



## What to bring on a sea kayaking trip

### Kit

Sea kayak (buoyant, watertight with functioning components)  
 Sea Paddle  
 Spray deck  
 Buoyancy aid (fits well and appropriate for weight)  
 Kayaking helmet; when there is a high risk of impact with hard objects, such as rocks, reefs or other structures. This includes areas like shallow or fast moving water (eg: surfing, rock hopping, rescue practise)

### Personal Clothing

Windproof/waterproof jacket/cag  
 Trousers - Waterproof or drysuit trousers. Shorts or something warm and quick drying (if you don't mind wet legs) or in warmer weather  
 Footwear – wellies, water shoes, old trainers with a good grip for walking over rocks/seaweed  
 Wicking layers – base, mid etc., fleece with extra layers in winter and for stops  
 Warm hat/sun hat (as appropriate)  
 Wetsuit (optional) – not really needed unless you want to keep falling in (rescue practice)  
 Drysuit and thermal undergarments are optional but recommended if going away from shore, winter trips and, generally, in case of immersion on any trip  
 Waterproof/neoprene gloves or pogies  
 Complete change of clothes in dry bag in boat

### Sundry

Hot drink  
 Water  
 Snack to eat on the move (eg. flapjack, chocolate bar, banana)  
 Lunch for longer meets, especially over lunch time  
 Lip salve  
 Suncream (even in early spring and autumn)  
 Midge repellent/hood  
 Personal medication, if required  
 Small waterproof box or bag for keys/wallet etc.  
 A whistle for attracting attention

### Group Kit

The minimum kit required in a group is listed below. Consider adding these to your own kit as soon as you can and as you begin to progress towards more challenging paddles.

<b>EMERGENCY SIGNALLING * = at least one of each per group</b>			
* PLB (or other approved marine satellite tracker & emergency beacon) *		* VHF Radio *	
* Mobile Phone *		* Flashlight *	
* Flares *			
<b>GENERAL SAFETY * = at least one of each per group</b>			
* Group Shelter *		Foil Blanket	
* First Aid Kit *		Bivvi Bag	
* Repair Kit *		Sponge	
* Bilge Pump *		Hand Bailer	

* Tow Line *		*Emergency Food*	
Short Tow		*Split Paddles*	
* Knife *		*Maps/Charts*	
* Spare Clothing*		Paddle Float	
* Compass *			

## GRADED PADDLES

The grading of sea kayak trips is important; it helps paddlers choose appropriate trips based on their experience, it provides a framework for the trip co-ordinator, and the collaborative/peer group, to plan and manage risks, and it supports the growth of paddlers' abilities in a safe and stimulating environment. While clubs may adopt different grading systems (numerical, traffic light, descriptive) the goal, and intention, is always the same.

**Introduction to sea kayaking** – When it can, the Nevis Canoe Club will offer introductory sessions. These sessions are suitable for incoming members with relatively little, or no sea paddling, experience. This will include the opportunity to practice “wet exiting” (capsize drill) and re-entry and will increase confidence to go out on graded paddles.

**Grade A Paddle:** is a club trip suitable for people new to sea kayaking and those who prefer calmer conditions, manageable distances and a more, gentle pace. As a general guideline, a Grade A paddle is in sheltered water and does not exceed 20 km (12 miles) per day in a maximum of Force 2/3 conditions. Ideally, paddlers should have practised “wet exits” before coming out on a trip but, if not, this must be done at their earliest opportunity. Please ask other club members with support for this, if required.

**Grade B Paddle:** is in more challenging waters and may include tidal streams, exposed headlands, and open crossings between islands. Participants should be capable of paddling 25 km (16 miles) per day in Force 4 conditions. *(This would sometimes apply to local evening, part day and all day paddles and weekend trips which are not excessively exposed, hugely subject to weather conditions on the day.)*

**Grade C Paddle:** participants should be capable of paddling in more difficult conditions than Grade B for a longer time. *(This may apply to more adventurous day and weekend paddles and longer trips where exposure or duration makes the conditions very likely to change. It may encompass ANY of the above trip types, where weather and sea conditions are more challenging on the day.)*

### Useful sites for checking the weather and tides:

Met Office inshore forecast; updated every 6 hours:

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/specialist-forecasts/coast-and-sea/inshore-waters-forecast>

<https://www.xcweather.co.uk> – usually pretty accurate

<https://www.yr.no> – Norwegian weather forecast

<https://myweather2.com> – Marine weather information including forecast wind speed and gust, wave and swell heights, precipitation, weather charts and more

Tides; free 6 day tide tables for the port of your choice:

<https://easytide.ukho.gov.uk/EasyTide/EasyTide/SelectPort.aspx>

Tides for whole year for major ports:

<http://tides.mobilegeographics.com/>

**If you are a beginner, always go with an experienced paddler.  
Make it a priority to familiarize yourself with rescue techniques; rescue practice is part of the club calendar.**