

# Parts of a Kayak

Most parts are common to all boats and ships. A few are unique to kayaks or to a specific type of kayak. C1 canoes have cockpits and sprayskirts like kayaks. Whitewater canoeists sit on their knees and all kayakers sit low in a seat near the bottom. Except for the paddle, it is difficult to see the difference. Canoeists use a single blade and rarely switch hands. Kayakers use a double bladed paddle.

## ***Parts Common to All Boats/Ships:***

Bow – front end

Stern – back end

Deck – top

Hull – bottom, could include sides up to the deck

Keel – centerline from bow to stern, none existent on most whitewater kayaks

Chine – in the water sharp/soft edge on both sides of the hull, may not exist on a rounded hull

## ***Parts Common to All Kayaks:***

Foot Pegs/Foot Rests/Peddles – should be adjustable, secure place to rest feet

Cockpit – opening for paddler

Cockpit combing/edging/rim – attachment point for sprayskirt

Grab Handles – bow and stern handles

Float Bags – inflatable bags use to displace water and provide floatation

Seat – place for paddler's butt

Seat Back – provides lower back support and contributes to good fit

## ***Parts Common to Sea Kayaks and some Recreational Kayaks:***

Sealed Hatches – water-tight compartments in bow and/or stern for storage and floatation

Deck Rigging – used to attach gear and personal items to deck

Paddle Float Deck Rigging – specific for use with a paddle float sea kayak rescue

Rudder or Skeg – provides additional directional stability, helps in windy conditions

## ***Parts Common to Better Sea Kayaks and a Few Recreational Kayaks:***

Thigh Braces – improve fit and permits rolling and bracing

Hip Pads - improve fit and permits rolling and bracing

## ***Parts Common to Whitewater Kayaks:***

Extraction Points – stronger than normal handles, used for rescue

Center Bracing – helps protect legs if kayak folds

Thigh Braces – improve fit and permits rolling and bracing

Hip Pads - improve fit and permits rolling and bracing

## ***Parts Specific to Recreational Kayaks:***

Oversized Cockpits – prevents good fit, easy to fall out, impossible to roll, safer for some boaters

Revised: January 16, 2013 by Chris Collins