

X-SERIES USER GUIDE

16X, 18X and 18X SPORT MODELS

1 JANUARY 2016 VERSION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Congratulations from Epic!

The Epic Kayaks website: www.epickayaks.com

Out on the Water – Do the Comparison!

X-SERIES TOURING KAYAKS – THE 16X, 18X and 18X SPORT MODELS

X-Series Specifications

16X, 18X, 18X Sport

X-Series Cockpit Design

X-Series Adjustable Seat

Operation, Correct Positioning and Maintenance

X-Series Footboard System

Operation, Correct Positioning and Maintenance

X-Series Backband

Operation and Maintenance

Benefits of a Rudder

Track Master™ Steering System

Operation, Correct Positioning and Maintenance

X-Series Storage Hatches

Operation and Maintenance

X-Series Deck Rigging

Maintenance

Overall Kayak Care

Take Special Care of Your Ultra Layup!

Storing Your Kayak

Transporting Your Kayak

Recommended Gear and Accessories

Warranty Terms

Returns (Warranty/Repairs)

PHOTOS

Photo 1. X-Series -- to adjust seat, pull up on release button

Photo 2. X-Series -- front of seat, release button and cockpit rail

Photo 3. X-Series -- knees/legs comfortably centered in cockpit

Photo 4. X-Series -- knees/legs locked under integrated thigh braces in cockpit

Photo 5. X-Series -- to adjust footboard, grasp and pull down on footboard cord to release pins

Photo 6. X-Series – straps and buckles for adjusting backband

Photo 7. X-Series – vertical height pin and three adjustment holes on backband

Photo 8. X-Series -- Track Master™ rudder

Photo 9. X-Series spreader bar and pedal lines

Photo 10. X-Series -- rudder removal – loosening 13 mm bolt

Photo 11. X-Series -- one metal cam lever flipped up and Velcro®/strap loosened

Photo 12. X-Series -- levers open, Velcro®/straps loosened, hatch cover removed



X-SERIES USER GUIDE

www.epickayaks.com



Congratulations on your purchase of an Epic Kayak! Whether you're a beginning recreational paddler or a highly competitive racer, your new Epic kayak will improve your paddling experience. After enjoying the benefits of lightweight, well-designed racing equipment, it was a shock to us the first time we paddled with heavy, unrefined touring kayaks and paddles. We thought, "Why can't modern technology be used to build better touring equipment?" We've paddled the equivalent of six times around the world with 70 years combined experience in all water conditions. Our passion for paddling and knowledge of high-performance racing technology is contained in every Epic-designed kayak and paddle. Our models are optimized for ease of handling, efficiency in the water, and to be extremely lightweight. We hope you enjoy our products as much as we do. See you on the water!

Greg Barton



2 X Olympic Gold Medalist

www.epickayaks.com

The Epic Kayaks website ensures you have convenient access to the latest paddling news and articles, tips, a convenient calendar of events, user guides and product information -- all at your fingertips! And/or choose to subscribe to our monthly Epic e-newsletter and receive concise bulleted updates on a wide array of paddlesports happenings around the world.

Ease of navigation and content layout are key elements of the Epic website. We hope you enjoy the website as much as we do, and that it helps answer any questions you have regarding Epic and the exciting world of paddlesports. Feel free to contact us with any comments or questions at info@epickayaks.com.

Out on the Water – Do the Comparison!

You probably know all about Epic's superior design features – after all, you decided to buy one! However, on the dock, at the beach, or while you're out on the water, note and compare these design features in your new Epic kayak!

1. **Full Waterline Length.** Nearly the full length of an Epic kayak is in the water. Our experience and testing have shown that long overhanging bows offer no benefit. A full-length waterline provides maximum efficiency going forward, and creates more volume in the bow for better rough water performance.
2. **Swede Form Shape.** A Swede form kayak is wider behind the seat for better stability, and narrower in the bow for a smooth entry into the water and a close efficient stroke.
3. **Advanced Rocker Profile.** The rocker in Epic kayaks has been optimized to provide superb handling in all water conditions.
4. **Front Deck Cutaways.** Epic's cutaway front deck design allows a close, efficient catch at the start of every stroke.
5. **Integrated Thigh Braces.** The thigh braces on an Epic kayak are molded under the deck of the cockpit. Paddlers can lock their knees under the thigh braces for rough water performance, or keep their knees centered in the middle of the cockpit to incorporate leg movement for more efficiency and power.
6. **Lightweight, High Tech Materials.** Epic kayaks are made with strong, durable, lightweight materials including carbon fiber, aramid fabric, fiberglass and a specially formulated epoxy resin which is stronger and tougher than polyester or vinyl ester resin. Epic's sandwich core construction process with these materials ensures our kayaks are noticeably lighter than any of the competition.
7. **Vacuum Infusion with Heat Cure.** Epoxy resin is infused into our kayaks under full vacuum. This eliminates voids and produces Epic's signature high strength and lightweight standards. After infusion, our boats are post-cured at elevated temperatures to create the strongest and lightest kayaks on the market.

X-SERIES TOURING KAYAKS – THE 16X, 18X AND 18X SPORT MODELS

X-Series Specifications

16X

Length: 16'0" (4.88 m), Width: 23" (58.4 cm)

Weights: Performance – 40 lbs/18.2 kg; Ultra – 34 lbs/15.5 kg

18X

Length: 18'0" (5.49 m), Width: 22" (55.9 cm)

Weights: Performance – 41 lbs/18.6 kg; Ultra – 35 lbs/16 kg

18X Sport

Length: 18'0" (5.49 m), Width: 22" (55.9 cm)

Weights: Performance – 42 lbs/19.1 kg; Ultra – 36 lbs/16.4 kg

Note: the 18X Sport has $\frac{3}{4}$ " wider waterline than the 18X

X-Series Cockpit Design

An important part of paddling a kayak is feeling a connection to the boat. A proper fit will allow you to use your body for propulsion, maneuvering, balance and general control.

To facilitate a better fit, many manufacturers design thigh braces in the cockpit of their kayaks. These thigh braces usually jut like wings from the inside of the cockpit ring, forward of the thighs, allowing the kayaker to lock their legs into the boat, providing a strong connection. This style of thigh brace satisfies the need for a connection to the boat, but has a major drawback. The paddler's legs remain in a locked position, thereby eliminating the freedom of movement and leg action that is essential for good paddling technique.

Epic Kayaks addresses this problem with a design that lengthens and widens the forward portion of the cockpit -- allowing ease of entry, and allowing more knee room. The extra room provides ample space for leg movement and flexing of the knees. You will be able to rotate through your stroke for much more comfortable and efficient paddling.

The need for a firm connection to your kayak has not been overlooked! The X-Series cockpit design incorporates integrated thigh braces molded under the deck. Molded, rather than "wing-style", thigh braces leave space for freedom of movement and will allow you to easily slide your legs under the thigh braces for a solid connection when you want one -- such as in rough water conditions, rolling, bracing or any other time you desire. Look forward to many safe and comfortable hours in your kayak with Epic's unique and thoughtful cockpit design!

Integrated thigh braces allow paddlers to keep their knees centered in the cockpit, much like an ICF K1 or Surf Ski. Racers and aggressive fitness paddlers require free range of movement and usually paddle with their knees centered and free of obstruction. This allows optimum rotation and transfer of power. Touring paddlers can benefit for the same reasons. The extra comfort and efficient paddling technique possible in the X-series cockpit will make the miles spent in the kayak more enjoyable, without any sacrifice in control.

Your comfortable and efficient paddling position is further enhanced by the X-Series' fully adjustable seat and footboard systems – read on for information on trimming out your new Epic kayak!



X-Series Adjustable Seat

The X-Series seat is fully adjustable and specifically designed to complement and enhance the X-Series touring cockpit. The seat, integrated thigh braces and fully adjustable footboard work in concert to allow you to “trim out” your boat just the way you prefer.

Operation

X-Series seats slide forward and back on an integrated notched cockpit rail, centered in the bottom of your kayak (photo 2). To adjust the seat:

1. Reach into the cockpit and pull up on the release button located at the base (front) of your seat, releasing the locking pin (photo 1).
2. Slide the seat to the desired position.
3. Release the button and the pin will fall back into the rail, locking the seat into position. Apply some light pressure to the seat to ensure that the holes on the rail have captured the pin.



Photo 1. X-Series -- to adjust seat, pull up on release button

Photo 2. X-Series -- front of seat, release button and cockpit rail

Correct Positioning

Actually there is no “correct” setting for the X-Series seat and footboard. They are designed to allow you to find your right fit. Settings vary dramatically with different body types and paddling styles. Here is how we recommend getting started with your seat:

FIRST: With the seat all the way back, and the footboard all the way forward (towards the bow), sit down in your kayak. Look at your knees in relation to the integrated thigh braces at the forward end of the cockpit. Can you slide your legs/knees under the deck and into the thigh braces (photo 4)? If not, move your seat forward until this is possible. For initial large adjustments, we recommend getting out of your kayak to adjust your seat. From the same seat position you should be able to keep your legs centered in the cockpit, with a slight bend at the knees (photo 3), and/or slide them under the thigh braces (photo 4). Adjust your seat on the rail until this is possible.



Photo 3. X-Series -- knees/legs comfortably centered in cockpit

Photo 4. X-Series -- knees/legs locked under integrated thigh braces in cockpit

SECOND: Once the seat is at the desired setting, adjust your footboard. (NOTE: Specific footboard operation is outlined in the next section). Pull the footboard back to your feet until it facilitates both centered and locked (thigh brace) leg-positions – complementing your seat position.

One notch in seat adjustment can make a surprising difference! Find the right position for your body type and paddling style.

Once you have your desired setting, it is unlikely that you will need to adjust it for personal use. Of course, if multiple paddlers use your boat, the versatility and ease of the X-Series system allows each paddler to quickly set up the boat and get on the water.

Maintenance

A fresh water rinse is recommended after paddling to ensure the seat, rail and release pin remain in good working order and that any contaminants are removed. If you have difficulty adjusting your seat, make sure the seat, integrated rail and release pin are free of salt, grit and other contaminants. Do not regularly remove the seat for rinsing. An occasional light application of silicone spray on the notched rail will keep adjustments smooth.

The X-Series Footboard System

The X-Series footboard system is fully adjustable and consists of a one-piece carbon platform that runs from one side of the hull to the other. Two toe pedals on top of the platform operate the integrated Track-Master™ rudder system. This versatile design allows flexible foot placement inside the boat. A centered foot and knee position allows better leg movement and full rotation for a more comfortable, powerful and efficient forward stroke. When paddling through rougher seas or when desiring more connection to your kayak for bracing and rolling, simply slide your feet to the sides of the footboard and lock your legs under the integrated thigh braces.

Before heading out on the water we recommend you custom fit your kayak on land. This process, including first the seat adjustment and then the footboard adjustment, is described in the previous section. Once you have the footboard set to your desired length, it remains in a locked position for paddling. Two pedals on top of the footboard operate the integrated rudder on the back of the kayak, and provide a solid platform to brace your legs while still allowing you to control the rudder with your toes.

Operation

The footboard runs on two rails molded onto either side of the hull. The rails have notched holes that catch pins coming from the back of the footboard. To adjust the settings of your footboard follow this procedure:

1. Reach in the cockpit and place your fingers behind the footboard, leaving your thumb on the front of the footboard. With your fingers feel for a plastic-coated cord running the length of the backside of the footboard. Grasp this cord with your fingers (photo 5).
2. Pull down on the cord behind the footboard with your fingers. The cord controls and releases the pins that anchor the footboard in the rails.
3. While holding the cord down, use the palm of your hand to slide the foot board on the rails forward or back to the desired position.
4. Once the footboard is in position, let go of the cord. This will release the pins back into the rails.
5. Apply pressure to ensure that the holes on the rails capture the pins and lock in the footboard. The rudder lines running through the pedals on top of the footboard are self-adjusting. Simply set the footboard at the desired setting and you're ready to go.



← Toe pedals

← Platform

Photo 5. X-Series -- to adjust footboard, grasp and pull down on footboard cord to release pins

It may take one or two tries to find the optimal position, but the luxury of this system is that you can try as many as you like!

Correct Positioning

To reiterate some general guidelines, we recommend positioning the adjustable seat first, to allow both centering your knees comfortably in the cockpit and sliding your legs under the thigh braces quickly and easily. Once the seat is positioned, adjust the footboard to serve as a solid platform and allow comfortable operation of the toe pedals.

Maintenance

The X-Series footboard is very user friendly and you should not encounter any problems with its operation. Routinely rinsing the footboard and rails after use will keep salt, sand and other contaminants from collecting and hindering the action of the footboard. A light application of silicone spray applied to the notched rails once or twice a season will keep your footboard moving smoothly.

X-Series Backband

The final adjustment, if needed, is the backband. Once the seat and footboard are adjusted, and using good paddling posture, determine whether the backband sits comfortably at your lower back. The fit of the backband is personal preference.

Operation

To loosen or tighten the backband, use the straps, buckles and slack adjusters located at either side of the seat (photo 6). In addition, there are three pin settings for the backband vertical height. The vertical height pin and holes are located on the lower back side of the backband (photo 7). This is a less common adjustment, but one that is easy to do if you have a preference. NOTE: Be careful not to sit directly on the backband when entering and exiting your kayak!

Maintenance

To ensure the best performance and longevity from your backband and associated hardware, a basic fresh water rinse after paddling is recommended, particularly when paddling in salt water.



Photo 6. X-Series – straps and buckles for adjusting backband

Photo 7. X-Series – vertical height pin and three adjustment holes on backband

Benefits of a Rudder

Many sea kayakers think it is "bad" to use a rudder. The concerns usually stated are:

1. A rudder will create more drag and slow the kayak down.
2. The rudder is a crutch, and a good paddler should be able to paddle without one.
3. The pedal system used with a rudder prevents the proper use of legs while paddling.
4. The rudder can potentially break.

Below these claims are examined one by one, followed by a discussion on when a rudder is important.

It is true that a rudder creates drag in the water. However this drag is greatly overestimated by many. A well-designed rudder will add less than 2% total drag to a kayak. In comparison, modifying your stroke to correct or maintain your course results in a 30% to 70% forward power loss! Very minor corrections will result in 5% to 10% less power than a fully efficient forward stroke. Even good paddlers in calm water subconsciously make very minor corrections on many of their strokes. It is actually much more efficient to take a consistent 2% drag increase than

to lose an average of 5% or more forward power on your stroke. All top flatwater paddlers and open-ocean racers use rudders, as they have proven time and time again in competition to be more efficient than a skeg or going without a rudder. Olympic sprint races are held on a straight course in calm water and rudders are optional. However, you would be hard-pressed to find anyone paddling without a rudder in high-level competitions. They know that the fastest way to paddle is to put maximum focus on an efficient forward stroke and let the rudder ensure they are traveling in a straight line. In the same way, engineers have found it much more efficient to use a rudder on an airplane, rather than attempt to turn the engines for directional control. Concern over drag is no reason not to use a rudder.

Rudder use does not indicate whether someone is a “good” paddler. We feel everyone should be comfortable paddling with and without a rudder. Learn to edge your kayak and use your paddle to help steer. These techniques in combination with a rudder give you even more precise control. From a personal preference standpoint, if some prefer paddling without a rudder, that's fine. However, most people will find that a rudder helps them paddle more easily and efficiently in all conditions.

The old style push-pull steering systems prevented the proper use of legs while paddling. An efficient forward stroke involves pushing with the same-side leg at the catch. The old-style pedal systems could cause a paddler to over steer on each stroke. New steering systems have pedals that are independent of the footbrace. Paddlers can push with the main part of the foot, and use the toes for steering. Modern efficient pedal systems allow proper use of leg drive and control of a rudder at the same time.

Finally, yes, a rudder can break. However, a well-designed and maintained rudder system will rarely cause problems. Check your rudder, lines, and pedals from time to time to ensure they are in good working order and replace anything that is worn. This is especially true before a long trip or important race. At Epic, we continue to work to ensure new steering systems will be even more reliable and trouble-free in the future.

While a rudder is a convenience for calm-water paddling, it will definitely change your experience for the better in rough or windy conditions. A good paddler travelling in downwind waves can cut back and forth to find the best wave positions, maximizing surfing gains — while those without a rudder or using a skeg often find themselves fighting a sideways broach. Experienced ocean paddlers, such as Oscar Chalupsky, are masters at this and will leave a rudderless paddler in their wake!

At Epic Kayaks our aim is to use technology to give you a more efficient and enjoyable paddling experience. We challenge the outdated theory held by many that because early Aleutian and Greenland kayaks did not have rudders, there is no place for them on modern kayaks. Early automobiles had hand-crank starters and wooden wheels. You rarely see people driving these today, as technology advances have made driving a car much easier, safer, and more accessible for everybody. Likewise there is nothing wrong with using an efficient rudder to help you enjoy your paddling experience. Most people will find that a rudder will help them paddle more easily and efficiently in all conditions. Ultimately, the choice of whether and when to use a rudder is up to you.

Track Master™ Steering System

The Epic Track Master™ Steering System is a proprietary rudder system and was introduced in conjunction with the new X-Series cockpit and footboard designs. It works in a similar fashion to an airplane steering system. The stern of the boat pivots to redirect water flow along the stern of the kayak. All rudder components and lines are neatly contained within the hull, eliminating the hassles and hazards of exposed rudder systems. To add extra traction, a small fin extends from the bottom of the rudder, adding positive and reliable control. The Track Master™ fin is positioned much farther forward on the hull compared to an overhanging rudder, improving performance in water conditions that may leave the stern and an overhanging rudder high and dry out of the water. The fin is durable, low profile and does not catch weeds, and is suitable for sandy beach launches.

X-Series -- Track Master™ rudder

Operation

Remember that rudders are not meant to serve as the sole means of maneuvering your kayak. The rudder on your kayak is an enhancement, a feature that helps you paddle with ease and efficiency. Instead of thinking of the rudder as a way to turn right and left, think of it as means of staying on course. As you paddle, particularly in open water conditions, there are forces (wind, waves, currents) acting on you and your kayak. A rudder allows you to better counter these forces, without sacrificing your forward stroke. You can keep your focus on paddling and forward progress; manipulating the rudder allows you to stay on course from A to B.

The Track Master™ is operated with two toe pedals located on top of the X-Series footboard. This “gas pedal” type system is extremely easy to operate. To turn the bow of the kayak to the right, simply push the right toe pedal forward. To bring it back to center, push the left pedal forward until the two pedals are back in line vertically (and vice versa to turn the bow to the left.)

While underway the rudder does not lock in a fixed center position. To keep the rudder centered and “neutral” keep equal pressure on the toe pedals, keeping them both in line. This is a very natural and comfortable position, and allows for instant corrections while paddling.

Do not over-correct with your rudder! The Track Master™ is very responsive. While underway, start your corrections in small increments, with small adjustments to the rudder, and then correct accordingly. Pushing the pedals back and forth aggressively will only frustrate you and keep the boat from finding the line you want!

Correct Positioning

The rudder is controlled with rudder lines that run from the footboard back to a spreader bar in the stern. The spreader bar is accessed by removing the small, round rudder access cover at the very stern of the boat. The cover loosens in a counter-clockwise direction.

Inside, the rudder lines are tied off on the spreader bar. Stand at the stern of your kayak and look toward the bow; the right pedal line is on your right, and left pedal line is on your left (photo 9). If you ever notice unevenness in your rudder pedals, or you want to adjust the pedal angles for more comfort, adjustments are made at the spreader bar. **Example:** the right toe pedal is angled too far forward, causing discomfort and keeping the rudder out of line. **Solution:** Have someone hold both pedals in line and even with each other at your desired angle. While they hold the pedals steady, untie the right rudder line from the spreader bar, and pull up the slack so that the tension is even. Make sure that the rudder is perfectly straight, and then retie the rudder line to the spreader

bar. It's that easy! This method can be used anytime you want to make pedal adjustments and/or fine tune the rudder alignment. Be sure to replace the rudder access cover and hand tighten in a clockwise direction.



Photo 9. X-Series -- spreader bar and pedal lines

Maintenance and Removal

Maintaining and working with the Track Master™ rudder is easy. The rudder is low profile, unobtrusive and hassle free. There is little hardware and few moving parts to worry about. Remove the cover and rinse the rudder in fresh water after you paddle. To completely remove the rudder from your boat for maintenance or repair, begin by opening the rudder access cover (loosen in a counter-clockwise direction). On top of the spreader bar is a bolt (13mm) holding the rudder in place. Unfasten this bolt (counter-clockwise) and the rudder will detach, allowing you to remove the whole piece completely (photo 10). Reattach the rudder by fastening the bolt back in place.



Photo 10. X-Series -- rudder removal – loosening 13 mm bolt

X-Series Storage Hatches

Epic X-Series kayaks come equipped with two bulk-headed storage hatches. The bow and stern hatches provide ample protected space for your personal belongings, and provide positive flotation for your kayak (a critical safety feature in the event of capsizing.)

Kayak hatches are designed to be dry and keep water out, but remember that this is a boat...never underestimate water's ability to find its way in!

Before placing gear in your kayak, always pack and properly seal your valuables and other storage items in "dry bags" or boxes/containers specifically designed for this purpose. When sealed in your hatch, this protection will ensure that even minuscule amounts of water will not reach and potentially damage your belongings.

The outside edges of the hatch covers are lined with a rubber seal that fits into the hatch deck contour, preventing water from entering the compartment. Two hatch straps fasten down to create a tight seal and keep each hatch cover firmly in place.

Operation

To release, open 4 hatch levers, open the hatch cover and access the compartment:

1. Flip the 4 plastic levers over the hatch.
2. Reverse the steps to re-fasten the hatch cover in place.

Maintenance

Check the hatches frequently to make sure your levers are in good working order. Rinse them thoroughly with fresh water after paddling, particularly when paddling in salt water. Look inside the hatches periodically, particularly after rolling practice or a rough water session, or when storing your kayak outdoors in the rain. Sponge out any water that may have seeped in. Make sure the hatch cover rubber seals remain sound and intact by keeping them clean and free of salt, sand and contaminants. A light layer of *303 Protectant*, or a similar product, applied with a clean cloth, will help to keep the rubber seals in good condition.

X-Series Deck Rigging

X-Series kayaks are equipped with a full set of deck rigging, including deck bungees and perimeter safety lines. The elastic deck bungees fastened in front of and immediately behind the cockpit are there for safety and to provide extra storage space. Store items for immediate convenient access, or store those things that simply won't fit into the storage hatches. This might include items such as a spare paddle, safety gear, or maps and charts. The bungee located immediately behind the cockpit may be used as part of a paddle float-assisted self-rescue.

The non-elastic perimeter deck cords are an important safety feature. In the event of a wet exit, the perimeter deck lines are the quickest and easiest way to grab your kayak and hold onto it, while you collect yourself and prepare for a self or assisted rescue.

Maintenance

Check all bungee and perimeter safety lines periodically to make sure there are no weaknesses, cuts or abrasions. If you find a faulty line or bungee on your boat, replace it immediately. Give all deck rigging and lines a quick rinse with fresh water after paddling, especially when paddling in salt water, to remove salt, sand and any other materials.

Overall Kayak Care

Your Epic kayak is for the most part "wash and wear." If done on a regular basis, kayak maintenance should be minimal, consume little time and can actually be an enjoyable part of paddling. Routine maintenance not only takes care of your boat, but helps you foster a bond with your kayak. After all, your kayak needs to take care of you as well. It's an important relationship!

Perhaps the simplest (yet important) task is washing your kayak. This should be routine and automatic, especially after every saltwater or beach paddling session. A good rinse with fresh water is all it takes. It is essential to keep the cockpit and its components (seat, foot pedals, etc.) clear of salt and grit to prevent corrosion and jamming of the parts. For a more detailed cleaning, dish washing soap or mild boat cleaners can be used to remove any dirt, grime or stains. We use a product called *Roll-Off*. It is very effective, biodegradable and comes in a convenient spray bottle.

Occasionally look your boat over thoroughly, on the exterior and interior. On the exterior look for any damage or cracks, make sure there are no structural problems. You're bound to find scratches. Sometimes a very fine buffing compound or polishing compound can help remove scratches, but usually it is better to leave them alone. Check the condition of all deck lines and bungee cords as well as handles and hatch straps. Be sure to replace anything worn or frayed, tighten any hardware that is loose, and contact your local dealer for advice on repair work that needs to be done.

Protecting your kayak from harmful UV rays will keep it sound and looking its best for many years. There are a number of products available that work well. *303 Protectant* and *UV Tech* are two examples that may be sprayed on the boat then wiped down with a rag. This simple process protects, and restores shine. You only need to do this 3-4 times a year.

Take Special Care of Your Ultra Layup!

Epic Kayaks is committed to manufacturing the finest kayaks available using only the highest quality materials. If you have purchased an Ultra layup you know they are exceptionally light, but they require more care when handling. Avoid direct impact with hard objects such as rocks, which can dent and/or delaminate the lightweight honeycomb core. Do not tie your Ultra kayak directly onto hard metal racks! Appropriately shaped saddles or padding are required to eliminate stress concentrations when transporting and storing your Ultra layup boat.

Storing Your Kayak

Available storage options obviously depend on your available space. Ideally, store your kayak indoors, in a garage or barn. Your kayak may be on the ground, on wall racks or stands, or suspended from the ceiling (to save space.) For floor storage, use padded saw horses or kayak cradles. In the bow, space the horse or cradle so that the kayak's front bulkhead rests on top of it (about 1/3 distance from the bow). In the stern, place the horse or cradle about halfway between the seat and the stern. For suspended storage, use polypropylene straps that wrap around rafters or hooks in the ceiling, and then loop under the kayak generally in these same locations. Do not use the kayak carry handles for hanging storage.

For outdoor storage use the same padded sawhorses and/or cradles that you would use inside. However, take some additional critical steps to protect your kayak from the elements. Store your kayak out of direct sunlight. Keep rain, snow and ice off your kayak; long-term parking in the shade is not enough. From the hardware store get a weatherproof tarp. Once you know where you want to store the boat, put the storage racks and kayak in place. Create a protective tent with the tarp, using some rope and wooden stakes. You can even use existing fences and trees to tie off if needed. A "tent" is better than wrapping the kayak with the tarp. Wrapping can keep moisture and other contaminants trapped close to the hull. Also, make sure the kayak is well secured and protected from the wind, so it does not blow off your stands and get damaged.



Regardless of whether you store your kayak inside or outside, here are a few simple storage points:

- In the bow, space horses, cradles or straps so that the kayak's front bulkhead rests on top of them (about 1/3 distance from the bow). In the stern, place horses, cradles or straps about halfway between the seat and the stern
- Loosen hatch straps to reduce tension, particularly for long term storage (this helps ensure the long life of your hatch seals)
- Make sure the kayak is clean and completely dry, inside and out (especially in cold climates)
- The decision of whether to store your boat in a cover is a personal one, however, use one for long term storage only if you are sure your boat will remain dry
- Use a cockpit cover when storing outdoors (keeps out debris and critters)
- Apply a UV protectant for long term storage

Excellent storage rack options may be found at:

- www.maloneautoracks.com
- www.talic.com

Transporting Your Kayak

Even if you live on the water, eventually you'll have to load up and drive your kayak somewhere. Luckily, there are a great selection of rack systems and car-topping accessories that make kayak transportation a cinch. Many cars, vans and SUV's also now come standard with pretty decent factory roof racks. Transporting your kayak right side up or upside down is personal preference, as is the use of a boat cover. The main objective is to make sure your kayak is securely fastened to whatever rack system you have chosen, and to ensure driver visibility is not compromised. The systems can vary from inexpensive foam blocks to more pricey aftermarket cross bars that incorporate all types of accessories for transporting. We recommend that you talk with your local paddlesports retailer about what roof rack options are available for the vehicle you use. Most retailers will have a variety of options, will be able to install whatever you choose to use on your vehicle and will also show you how to properly secure your kayak.

Below are a few recommended companies to consider for kayak transportation:

- Thule – www.thuleracks.com
- Malone – www.maloneautoracks.com
- Yakima – www.yakima.com

Recommended Gear and Accessories

The following list of accessories and safety items represents essential gear that should be accounted for each time you head out on the water. Having the items on this list will help ensure you have the capability to perform self-rescues, signal for help, and will make your overall paddling experience more comfortable and enjoyable. Check with the maritime authorities in your area (e.g. the Coast Guard) to determine applicable sea kayak regulations.

- PFD (Personal Flotation Device)
- Whistle or other sound-signaling device
- Spray Skirt
- Spare Paddle
- Compass and/or handheld GPS
- Paddle Float
- Hand Pump (for bailing)

- Sponge (for bailing)
- Tow Line
- Dry Bags (for your stored items)
- Cell Phone / VHF radio
- First aid kit
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Hat
- Water

Warranty Terms

Epic Kayaks warrants all products to be free from defects in materials and workmanship for one year from the date of purchase. This warranty applies to the original owner and is non-transferable. If damage is due to a material or manufacturing defect, Epic will repair or replace the kayak free of charge. Epic reserves the right to determine if a product will be covered under warranty. Normal wear, cosmetic blemishes, and damage due to improper use, modification, negligence or transport are not covered under warranty. Demo equipment is not covered under warranty. Your original invoice is your proof of purchase.

Returns (Warranty/Repairs)

To pursue a customer warranty claim, contact your local dealer. We will work with you through your local dealer. If this process does not meet your expectations, you are welcome to contact Epic Kayaks directly. Follow the procedures below:

- Contact Epic – we need the kayak serial number, model, color and location where purchased. You will be assigned a Return Authorization number (RA#) for tracking your claim. Failure to follow this procedure will result in a 10% restocking fee
- Epic will provide a correct return address (we have several locations)
- Your shipment should include your RA#, name, address and clear contact information, along with the reason for returning the item
- You are responsible for the shipping cost to Epic, however, Epic will pay return shipping costs
- Please call customer service with any questions, NEVER send product to Epic without an RA#