
A Texas Nature Kayaking Guide

Kayak Camping – Transportation & Comfort

We will leave transporting your kayak on your vehicle to another Texas Nature Kayaking Guide and dedicate this guide to transporting gear and supplies in the kayak.

One of the most important items if you are transporting gear in a kayak is dry bags. Garbage bags work until you poke a hole in the bag. But dry bags are best. The cheapies at Academy and Wal-Mart do a decent job, but you need to care for them and carefully seal them. Better bags are available, but they are more expensive. Decide how many bags are needed and what size. Remember, sleeping bag, clothes, pillow (if you are not using a PFD), tent, and food items can become soaked. If you cannot afford dry bags and want something much better than a garbage bag, get some plastic trash compactor bags.

If one anticipates having to portage or is running rapids, minimalist-backpacking gear becomes more ideal, but if one does not need to portage or run rapids, other gear may make the camping experience comfortable.

When packing a kayak, distribute the weight to keep an even keel with you in the kayak. Pack as much inside the kayak as possible. In that manner, when the kayak turns over, you are not as likely to lose gear and supplies. Load heavy items close to the center of the kayak and light items to the extremes. Pack tight, so items will not shift. Also pack items you will need where you can retrieve them. Is that enough conflicting information? After you have everything in place, strap it down so you do not lose it before you need it. You will probably have to add extra pad eyes to your kayak so you will have enough tie-down points.

Prior to going on a kayak camping trip, practice loading your kayak with all of the gear you plan on taking. The little pile of gear you were going to take suddenly begins to grow so much that you cannot fit it all in. Decide what is important. If you plan on carrying 300 pounds of gear, you need an inflatable kayak such as the one in the photo. It takes a lot of muscle to paddle. If you want to take the necessities for a 3-day trip, you can get them down to 60 pounds of gear (that includes 25 pounds of drinking water), and it all fits in an easy-to-paddle kayak.



Copyright © 2010 by Nordmeyer, LLC. Permission is granted to reproduce as long as this document is reproduced in its entirety without modification and it is not sold.

Find Texas Nature Kayaking Guides at www.TxNatureKayaking.com

Be sure you have a trash bag packed where you can get to it and use it. A mesh bag works great.

Kayak Camping – Comfort

As we get a little older, comfort becomes more and more important. Why go out into the wilderness to be miserable? A 5-gallon bucket with a screw-on lid makes an adequate stool. It can be used to store food, gloves, and whatever. For those of us who admit to being over 25, a folding camp chair can be worth its weight in gold after a hard day, if you have room. There are also chairs that consist of a seat and a back, but lack legs. Not quite as comfortable as that folding camp chair, but they take up a lot less room.

Some people like to have a fire for cooking, warmth, morale, and to keep the critters at bay. The smoke may even keep annoying bugs at bay. When selecting a camping spot, stay out of obvious critter haunts. If your prospective campsite is covered in hog tracks, you may not be comfortable when they come for a visit. If you stored food in your tent, rather than storing it properly, they may decide to join you in your tent. If you have a fire for comfort and to keep critters away, do not leave it unattended.

Some people insist that a bottle of whiskey is a must, but do not open it until the paddling's done and camp is set up. Others need their beer or wine.

Kayak Camping – The Most Important Item to Take

Friends – By sharing your time with them, and leaving the whine at home, the trip becomes much more enjoyable.