

T – RESCUE:

Paddling skill: T Rescue

The T rescue is the most used buddy rescue in Sea Kayaking. It is a rescue when performed well requires minimal strength, minimal time and provides maximum safety to both rescuer and swimmer.

The T rescue empties nearly 100% of the water that has entered the Sea Kayak cockpit due to a capsize. This rescue works best on kayaks that have bulkheads in each end of the cockpit. (behind the seat and in front of your feet)

With buddy rescues it is important that all involved understand what is required by both the rescuer and the swimmer. A complete understanding of the technique by both parties will enhance the speed, ease and safety of the rescue.



If you happen to capsize your kayak and are unable to roll.

You will have to perform a wet exit from your kayak and come up to the surface.

Once you have come to the surface it is important to hold onto the kayak and if possible your paddle if it is not on a leash.

You may then need to draw attention to yourself so that someone is able to come and perform a rescue.



While you are waiting for a rescuer to approach the front of your kayak, leave the kayak upside down so that it does not fill up with more water and continue holding on.

Rescuer: When you have noticed that you are required to perform a rescue, you need to check that the person in the water is okay and that they wish for you to perform a T rescue.



You then need to position your craft so that the two kayakers form a "T" shape with the bow of the kayak you are rescuing located at your hip.

Once you are in this position you will be able to collect the swimmers paddle if it is not on a paddle leash.

Store this paddle on your kayak.



You now need to get the bow of the kayak you are rescuing onto your cockpit coaming or spray deck.

There are a number of ways you can do this, but we are going to look at the most user friendly option.



The swimmer needs to make their way down to the back of the kayak making sure that they hold on at all times.

This is when deck lines become very useful.





Once the swimmer is at the back you can then work as a team.

While you pull up on the front of the kayak the swimmer pushes down with all their weight on the back.

Suction from air trapped in the cockpit can make the overturned kayak difficult to lift clear of the water, if this occurs roll the kayak on its side to release this pressure and continue the rescue

Once you have the front of the kayak on your spray deck, you then need to slide it across a little so that the cockpit of the swimmer's kayak is out of the water.



This should be done while maintaining good communication with the person in the water to reduce the risk of injury.

Note: The swimmer needs to hold on at all times as the kayak is being moved

Once the cockpit is out of the water you can roll the kayak over to its up right position.



Make sure that you advise the swimmer to keep their head clear from any obstructions as you roll the kayak over eg: rudder, split paddle etc.



You now want to position the kayaks side by side but facing in the opposite direction.

Note: It is important that the swimmer is not positioned between the 2 kayaks to avoid possible injury.

The swimmer can then make their way down to the outside of the craft (holding on at all times) so that they are next to the back of the cockpit.



The job of the rescuer is now to keep the two kayaks side by side and maintain a solid raft for the conditions.

This is best performed by leaning over the swimmers kayak so that you can hold onto the deck line on the side of the kayak with one hand and the cockpit coaming with the other hand.



Swimmer: To get back into the kayak you need to kick your feet to the surface behind you so that you can slide yourself onto the back deck of your kayak like a seal. You can reach over and get hold of the rescuer's kayak to help.





Once your stomach is on the back, turn so that you are facing the back of your kayak with your feet going into the cockpit first.

Once you have located the cockpit with your feet, slide backwards and slowly turn over towards the rescuers kayak



While you are moving yourself around into position, lean on the rescuers kayak to maintain a solid raft.



Once the swimmer is back in their kayak, maintain the raft until they have their spray deck reattached and both people are ready to continue with the paddle.

