



BASIC SEA KAYAK CONTROL

Disclaimer - this is for information only - you must make your own informed decision as to whether it's safe to paddle or not.

LEGEND

BEGINNER	
INTERMEDIATE	
EXPERIENCED	
STUPID	

BEAUFORT SCALE FOR SEA KAYAKERS

Beaufort Scale	Wind Speed knots	Wind Speed miles/hr	Wind Speed km/hr	Traditional Description	Sea State	Meteorological Description	Wave Height (m)
0	0	0	0	Calm	Sea like a mirror – good for training purposes.	Calm	0
1	1 to 3	1 to 3	1 to 5	Light Air	Surface disturbed by ripples	Light	0.1
2	4 to 6	4 to 6	6 to 12	Light Breeze	Small wavelets - crests do not break	Light	0.2 to 0.3
3	7 to 10	7 to 12	13 to 19	Gentle Breeze	Large wavelets. Scattered whitecaps (white horses). Limit of sea kayak control to beginner kayakers.	Light	0.6 to 1.0
4	11 to 16	13 to 18	20 to 29	Moderate Breeze	Small waves. Fairly frequent white horses. Getting lumpy and the inexperienced paddler should be finding shelter ASAP.	Moderate	1.0 to 1.5
5	17 to 21	19 to 24	30 to 39	Fresh Breeze	Moderate waves. Many white horses (more than 50% of the ocean surface). The beginner should be home. Great training for moderately experienced paddlers. Testing conditions.	Fresh	2.0 to 2.5
6	22 to 27	25 to 31	40 to 50	Strong Breeze	Large waves begin to form; white foam crests, probably spray. Seas getting big, rescues will be difficult. Warnings issued to small craft.	Strong	3.0 to 4.0
7	28 to 33	32 to 38	51 to 61	Near Gale	Sea heaps up and white foam blown in streaks along the direction of the wind. Big seas, kayaks are difficult to turn and it will be hard to make headway. Communication very difficult. Only for very experienced paddlers.	Strong	4.0 to 5.5
8	34 to 40	39 to 46	62 to 74	Gale	Moderately high waves, crests begin to break into spindrift. Dangerous conditions – communication almost impossible. Each paddler must look out for himself and rescues are impractical.	Gale	6.0 to 7.5
9	41 to 47	47 to 54	75 to 87	Strong Gale	High waves. Crests begin to roll over. Very dangerous conditions – communication impossible. Survival only possible is rescued. You should NOT BE THERE!	Severe Gale	7 to 10