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Capsizing and The Art of Recovery

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“Capsizing is inevitable in kayaking, but with proper technique and practice, it won't ruin your experience.”

Capsizing is an inevitable part of kayaking, especially in challenging conditions like rough waters or during difficult manoeuvres. When a kayak flips over, knowing how to perform a rescue is vital for personal safety and the well-being of fellow paddlers. A kayak capsize rescue involves multiple techniques, depending on whether you are solo or with companions. Mastering these methods ensures a safe, swift recovery and allows kayakers to maintain control, even in

How to perform a rescue?

The rescue process starts with the most critical action: staying calm. When a kayak capsizes, your immediate reaction should be to orient yourself mentally and prepare to perform a wet exit, which is the first step in rescuing yourself. If you're upside down in the water, the wet exit involves pulling the spray skirt (if you're using one) away from the cockpit, pushing yourself free, and



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surfacing safely beside the overturned kayak.

Once you have performed the wet exit and are in the water, the next step depends on whether you are alone or with other kayakers. In a solo situation, you will have to perform self-rescue, which usually involves one of two popular techniques: the heel hook or the cowboy re-entry.

Heel-Hook Re-Entry

The heel-hook method is one of the most stable ways to get back into your kayak on your own. Start by positioning yourself on the side of the overturned kayak near the cockpit. Reach across the kayak with one hand and use the other hand to grab onto the far side of the cockpit. Hook one leg (usually the leg closer to the kayak) into the cockpit while floating on your back, then use the leverage of your hooked leg to pull yourself up and twist into a seated position. From here, carefully swing your other leg into the kayak and stabilize yourself.

Cowboy Re-Entry

Another common method, cowboy re-entry involves positioning yourself at the rear of the kayak and climbing back onto it like you would mount a horse. Straddle the kayak, and then slowly slide forward toward the cockpit, maintaining balance as you go. This method works best in calmer conditions, as

rough waters can make it harder to stabilize the kayak.

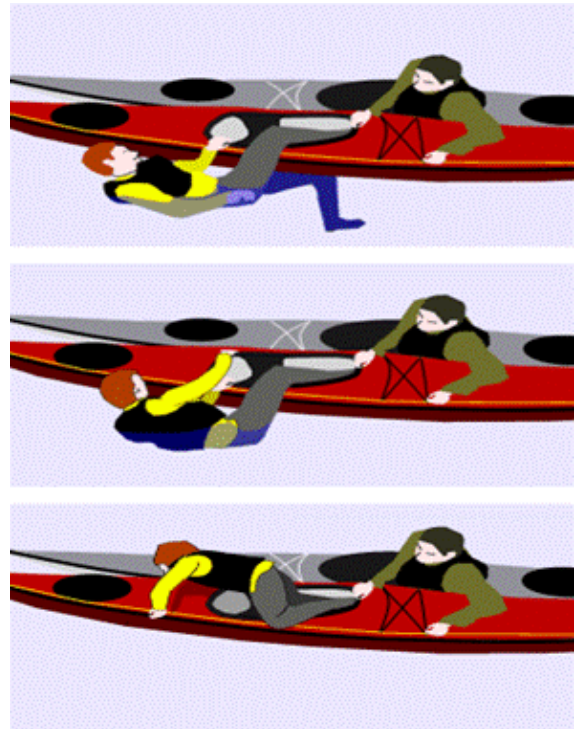


Figure 1: Heel-hook re-entry



Figure 2: Cowboy re-entry

In an assisted rescue, where a companion is available, the process is faster and often easier. In this case, the assisting kayaker approaches the overturned kayak and positions its kayak alongside it. The rescuer can stabilize the overturned kayak by reaching across it and grabbing both sides of the cockpit. They then help the capsized

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paddler by lifting and flipping the kayak upright, ensuring it is steady for re-entry.

Once the kayak is righted, the capsized kayaker performs a re-entry, typically using the heel-hook method while the assisting paddler holds the kayak steady. If needed, the rescuer can provide additional support by holding onto the bow or stern to keep the kayak from rolling again during the re-entry process.

After you are back in the cockpit, it is important to remove any water that may have entered the kayak. This can be done using a bilge pump, sponge, or other draining methods. Removing excess water helps maintain the kayak's stability and prevents additional capsizing risks. In an internet cafe for days with short breaks. Heart failure and exhaustion killed him shortly after he stopped playing. Lee's and other cases show IGD's risk factors. Even though not everyone with IGD has such catastrophic outcomes, the physical and psychological effects are clear.

Conclusion

Capsizing is an unavoidable part of kayaking, but with proper technique and practice, it does not have to ruin your experience. Whether performing a self-rescue or assisted rescue, knowing how to regain control of your kayak after a capsize is crucial for staying safe on the water. The heel-hook and cowboy re-entry methods offer effective ways to recover solo, while assisted rescues provide a faster recovery in group settings. Ultimately, practicing these techniques builds confidence, allowing paddlers to manage capsizing situations calmly and efficiently, making every trip safer and more enjoyable.

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