

## SDKC Guest Guidelines

Remember that Trip Hosts are not certified club leaders or trained guides. They cannot guarantee the happiness or safety of participants. They do not necessarily know first aid or CPR, or carry first aid equipment. They are not necessarily trained to assist with a rescue or carry rescue equipment.

Participants are responsible for themselves, getting themselves to the site and for the condition of their gear. Members should limit their activities to the level of their ability. As a guest, you are responsible for your own safety, bringing appropriate gear and clothing and having a seaworthy craft:

1. Call the trip host as soon as you determine that you want to attend the paddle/trip. You must realistically evaluate your own skills against the trip rating given by the host. It is your responsibility to confirm with the host by the RSVP date that you will be attending.
2. Make sure you understand SDKC's trip rating system.
3. Read and understand the club waiver. Make sure any friends you plan to bring have spoken with the host and have signed waivers.
4. Call the host and honestly answer the "Guest Interview" questions. When answering the questions, keep in mind your skill level and experience, physical condition and any medical problems that may affect your ability to keep up with the group.
5. Familiarize yourself with the details of the trip.
6. Check weather and ocean conditions. If you have concerns about the weather, contact the host and discuss the situation. You must make a go/no-go decision for yourself and not let the group or host make it for you. Hosts and other guests may or may not have rescue experience or equipment. Do not assume that the group will "take care" of you if conditions become bad. In rough conditions, it may be all someone can do to take care of themselves, much less you. Once you join the paddle, remember that you are part of the group and should remain with them.
7. If you are going on a multi-day trip and have to travel a long distance to your destination, make sure your vehicle is in good working condition.
8. Be on time at the put-in! If you are late, the host may leave without you.
9. Have appropriate clothing and gear for the planned paddle/trip. Make sure your boat is seaworthy and has fore and aft floatation. Have appropriate safety equipment - see recommended gear checklist. If you do not have a VHF radio or other communication device, check with your host to see if someone on the trip has one. Dress for the water temperature, in case of unexpected immersion.
10. Have your waiver signed and give it to the host before launching.
11. Don't be an "eager beaver". Launch with the group and help less experienced people launch.
12. Stay with the group. Do not speed ahead of the lead person or go out on unannounced forays. If you wish to explore the coastline or other areas, let your host know beforehand.
13. Inform the host of any problems or difficulties that may come up during the paddle/trip.
14. Be supportive of the host and co-hosts and have a positive attitude. Encourage other participants to cooperate and help others.
15. Return times are estimates. Weather conditions may delay a paddle. Be flexible.
16. If you cannot attend a paddle that you have committed to, be sure to contact your host immediately.
17. Help keep the group together and contribute to group safety.
18. Leave a float/trip plan with relatives or a close friend. See SDKC's "float plan" form.
19. Inform the safety committee if anyone in the group does not adhere to safe kayaking practices.
20. Assist trip guests and the host in any appropriate manner.
21. Volunteer to be a co-host on a club paddle/trip. You will gain invaluable experience.

Kayaking is a rewarding experience; it can range from relaxing paddling to extremely strenuous, even dangerous situations. Joining a group does not relieve you of personal accountability. Everyone is responsible for their own safety. You must use good judgment in choosing when, where, and with whom you paddle. If you do not feel comfortable with the host, sea conditions or anything else, do not participate.

Members should limit their activities to the level of their ability. Sea kayakers may only rarely encounter conditions that test their limits. Therefore, it is essential that they should continually practice bracing, self and assisted rescues and rolling. There are many good outfitters that offer clinics and lessons. The club also has occasional practice sessions where

you can improve and hone these skills. It is strongly recommended that trip hosts as well as guests take CPR and first aid courses.