

# Canoe & Kayak Magazine's 2009 Beginner's Guide Issue Featuring the NRS Tuff Sack



## \*OTHER ESSENTIALS

Now that you're ready to day-trip, you should consider how to rig all your stuff— sunscreen, extra layers, snacks, keys, cameras, etc.— to your boat, and to keep it dry.

**Pictured:** The NRS Tuff Sack is made of a durable PVC material with a Storm-strip closure system that folds down to seal over your gear and clips shut, with a D-ring you can lash in the boat.

(\$16.95 IN SMALL, AVAILABLE IN SIX SIZES, [NRSWEB.COM](http://NRSWEB.COM))

## CANOEING // GEAR



### \*PADDLE FACTORS

**\*PADDLE LENGTH:** Determine paddle length by torso size. Measure the distance between a straight-back chair's seat and your nose to determine optimal shaft length, then add 20 inches for the paddle blade. Add an inch or two if you'll be sitting rather than kneeling most of the time in your canoe.

**\*THE BENT TIP:** Choose a comfortable T-grip. Smoother pear and bulbous grips lend themselves to tearing and crushing. Most paddles today are lightweight laminated combinations of wood and synthetic composites, especially extra sheets of material and resin on the blade for durability's sake. It comes down to how light you want to go, how much you want to spend and how much of that classic wood feel you're looking for.

**\*STRAIGHT VS BENT:** Traditional straight-shaft models offer control and stability in whitewater, especially in the stern. Bent shafts are designed to maximize stroke efficiency. A 10- to 12-degree bend where the blade joins the shaft allows for a shorter, feeler, and less fatiguing stroke as the blade is perpendicular entering and leaving the water.

**\*BLADES:** A 7- to 8.5-inch blade width is typical for general touring. Wider blades (9 to 10 inches) are more powerful at pushing water and thus more effective in whitewater. Narrower, rounded blades (7 inches or less) are crisscross tools for all-day paddling.

**Pictured:** Mitchell Paddles. Service is a touring-style paddle designed for distance on the flats. It features a laminated fiberglass and ash shaft and cedar blades covered with a layer of fiberglass and tipped with polyurethane. (800.867.8222/WWW.MITCHELLPADDLES.COM)

### \*OTHER ESSENTIALS

A Personal Flotation Device is the one keystone piece of equipment you need for every paddlesports discipline (aside from the boat and the paddle). Donning a PFD, otherwise known as a life vest, should be as second nature to paddlers as wearing pants to school. Get a comfortable, USCG-approved type III vest you can wear for any type of paddling. You don't need an overly bulky one with a flotation flap behind the head. **Pictured:** The Kokatat InFIT is this California manufacturer's most popular PFD, featuring padded, adjustable shoulder straps and 16 lbs. of flotation in a streamlined and durable package. ([WWW.KOKATAT.COM](http://WWW.KOKATAT.COM))



Now that you're ready to day-trip, you should consider how to rig all your stuff— sunscreen, extra layers, snacks, keys, cameras, etc.— to your boat, and to keep it dry. **Pictured:** The NRS Tuff Sack is made of a durable PVC material with a Storm-strip closure system that folds down to seal over your gear and clips shut, with a D-ring you can lash in the boat. ([WWW.NRSWEB.COM](http://WWW.NRSWEB.COM))

