



# Kayak Rolling on dry land

with Mandy Kotzman



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Another "creative pursuit", brought to you by Mandy Kotzman

## No stress kayak rolling drill - try this at home!

Having trouble Eskimo rolling your kayak? How about your offside roll? Don't want to scare yourself or drown while you learn? Find yourself less stable in moving water than you would like to be? Can't get access to a pool, pond or river as often as you need?

Mandy's "dry land paddling" approach to improving your physique, balance and technique might be just what you need. It is NOT a substitute for quality instruction and river time, but can be an invaluable addition.

### You will need:

- A desire to learn or improve technique
- A kayak with adequate outfitting (i.e., the boat fits you)
- A paddle, and
- A smoothish surface (i.e., not gravel) with sufficient space - carpeted living rooms and lawns are good.

As always with kayaking, be careful not to strain your shoulders - keeping your elbows low and avoiding excessive pressure can help with this.

### "Hip ups" - Mastering balance and toning your muscles

1. Use your paddle as a balancing pole.
2. Engaging your lateral trunk muscles, rock the kayak sideways until you are up on edge and balanced. Hold this position as long as you can.
3. If necessary, use a soft brace to maintain your balance. You can also lean forward or backwards to enhance the exercise.
4. Gently return the kayak to a level position.
5. Repeat to exhaustion on both sides.



[Click here for "hip up" video \(3.57MB\)](#)

\* Repetition "hip ups" are great for off- or pre-season training, or as a non-paddling day exercise. It's great to do this while sitting in the living room in your kayak watching inspiring kayaking videos or DVDs (hint: wash the kayak first).

### Rolling without stress, and without water!

The following drill is extremely useful for people wanting to learn or improve their rolling technique - especially if they are a bit nervous in water.

1. Sit in the kayak holding the paddle, with the knuckles of your control hand in line with the paddle blade.



2. Using your knees and hips and a gentle brace to soften the impact, tip the kayak over on top of you.



3. Push the paddle upwards around the side of the boat to where the water's surface would be, and check that your forward paddle angle is correct (resting on top of the imaginary water surface). Your body should be tucked up close to the boat.



4. Sweep your paddle around to the side, into the position from which you will do a hip snap. Check that the paddle blade angle is still correct, flat on the water surface (=ground), and that the upper side of the kayak is tucked under your other arm.



5. Execute a hip snap to right the boat, drawing the blade towards you as you come up to keep your elbow down. Executed correctly, the motion is easy. If you lean too much on your paddle, or lift your head, it becomes very hard work; approaching impossible!



[Click here for rolling video \(3.02MB\)](#)

You can repeat these motions over and over again, on either or both sides, until your muscle memory is well established and bad habits are eliminated. You learn the motion and train the muscles all without leaving the comfort and convenience of your living room or back yard.

Don't laugh until you've tried it, it really works!

Learning to roll a whitewater kayak or a sea kayak can be a challenging and disorienting process. It can be distressing being under a capsized boat and confusing to sort out the required motions. Ideally an Eskimo roll should be a first response to flipping or capsizing, but for many people, the instinct to get out of the boat can be a hard inclination to override. Developing muscle memory and technique for a bombproof roll can make all the difference in your paddling pleasure. Being able to do this step-by-step, "at home", and on dry land, can have huge advantages.

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