

# The Shore Entry

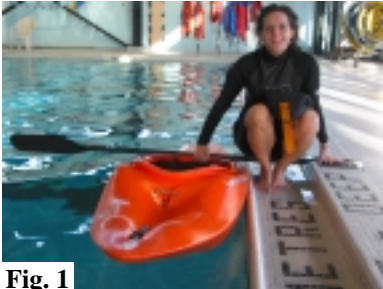


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

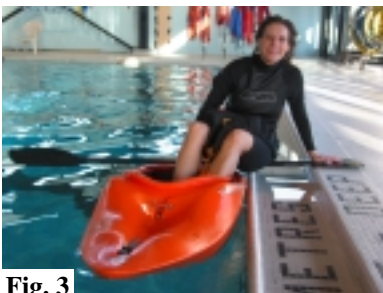


Fig. 3

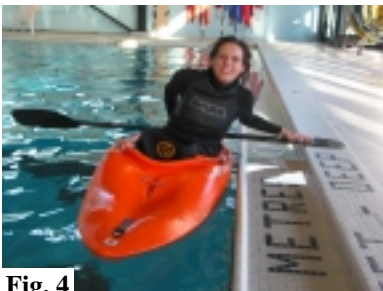


Fig. 4



Fig. 5

To the uninitiated getting into a kayak can be challenging, embarrassing and even frustrating. By using your paddle to stabilize your kayak, the *Shore Entry* can seem effortless and graceful. The following skill outline is intended for calm days at the beach, cottage or local paddling destinations - it is *not* suited for large waves or fast moving water.

The key to a successful shore entry is keeping your weight leaning towards shore at all times and a proper initial set up. If you are attempting this on your own, be prepared to go for a swim at least once while learning. If you think you can handle it, here are the steps to a basic *Shore Entry*.

**1. The set up.** Position your kayak parallel with the shoreline and determine the center of your paddle by balancing it in your hand. Place the paddle behind the cockpit and perpendicular to the boat. Line up the center of the paddle with the center of the kayak in order to reduce the stress on the paddle while boarding. Position yourself in front of the paddle, facing the front of the boat (Fig. 1)

**2. Stabilize the boat.** With the hand that is closest to the kayak, reach across the center of the boat and grab the cockpit coaming and the paddle (Fig. 2). This will lock the paddle and the boat together and form an outrigger for stability.

**3. Sit down.** Now that the boat is stabilized, sit on the corner of the boat closest to shore (on top of the paddle) and lean your body towards the shoreline. To further stabilize the kayak and protect your fingers, place your free hand on top of the paddle blade remaining on shore. Once you are comfortable and balanced swing your legs into the cockpit (*be sure to continue leaning towards shore at all times*). (Fig. 3)

**4. Slide in.** While leaning towards shore, slide the rest of your body into the kayak. Once you are in the boat, be sure to put your feet on the foot pegs and your legs under the thigh braces before you let go of the paddle and begin to put on your spray skirt. (Fig. 4)

**5. Seal up the cockpit.** Once in the kayak, it is important to use caution while adjusting your spray skirt or kayak outfitting (Fig. 5). Once you have released your grip from the paddle and the kayak, the boat will not be as stable.

**Note:** The most common time to wipe out in a kayak is near shore, while entering or exiting the kayak (usually with all of your friends around). Take your time and methodically follow these steps and the embarrassment of a splash down will be reduced. Nothing replaces professional instruction - check out our **COURSES** page to find out more about our programs.