

BEFORE YOU LAUNCH

THINGS TO DO

Kayaks do not mind rain — they mind wind. Ten minutes of checks decide the whole day.

1 CHECK THE WIND, THE MORNING OF

- ☐ Wind SPEED for the spot, not your suburb
bom.gov.au — coastal waters forecast and radar
- ☐ Under 10 knots: go
10–15: sheltered water, short trip, in company
- ☐ Over 15 knots: café day
- ☐ Wind DIRECTION checked against the spot
- ☐ Offshore wind is the trap
flat inshore water that looks perfect
- ☐ Near the coast, check the tide
avoid river mouths and inlets on a run
- ☐ Storms forecast nearby means off
you are the tallest thing on flat water

2 AT THE WATER, EYES BEFORE GEAR

- ☐ Watch the water for five minutes
before you unload a single thing
- ☐ Whitecaps anywhere means 15+ knots
decision made, no debate
- ☐ Flags, trees and moored boats read
the free wind gauges, all of them
- ☐ Plan the route out into the wind
and home with it, never the reverse

3 LIFEJACKET ON, NOT STOWED

- ☐ Everyone in a fitted jacket before launch
snug, adjusted, zips and clips done
- ☐ Kids: child size, crotch strap done
shoulder-lift test passed
- ☐ Know your state legal minimum
stricter rules apply to children
- ☐ Whistle attached to every jacket

4 THE FLOAT PLAN

- ☐ Someone at home knows the plan
launch spot, route, off-water time
- ☐ They get a message when you are off
- ☐ Phone charged, in a pouch, worn on you
not in the hatch of a drifting boat
- ☐ Beginner? Do not paddle alone yet
company is a rescue plan
- ☐ Turn around by time, not distance
halfway through your energy

THE GOLDEN RULE

Getting off the water early is the experienced move. The water is still there tomorrow.

Wind thresholds are Outdoorsia guidance aligned with Paddle Australia safety practice. Forecasts: Bureau of Meteorology.