



Thank you for attending Mississippi Valley Conservancy's *Canoeing and Kayaking Basics* presentation. Several of our nature preserves have river and lake access, so we want to help ensure paddlers return safely with happy stories and big fish tales.

PADDLING SAFETY CHECKLIST

- Personal Floatation Device (PFD) – commonly known as life jacket – MUST BE WORN
- Spare paddle
- Buddy system – don't go alone!
- Rope on your boat (in case you have to rescue or be rescued)
- Whistle
- Bilge pump or water bucket
- Potential hazards on your route (know before you go)
- Check water levels with moving water.
<https://snoflo.org/>
<https://water.weather.gov/ahps2/hydrograph.php?wfo=arx&gage=LACW3>
- The plan – how will you get back to where you started?
- Tell someone where you are going
- Cell phone in a waterproof ziplock container
- Weather forecast (consider heat, cold, rain, lightening, wind) – risk of hypothermia
- Sun and bug protection
- Food and hydration
- Alcohol and paddling are not a great combination

SUGGESTED DESTINATIONS FOR BEGINNERS (places with little or no current)

- Wyalusing State Park backwaters*
- Perrot State Park backwaters*
- La Crosse's French Island – Island Outdoors* or Airport Beach and Black River Bottoms
- La Crosse's Goose Island backwaters*

SUGGESTED DESTINATIONS FOR ADVANCED BEGINNERS OR INTERMEDIATE SKILLS (places with little or no current)

- Wyalusing State Park full loop*
- La Crosse's Goose Island full loop*
- Lower Wisconsin River – Wisconsin River Outings* in Boscobel
- Upper La Crosse River*
- Black River*
- Kickapoo River at Ontario, WI*

LOCAL PADDLING GROUPS

- Driftless Paddlers <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1708244102742249>
- Coulee Canoe And Kayak Club <https://www.facebook.com/groups/138348282955737>

MORE PADDLING EDUCATION AND RESOURCES

American Canoe Association (teaching ALL paddlesports)
<https://www.americancanoe.org/page/Courses>

REI <https://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/kayak-safety.html>

Ruttabaga <https://www.rutabaga.com/page?r=1>

**rentals available*

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