

Important information about safety for the kayak renter

## **Safety guidelines for paddling for the clients of Etelä-Konneveden Luontopalvelut Oy - please read before paddling.**

- \* Renting a kayak requires always at least 18 years of age, previous paddling experience and be able to swim. Children under 18 can rent kayaks only when accompanied by a guardian over 18 or with the guardian's written permission.
- \* Always wear a personal floating device. Remember that the personal floating device is just for floating and requires the user to be able to swim. Note! The type of life vests we use are not suitable for those under 140 cm tall.
- \* Check the condition of the kayak and the equipment before going to the water and that you have taken all the equipment from the rental place: kayak with hatches, deck lines and toggles in the bow and stern; personal floating device; spraydeck; paddle and bailing device (a sponge). The kayaks have a safety sticker: 'Always use a personal floating device, check floating equipment and keep a bailer with you. It increases paddling safety.'
- \* Pack your equipment inside the kayak's cargo facilities so that they cannot move around and the kayak floats as horizontally as possible. Avoid heavy load on the deck.
- \* Dress up the personal floating device and a spraydeck before going to the water. Remember to tighten the sleeves of the vest tight enough and attach the crotch strap. The personal floating device is always worn on the top of other clothes, so it cannot be used for example under a coat.
- \* Renting a kayak requires previous paddling experience or the services of a paddling guide in the beginning. You can ask advice and book yourself a paid initial guidance if necessary by calling us.
- \* Plan your paddling route according to the conditions and your abilities. Do not overestimate your own skills or endurance and do not paddle when tired. Preferably always paddle in a group. If you are paddling alone, always stay in a swimming distance from the shore. At the time of cold water, stay close to the shore.
- \* Equip yourself according to the weather and other conditions. At the time of cold water, always have with you spare clothes in watertight package. Other equipment critical for safety are: cell phone (packed waterproof), water bottle and food, compass and map, white light (headlamp) if you are paddling during dusk or dark, paddle float, thermal blanket and first aid kit, knife, fire starting gear. In addition, sunscreen, sunglasses and headgear are often necessary when being near water. Prefer bright colours in your clothing so that the boaters will see you better. Drink and eat enough, because especially dehydration can happen fast while paddling since the sweating can be difficult.
- \* Be careful with the boat traffic. The paddler is expected to always give way for sail and engine boats coming from left and right. Be careful with the waves left by fast-moving boats. Avoid paddling in marked routes and cross them safely and without hindering the other traffic.
- \* Follow the weather and the weather forecasts and seek shelter on time and come to a shore if the conditions become too difficult. Especially when paddling on large open water, the strengthening of the wind can quickly turn the conditions challenging or life-threatening.
- \* The social pressure of the group may drive you to do something that you do not know properly how to do or do not have endurance for. Tell the others in your group well in advance when you start to get tired or start to feel unsure about your abilities.
- \* Be especially careful when entering and leaving the kayak, the rocks and the shore and the piers are often slippery.

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