

# **GPX USER GUIDE**

6 MARCH 2009 VERSION

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The Epic Kayaks website: [www.epickayaks.com](http://www.epickayaks.com)

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**Congratulations** on your purchase of an Epic Kayak! Whether you're a beginning recreational paddler or a highly competitive racer, your new Epic kayak will improve your paddling experience. After enjoying the benefits of lightweight, well-designed racing equipment, it was a shock to us the first time we paddled with heavy, unrefined touring kayaks and paddles. We thought, "Why can't modern technology be used to build better touring equipment?" We've paddled the equivalent of six times around the world with 70 years combined experience in all water conditions. Our passion for paddling and knowledge of high-performance racing technology is contained in every Epic-designed kayak and paddle. Our models are optimized for ease of handling, efficiency in the water, and to be extremely lightweight. We hope you enjoy our products as much as we do. See you on the water!

Greg Barton



2 X Olympic Gold Medalist

Oscar Chalupsky



11 x Molokai World Champion

**[www.epickayaks.com](http://www.epickayaks.com)**

**The Epic Kayaks website** ensures you have convenient access to the latest paddling news and articles, tips, a convenient calendar of events, user guides and product information -- all at your fingertips! And/or choose to subscribe to our monthly Epic e-newsletter and receive concise bulleted updates on a wide array of paddlesports happenings around the world.

Ease of navigation and content layout are key elements of the Epic website. We hope you enjoy the website as much as we do, and that it helps answer any questions you have regarding Epic and the exciting world of paddlesports. Feel free to contact us with any comments or questions at [info@epickayaks.com](mailto:info@epickayaks.com).

### **Out on the Water – Do the Comparison!**

You probably know all about Epic's superior design features – after all, you decided to buy one! However, on the dock, at the beach, or while you're out on the water, note and compare these design features in your new Epic kayak!

1. **Full Waterline Length.** Nearly the full length of an Epic kayak is in the water. Our experience and testing have shown that long overhanging bows offer no benefit. A full-length waterline provides maximum efficiency going forward, and creates more volume in the bow for better rough water performance.
2. **Swede Form Shape.** A Swede form kayak is wider behind the seat for better stability, and narrower in the bow for a smooth entry into the water and a close efficient stroke.
3. **Advanced Rocker Profile.** The rocker in Epic kayaks has been optimized to provide superb handling in all water conditions.
4. **Front Deck Cutaways.** Epic's cutaway front deck design allows a close, efficient catch at the start of every stroke.
5. **Integrated Thigh Braces.** The thigh braces on an Epic kayak are molded under the deck of the cockpit. Paddlers can lock their knees under the thigh braces for rough water performance, or keep their knees centered in the middle of the cockpit to incorporate leg movement for more efficiency and power.
6. **Lightweight, High Tech Materials.** Epic kayaks are made with strong, durable, lightweight materials including carbon fiber, aramid fabric, fiberglass and a specially formulated epoxy resin which is stronger and tougher than polyester or vinyl ester resin. Epic's sandwich core construction process with these materials ensures our kayaks are noticeably lighter than any of the competition.
7. **Vacuum Infusion with Heat Cure.** Epoxy resin is infused into our kayaks under full vacuum. This eliminates voids and produces Epic's signature high strength and lightweight standards. After infusion, our boats are post-cured at elevated temperatures to create the strongest and lightest kayaks on the market.

## THE GPX MODEL

### GPX Specifications

Length: 12'11" (3.94 m), Width: 25" (63.5 cm)

Weights: Value – 37 lbs/17 kg; Performance – 31 lbs/14 kg; Ultra – 25 lbs/11.4 kg

### GPX Cockpit – Fit and Connection While You Paddle

An important part of paddling a kayak is feeling a connection to the boat. A proper fit will allow you to use your body for propulsion, maneuvering, balance and general control.

To facilitate a better fit, many manufacturers design thigh braces in the cockpit of their kayaks. These thigh braces usually jut like wings from the inside of the cockpit ring, forward of the thighs, allowing the kayaker to lock their legs into the boat, providing a strong connection. This style of thigh brace satisfies the need for a connection to the boat, but has a major drawback. The paddler's legs remain in a locked position, thereby eliminating the freedom of movement and leg action that is essential for good paddling technique.

Epic Kayaks addresses this problem with a design that lengthens and widens the forward portion of the cockpit – allowing ease of entry, and allowing more knee room. The extra room provides ample space for leg movement and flexing of the knees. You will be able to rotate through your stroke for much more comfortable and efficient paddling (photo 1).

The need for a firm connection to your kayak has not been overlooked! The GPX cockpit design incorporates integrated thigh braces molded under the deck. Molded, rather than “wing-style”, thigh braces leave space for freedom of movement and will allow you to easily slide your legs under the thigh braces for a solid connection when you want one -- such as in rough water conditions, rolling, bracing or any other time you desire (photo 2). Look forward to many safe and comfortable hours in your GPX with Epic's unique and thoughtful cockpit design!



Photo 1. GPX -- knees/legs comfortably centered

Photo 2. GPX -- knees/legs locked under integrated thigh braces

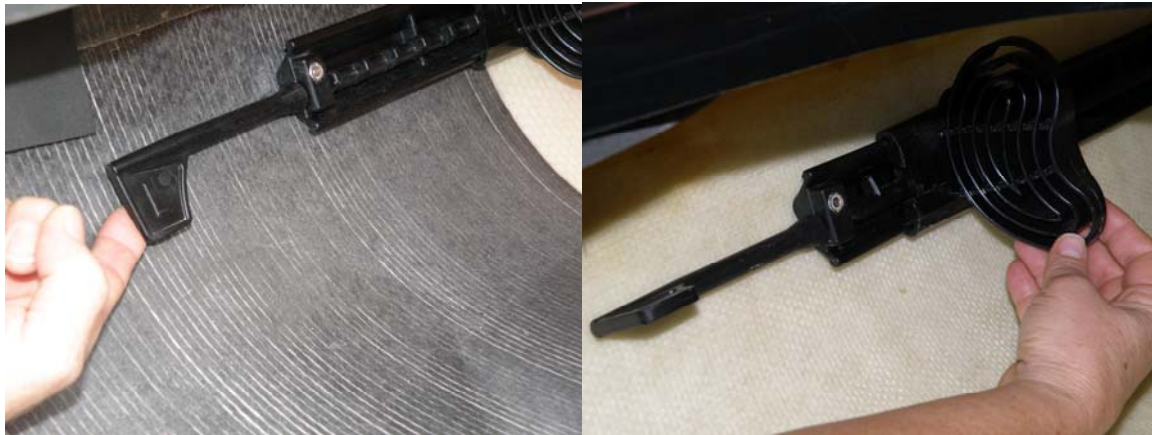
## GPX Footbrace

The Epic GPX comes equipped with a *Sea-Dog Line* adjustable footbrace. This pedal system is ergonomically designed and offers fourteen inches of adjustability, ensuring a comfortable custom fit.

### Operation

The GPX footbrace system is comprised of mounting rails and two independent foot pedals with lever locking mechanisms. When the lever lock is open, the pedal glides freely on the mounting rail, for custom positioning. With the lever lock closed, the pedal is secured in place on the mounting rail, providing a solid platform. To adjust the footbrace, you will adjust each foot pedal separately:

1. To disengage the lock, flip up the lever on the closest end of the mounting rail (photo 3).
2. Grasp the foot pedal and slide it to the desired position on the rail (photo 4).
3. Flip the lever down into the locked position, securing the foot pedal in place.



**Photo 3. GPX -- foot pedal lever locked down**

**Photo 4. GPX -- sliding foot pedal on rail with lock in neutral/open position**

### Correct Positioning

The foot pedals should be placed to provide a solid platform while ensuring maximum comfort. Spend a few minutes on land experimenting with different positions until you find the right one for your personal fit and style of paddling. Sit comfortably back in your seat. Maintain good posture. Ideally a slight bend in your knees will allow you to work your legs while paddling, and will also provide room to slide your legs under the integrated thigh braces when needed (photos 1 and 2).

### Maintenance

The adjustable *Sea-Dog Line* footbrace system is engineered to be virtually maintenance free. The components are very strong and should require little attention. However, to ensure the best performance and longevity from your equipment, a basic fresh water rinse after paddling is recommended. Build up of salt, sand and/or other contaminants on the footbrace system may hamper easy adjustment and proper function. Get in the habit of routinely spraying your footbrace rails and pedals after paddling to remove these materials and to keep your kayak in good working order.

## GPX Backband

The final adjustment, if needed, is the backband. Once the footbrace is adjusted, and using good paddling posture, determine whether the backband sits comfortably at your lower back. The fit of the backband is personal preference.

### Operation

To loosen or tighten the backband, use the straps, buckles and slack adjusters located at either side of the seat (photo 5). In addition, there are three pin settings for the backband vertical height. The vertical height pin and holes are located on the lower back side of the backband (photo 6). This is a less common adjustment, but one that is easy to do if you have a preference. NOTE: Be careful not to sit directly on the backband when entering and exiting your kayak!

### Maintenance

To ensure the best performance and longevity from your backband and associated hardware, a basic fresh water rinse after paddling is recommended, particularly when paddling in salt water.



Photo 5. GPX – straps and buckles for adjusting backband

Photo 6. GPX – vertical height pin and three adjustment holes on backband

## GPX Stern Storage Hatch

The Epic GPX is equipped with a large stern storage hatch. This bulk-headed hatch provides ample protected space for your personal belongings, and provides positive flotation for your kayak (a critical safety feature in the event of a capsized.)

Kayak hatches are designed to be dry and keep water out, but remember that this is a boat...never underestimate water's ability to find its way in!

Before placing gear in your kayak, always pack and properly seal your valuables and other storage items in "dry bags" or boxes/containers specifically designed for this purpose. When sealed in your hatch, this protection will ensure that even minuscule amounts of water will not reach and potentially damage your belongings.

The outside edge of the hatch cover is lined with a rubber seal that fits into the hatch deck contour, preventing water from entering the compartment. Two hatch straps fasten down to create a tight seal and keep the hatch cover firmly in place (photo 7).

### Operation

To release the hatch straps, open the hatch cover and access the compartment:

1. Flip over the metal cam lever in the center of the strap buckle (photo 8).
2. Pull back any excess strap length from the Velcro® hook and loop fastener; making sure the Velcro® pieces are completely free of each other.
3. With the lever open and the Velcro® undone, pull back on the strap buckle. This will create slack in the hatch straps for easy removal of the hatch cover (photo 9).
4. Reverse the steps to re-fasten the hatch cover in place.



Photo 7. GPX -- hatch strap tightened with metal cam lever locked down

Photo 8. GPX -- metal cam lever flipped up and open



Photo 9. GPX -- levers open, Velcro®/straps loosened, hatch cover removed

## Maintenance

Check the hatch frequently to make sure your straps and buckles are in good working order. Rinse them thoroughly with fresh water after paddling, particularly when paddling in salt water. Look inside the hatch periodically, particularly after rolling practice or a rough water session, or when storing your kayak outdoors in the rain. Sponge out any water that may have seeped in. Make sure the hatch cover rubber seal remains sound and intact by keeping it clean and free of salt, sand and contaminants. A light layer of *303 Protectant*, or a similar product, applied with a clean cloth, will help to keep the rubber seal in good condition.

## GPX Deck Rigging

The GPX is equipped with a full set of deck rigging, including deck bungees and perimeter safety lines. The elastic deck bungees fastened in front of and immediately behind the cockpit are there for safety and to provide extra storage space. Store items for immediate convenient access, or store those things that simply won't fit into the stern storage hatch. This might include items such as a spare paddle, safety gear, or maps and charts. The bungee located immediately behind the cockpit may be used as part of a paddle float-assisted self-rescue.

The non-elastic perimeter deck cords are an important safety feature. In the event of a wet exit, the perimeter deck lines are the quickest and easiest way to grab your kayak and hold onto it, while you collect yourself and prepare for a self or assisted rescue.

## Maintenance

Check all bungee and perimeter safety lines periodically to make sure there are no weaknesses, cuts or abrasions. If you find a faulty line or bungee on your boat, replace it immediately. Give all deck rigging and lines a quick rinse with fresh water after paddling, especially when paddling in salt water, to remove salt, sand and any other materials.

## Overall Kayak Care

Your Epic kayak is for the most part "wash and wear." If done on a regular basis, kayak maintenance should be minimal, consume little time and can actually be an enjoyable part of paddling. Routine maintenance not only takes care of your boat, but helps you foster a bond with your kayak. After all, your kayak needs to take care of you as well. It's an important relationship!

Perhaps the simplest (yet important) task is washing your kayak. This should be routine and automatic, especially after every saltwater or beach paddling session. A good rinse with fresh water is all it takes. It is essential to keep the cockpit and its components (seat, foot pedals, etc.) clear of salt and grit to prevent corrosion and jamming of the parts. For a more detailed cleaning, dish washing soap or mild boat cleaners can be used to remove any dirt, grime or stains. We use a product called *Roll-Off*. It is very effective, biodegradable and comes in a convenient spray bottle.

Occasionally look your boat over thoroughly, on the exterior and interior. On the exterior look for any damage or cracks, make sure there are no structural problems. You're bound to find scratches. Sometimes a very fine buffing compound or polishing compound can help remove scratches, but usually it is better to leave them alone. Check the condition of all deck lines and bungee cords as well as handles and hatch straps. Be sure to replace anything worn or frayed, tighten any hardware that is loose, and contact your local dealer for advice on repair work that needs to be done.

Protecting your kayak from harmful UV rays will keep it sound and looking its best for many years. There are a number of products available that work well. *303 Protectant* and *UV Tech* are two examples that may be sprayed on the boat then wiped down with a rag. This simple process protects, and restores shine. You only need to do this 3-4 times a year.

## Take Special Care of Your Ultra Layup!

Epic Kayaks is committed to manufacturing the finest kayaks available using only the highest quality materials. If you have purchased an Ultra layup you know they are exceptionally light, but they require more care when handling. Avoid direct impact with hard objects such as rocks, which can dent and/or delaminate the lightweight honeycomb core. Do not tie your Ultra kayak directly onto hard metal racks! Appropriately shaped saddles or padding are required to eliminate stress concentrations when transporting and storing your Ultra layup boat.

## Storing Your Kayak

Available storage options obviously depend on your available space. Ideally, store your kayak indoors, in a garage or barn. Your kayak may be on the ground, on wall racks or stands, or suspended from the ceiling (to save space.) For floor storage, use padded saw horses or kayak cradles. In the bow, space the horse or cradle so that the kayak's front bulkhead rests on top of it (about 1/3 distance from the bow). In the stern, place the horse or cradle about halfway between the seat and the stern. For suspended storage, use polypropylene straps that wrap around rafters or hooks in the ceiling, and then loop under the kayak generally in these same locations. Do not use the kayak carry handles for hanging storage.

For outdoor storage use the same padded sawhorses and/or cradles that you would use inside. However, take some additional critical steps to protect your kayak from the elements. Store your kayak out of direct sunlight. Keep rain, snow and ice off your kayak; long-term parking in the shade is not enough. From the hardware store get a weatherproof tarp. Once you know where you want to store the boat, put the storage racks and kayak in place. Create a protective tent with the tarp, using some rope and wooden stakes. You can even use existing fences and trees to tie off if needed. A "tent" is better than wrapping the kayak with the tarp. Wrapping can keep moisture and other contaminants trapped close to the hull. Also, make sure the kayak is well secured and protected from the wind, so it does not blow off your stands and get damaged.



Regardless of whether you store your kayak inside or outside, here are a few simple storage points:

- In the bow, space horses, cradles or straps so that the kayak's front bulkhead rests on top of them (about 1/3 distance from the bow). In the stern, place horses, cradles or straps about halfway between the seat and the stern
- Loosen hatch straps to reduce tension, particularly for long term storage (this helps ensure the long life of your hatch seals)
- Make sure the kayak is clean and completely dry, inside and out (especially in cold climates)
- The decision of whether to store your boat in a cover is a personal one, however, use one for long term storage only if you are sure your boat will remain dry
- Use a cockpit cover when storing outdoors (keeps out debris and critters)
- Apply a UV protectant for long term storage

Excellent storage rack options may be found at:

- [www.maloneautoracks.com](http://www.maloneautoracks.com)
- [www.talic.com](http://www.talic.com)

## Transporting Your Kayak

Even if you live on the water, eventually you'll have to load up and drive your kayak somewhere. Luckily, there are a great selection of rack systems and car-topping accessories that make kayak transportation a cinch. Many cars, vans and SUV's also now come standard with pretty decent factory roof racks. Transporting your kayak right side up or upside down is personal preference, as is the use of a boat cover. The main objective is to make sure your kayak is securely fastened to whatever rack system you have chosen, and to ensure driver visibility is not compromised. The systems can vary from inexpensive foam blocks to more pricey aftermarket cross bars that incorporate all types of accessories for transporting. We recommend that you talk with your local paddlesports retailer about what roof rack options are available for the vehicle you use. Most retailers will have a variety of options, will be able to install whatever you choose to use on your vehicle and will also show you how to properly secure your kayak.

Below are a few recommended companies to consider for kayak transportation:

- Thule – [www.thuleracks.com](http://www.thuleracks.com)
- Malone – [www.maloneautoracks.com](http://www.maloneautoracks.com)
- Yakima – [www.yakima.com](http://www.yakima.com)

## Recommended Gear and Accessories

The following list of accessories and safety items represents essential gear that should be accounted for each time you head out on the water. Having the items on this list will help ensure you have the capability to perform self-rescues, signal for help, and will make your overall paddling experience more comfortable and enjoyable. Check with the maritime authorities in your area (e.g. the Coast Guard) to determine applicable sea kayak regulations.

- PFD (Personal Flotation Device)
- Whistle or other sound-signaling device
- Spray Skirt
- Spare Paddle
- Compass and/or handheld GPS
- Paddle Float
- Hand Pump (for bailing)

- Sponge (for bailing)
- Tow Line
- Dry Bags (for your stored items)
- Cell Phone / VHF radio
- First aid kit
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Hat
- Water

## Warranty Terms

Epic Kayaks warrants all products to be free from defects in materials and workmanship for one year from the date of purchase. This warranty applies to the original owner and is non-transferable. If damage is due to a material or manufacturing defect, Epic will repair or replace the kayak free of charge. Epic reserves the right to determine if a product will be covered under warranty. Normal wear, cosmetic blemishes, and damage due to improper use, modification, negligence or transport are not covered under warranty. Demo equipment is not covered under warranty. Your original invoice is your proof of purchase.

## Returns (Warranty/Repairs)

To pursue a customer warranty claim, contact your local dealer. We will work with you through your local dealer. If this process does not meet your expectations, you are welcome to contact Epic Kayaks directly. Follow the procedures below:

- Contact Epic – we need the kayak serial number, model, color and location where purchased. You will be assigned a Return Authorization number (RA#) for tracking your claim. Failure to follow this procedure will result in a 10% restocking fee
- Epic will provide a correct return address (we have several locations)
- Your shipment should include your RA#, name, address and clear contact information, along with the reason for returning the item
- You are responsible for the shipping cost to Epic, however, Epic will pay return shipping costs
- Please call customer service with any questions, NEVER send product to Epic without an RA#