

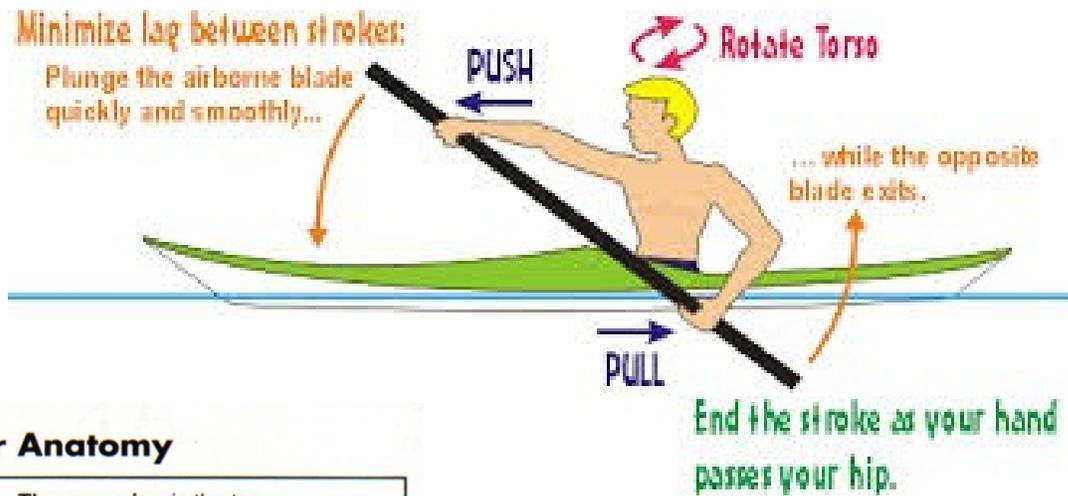
The Basics

POSITIONING

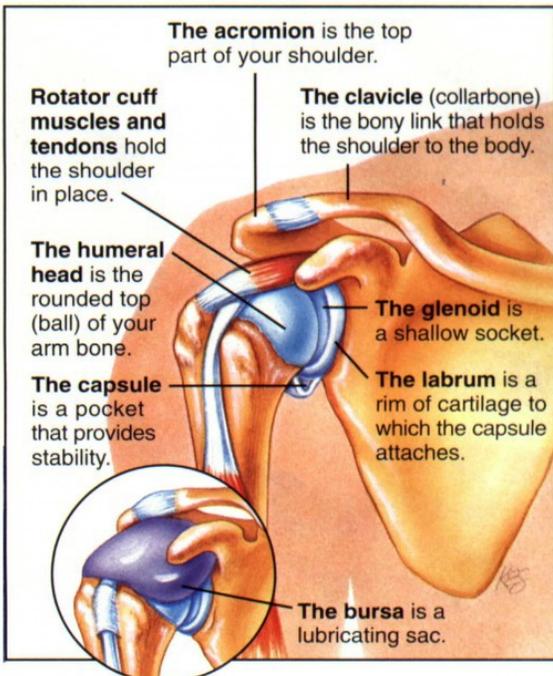
Sit upright leaning slightly forward with your back in contact with the seat. Stretch your legs out and maintain a slight bend at the knee with your feet positioned in the foot holds. Relax your shoulders and let the paddle sit across the cock pit. Extend both arms out comfortably in front of you- do not lock your elbows. Lightly grip the shaft of the paddle shoulder width apart, knuckles up (lined up with blades) and thumbs wrapped around the shaft.

PADDLING

Pull- Push: pull with the downward stroke and push the upward shaft away from you. Turn your torso into the stroke- movement should come from the torso and not the arms. Be careful not to bend too far at the waist or over extend the arms, as this can create back and shoulder injuries. Sweep the water toward the back of the kayak. Do not let the paddle “windmill” out of the water. Reverse for backwards propulsion. Repeat single side strokes to turn the kayak.



Shoulder Anatomy



Anatomy and Areas of Injury

SHOULDER

Due to the repetitive nature of kayaking, it is common to see over use injuries to the very mobile shoulder joint. Tendinitis/osis, shoulder impingement, Acromioclavicular joint (AC) injuries, and muscle strains are most common.

Pain is typically felt in the region of the shoulder and possible referral to the arm. May range from dull and achy to sharp and severe.

Causes: Improper paddling technique, muscle imbalance, striking an object while paddling, and over use.

BACK

Muscle strain and ligament sprain injuries are most common and result from improper techniques while paddling or lifting, improper kayak seating/positioning, as well as striking an object in the water.

ELBOW/WRIST

Tendinitis/osis, sprain/strain, overuse injuries can result from improper techniques that over utilize the arms for propulsion.

Treating an Injury: PRICE

As soon as possible after an injury:

Protect the area that is injured from further harm.

Rest the injured area to reduce inflammation and promote healing.

Ice the injured area. 15-20 minutes of icing can decrease inflammation and swelling.

Do not place directly on skin. Repeat 2-3 times a day for 24-48 hours.

Compression: If necessary wrap the area with compression bandages to reduce swelling.

Do not wrap too tightly

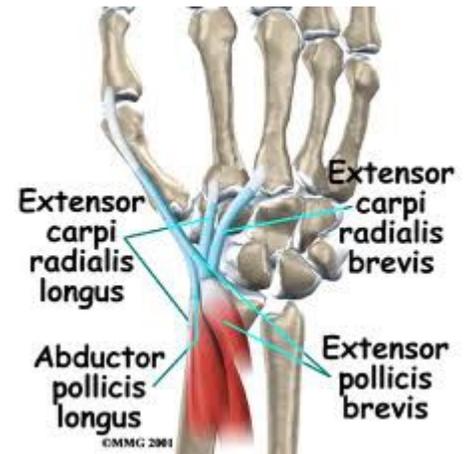
Elevation: Elevate the injured area above the level of the heart to minimize swelling.

*If there is obvious deformity, intense pain, swelling, or bruising, consult a medical professional.

After 48-72 hours and swelling has reduced it is safe to use heat for discomfort and begin gentle stretching and strengthening.

Prevention

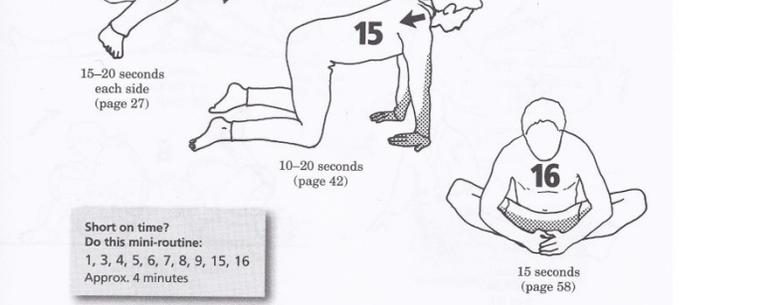
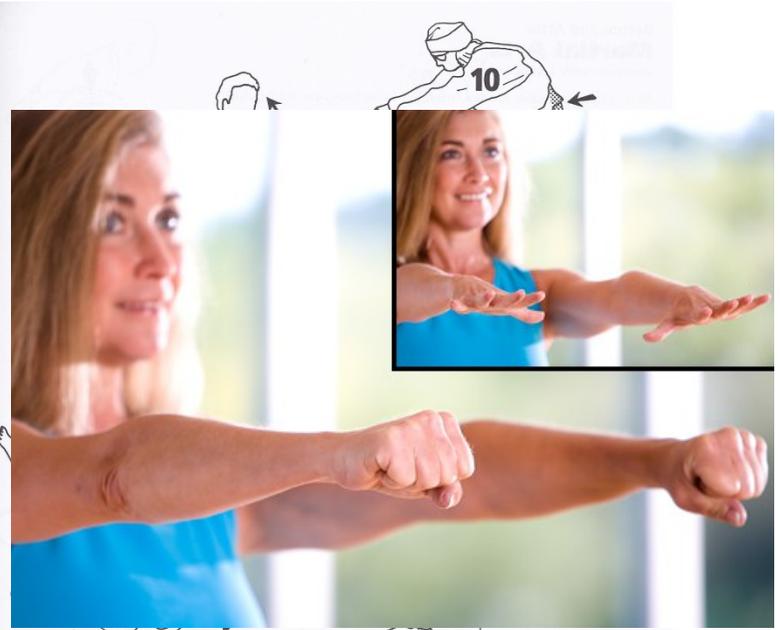
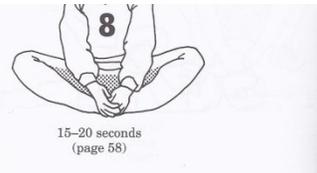
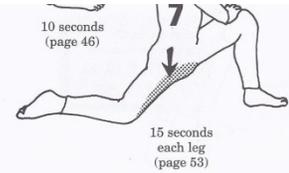
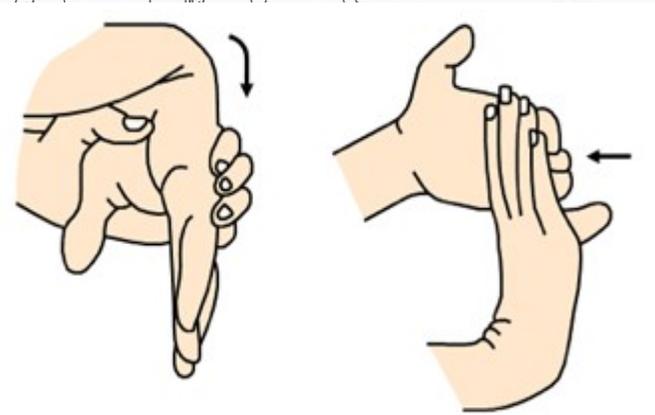
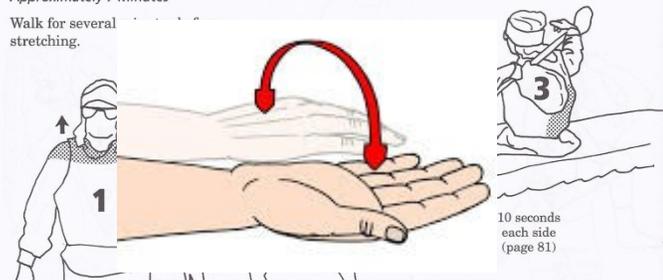
- Dress for the weather/water temperature!
- Maintain joint flexibility!
 - Warm up and stretch before kayaking, cool down and stretch after kayaking.
 - See Examples below
- Use good and safe techniques for paddling and lifting!
 - See Paddling Basics Above
- Know your limits and don't overdo it!
- Wear your life vest!



Before and After Kayaking

Approximately 7 Minutes

Walk for several stretching.



Short on time?
Do this mini-routine:
1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16
Approx. 4 minutes

Elbow, Wrist, and Hand Stretches

Resources:

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