. Having a cell phone with you (in a waterproof case attached to you or your board) is also never a bad idea.

7. Wear Sunscreen and Stay Hydrated

There's not a lot of shade on the water, so protect yourself by wearing sunscreen and drinking plenty of water. A water bladder attached to your board is a great way to carry enough water for a summer's day. Also, avoid drugs and alcohol while paddling — they impair your balance, judgment, and make it harder to stay hydrated.

8. Let Someone Know Where You're Going

Before paddling it is always a good idea to let someone know where you are going to be paddling and how long you plan on being out. Be sure to check in with them when you're done!

9. Paddling Alone Increases your Risk

Paddling with others can be fun but it also is safer than paddling alone. If something does go wrong, you will be able to help each other.

10. Take a Lesson with Us!

Taking a lesson with one of our expert instructors will help you to have a fun SUP experience and also to better understand the risks associated with the sport. Visit our Paddling School web page for details.

Visit PaddleBoston.com/resources/links.php for weather info!



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