



Kayak Purchasing Check List

Use the following information and form to assist you in your purchase. Before using the form, we suggest you take some time and do a little research into the various types of kayaks.

A good place to start is the Current Designs Resource page at:

<http://www.cdkayak.com/resources/index.php>

When comparing different boats, make sure you are comparing apples to apples. A 10' kayak will be lighter and less expensive than a 14' boat, but there are significant tradeoffs in performance.

Construction materials make a huge difference in all aspects from cost through performance and efficiency. Also keep in mind that we are talking here about touring boats which are distinctly different than whitewater boats.

Here are a few things to consider.

Most of these are self-explanatory. We have added a column on service. We suggest you take stock of how you are treated during your journey. Shops that are not willing to take the time to talk to you up front are unlikely to provide much customer service after the sale. Keep in mind that all things are a compromise and everyone has their own criteria, budget is every bit as legitimate a criteria as is weight of the kayak or length. One final word of advice. Don't buy a kayak until you've had a chance to try it out. Fit and feel are very individual things and are more important than the looks of the boat. A good dealer will try to fit you with the best boat possible by "qualifying" you and discussing you specific needs.

Length /Width	Weight &Capacity	Construction (P) (PC) (VBL)	Manufacturer / Model	BulkHeads ? (0), (1), (2)	Price	Service	Shop

Aardvark's Florida Kayak Company Crystal River 352-795-5650

NOTES:

Kayak Purchasing Guidelines

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<p>Length...Life's a tradeoff. Shorter boats are less expensive, turn quicker and are lighter than longer boats. Longer boats are faster (more efficient at distance), better tracking, and have more glide (that efficiency thing again). What's best for you depends on a number of things including budget, transport capability, where you paddle, who you paddle with and what they are paddling. This applies to both couples and groups. Someone paddling 12' kayak is going to have to paddle like crazy to keep up with someone in a 16' boat. A 12' kayak probably wouldn't be an appropriate boat for offshore, but a 16' kayak will be harder (though not impossible) to use in small creeks. Consider storage.</p>	 <p>Notes</p>
<p>Construction...<i>Polyethylene</i> is cheaper but heavier and prone to warping and fading in Florida's sun. Also will gouge upon impact with sharp objects like oyster bars. <i>Plastic Composites</i> are lighter, more abrasion resistant, and don't fade or warp. Costs can be competitive with "A" brand poly boats. Longer life expectancy & recyclable. <i>Laminates</i> are cloth and resin boats that are the lightest and most efficient. Not as impact resistant as the plastics, but much lighter. Generally the most expensive.</p>	<p>Notes</p>
<p>Rudders/ or Skegs...Both are useful in windy conditions with certain hull designs. A retractable skeg is more efficient because it produces less drag and does not increase windage on the deck. Short boats (under 15') should not need a rudder with a properly designed hull. Heavily rocker hulls benefit more from a rudder than boats with minimal rocker. Boats with minimal rocker have longer waterlines at the same overall length making them more efficient and better tracking.</p>	<p>NOTES</p>
<p>Safety.....Not all boats have bulkheads. Bulkheads create air chambers that provide flotation and safety in the event of a mishap. Bulkheads add to the cost of a boat, but in our opinion, provide a greater margin of safety than boats that use foam blocks for flotation. We recommend at least a rear bulkhead and preferably bulkheads at both front and rear. Having a front bulkhead is the difference in lifting a bow full of water (at least 5 gallons to as much as 20 at 8.5 lbs/gal) or a bow full of air at 0 lbs/gal. With a bulkhead, the storage capacity is still there, you just access it from above or use a deck dry bag for storage.</p>	<p>Notes</p>
<p>Price...when it comes to price, it is buyer beware. While price is a legitimate criteria, remember that the least expensive boats have to skimp somewhere to offer those bargain basement prices. Compare construction, features, performance, and makers reputation.</p>	<p>Notes</p>

