

Stand Up Paddle Boarding (SUP)

Boating Tips

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Stand up paddle boarding or SUP is the all the rage, combining a surfboard style board with an oar or pole. Paddle boards serve as platforms for exploring out of the way places, yoga and fitness, fishing along with snorkeling and diving.

To find the right SUP, here's what you need to consider:

- **Hull type:** Your two main choices are a planning hull and a displacement hull; the type you choose will be based on the type of paddling you plan to do.
- **Solid or inflatable:** Do you want a solid board or an inflatable one? Your answer will be based on things like board performance, portability and your storage options.
- **Volume and weight capacity:** You want to pick a board with the volume and weight capacity that's right for your height and weight to ensure good stability and paddling performance.
- **Length, width and thickness:** The dimensions of a SUP play a big role in determining how it handles on the water.

The Internet contains detailed information on selecting a Stand Up Paddleboard (SUP) that's right for you. From there, you'll may add fins and any extras or accessories for easier transport and more enjoyment on the water. Some people have configured paddle boards for fishing as well as snorkeling or diving.

Always wear a comfortable PFD, personal flotation device as some are specifically for SUP. Like a surfboard keep the paddle board attached to your body by a safety line or leash so you and the board stay together. Tell people when and where you will be Stand Up Paddle boarding as well as when you expect to return. Always take drinking water to keep hydrated. Plus, carry a mini flashlight for when it becomes dark. A few flashlights attach to a paddle board. For weather reports and emergencies, carry a water proof marine radio plus an orange distress flag.

Unfortunately paddle boarders have required rescue after getting too far out, being caught by the tide or bad weather or becoming just plain tired. Before venturing out, check water conditions along with the weather for pending storms then stay alert to changing conditions.

A SUP is a "bobber", floating in most all conditions. When you become tired, rest while seated or lying on the board. When you encounter weather or strong wave conditions make a low profile by lying on the board until conditions improve. If necessary, you may hand paddle a paddle board like a surfboard or use the paddle or pole while seated. In heavy waves keep the board's nose into the waves so it doesn't flip, dumping you into the water.

As with boating, start small and inexpensive, even used until you find your stand up paddle boarding niche. And always be safe on the water with the right equipment and right training.

This article is given courtesy of the Pamlico Sail & Power Squadron, America's Boating Club™.

To learn more about boating and boating safety, email Linda, our Education Officer at psps@gmail.com or contact her at 252-964-3009. You can also receive FREE Vessel Safety Checks performed by certified inspectors. Contact Fred at VSC@pspsnc.com or call him at 948-0682 to schedule your inspection.