

How to “Customize” your Kayak

(for a bit more comfort!)

Pull-up Straps- Being a full grown adult, I found getting up and down in my seat in the kayak not a graceful exercise. I found two 24inch straps that were each glued in a circle and then I drilled two holes on both sides of my kayak dashboard area. I merely slid the strap through the hole and into itself on each side. One two three, I pulled myself up easily. When I did it at a beach full of folks, I felt like a commercial for EF Hutton. Everyone got real quiet then they all gathered round and asked to try it out. Easy peezy.

Front Pouch- Now that the holes were drilled I found I could also install a front pouch for storage for knick-knacks. The best pouch has been a cheap trash bag meant for cars. The straps can get tied in the back and the Velcro holds it firmly. The vinyl only lasts for a couple of years with the heavy wear and tear but for ten bucks it's a great idea.

Door Mats- In the summer one of the great feel good things, is bare feet against the dry plastic floor of the kayak cooled by creek water. But during the cooler months a rubber doormat is very comfortable and gives good insulation. I found doormats come in many sizes and found a slightly larger size for my fishing kayak, which I was able to duck tape down.

Old Fashion GPS- Photo copy part of a map and fold it into a square or rectangle. Try to find a clear stiff plastic envelope to put the map in. I found at a Home Depot store a “tile pick up tool” which is perfect for the next step. This costs about five dollars and is a plastic suction cup device. The handles move back and forth creating the suction and the handles come together. Unfortunately the suction does not work well on the kayak plastic but the handles can be held together with rubber bands and it creates an upright holding stand for the stiff plastic with map. The whole contraption can be duck taped down in front of you on the dashboard or forward area. This homemade gadget will allow you to paddle and read the map at the same time.

Back Padding for Kayak Seats-Most Kayak seats are molded plastic with just a hint of foam rubber. Some seats have strings that push seats forward for better support but sore butts and stiff backs are the norm for long distance paddlers. Buy a Granny Back Supporter for cars. These are usually black, about 24 inches high with stiff metal supports and mesh inside. Then look for a simple inch thick stadium foam rubber mat. Lastly look for a stadium foam cushion mat to sit on. The Granny mesh fits upside down with the new inch thick form rubber mat put inside. I found a few 18inch plastic tie-ups poked through holes made by a screwdriver could be matched up with the original molded plastic chair. Fasten tie-ups tightly and balance the brace. It will give you a firm comfort level that will give your back muscles surprising energy. You are welcome.