

Heritage Kayaks

Online Owner's Manual – Featherlite

Welcome to Heritage Kayaks!

Thanks for purchasing your Featherlite kayak! We've produced it in Greensboro, North Carolina, USA for your enjoyment. As paddlers ourselves, we're excited about sharing passion for our sport with you.

In order for you to get the most from your paddling your Featherlite, we encourage you to

- familiarize yourself with the waters on which you'll be paddling,
- check the weather that might affect your trip, and
- learn how to use your gear safely.

You can locate, download and print this *Heritage Kayaks Owner's Manual* while you're at www.heritagekayaks.com, learn how to get the most enjoyment from your Featherlite, and discover additional information about other Heritage Kayaks products.

If you have questions that are not answered here or have comments about our products, call us at (866) 438-2799, or email a message to us at info@heritagekayaks.com.

We'll see you ... on the water!

Sincerely,

The Heritage Kayaks Team

Lifetime Warranty

It's yours, when you register your boat at www.heritagekayaks.com

Remember to register your Featherlite online. We stand behind our products, so if you've registered your boat and feel that it has failed due to faulty materials or workmanship, you can bring it to your Heritage Kayaks retailer and we will repair or replace it.

Your Heritage Kayaks Featherlite is made from the highest quality materials available chosen for durability, reliability and performance. The following tips are intended to help you enjoy it to the fullest extent possible.

Superlinear® Kayaks

Rotationally molded boats are engineered to combine stiffness, impact and abrasion resistance. Superlinear polyethylene can endure extended exposure to both ultraviolet light and temperature variation, and can be stored outdoors successfully. When you are paddling Heritage Kayaks made with Superlinear polyethylene, you can focus on your paddling experience without distraction or concern for your boat's durability.

Superlinear polyethylene is a tough, resilient material. It can withstand a reasonable absorb a reasonable amount of impact and usage over rough surfaces.

Featherlite elite Composite™

Beautiful and sleek, the Featherlite *elite Composite* kayaks are crafted with state-of-the art materials and utilize *vacuum bagging* techniques to eliminate all unnecessary non-structural weight. They are light, stiff and able to accommodate the weight of paddlers and recommended gear loads.

Heritage Kayaks are carefully designed with sufficient flotation to insure that they will not sink during if capsized in an unloaded state.

DVC™ Seating System

Each new Heritage Kayaks seat Drain, Vent, and Cushion with environmentally-friendly materials that provide you with an extremely comfortable ride. DVC seats utilize HiFlow™ 3-D Mesh (patent pending for watercraft), a 100% recyclable padding material. Chlorofluorocarbons* are not required for its production, unlike many other foam products. The Textilene® solar screen fabric is designed to withstand five (5) years of daily exposure to the sun's rays before it begins to break down. DVC seats are light in color, so they stay much cooler than the traditionally black kayak seats.

* When released during production, cfc's destroy ozone in the atmosphere, thereby increasing our exposure to the sun's ultraviolet rays.

To get the seat ready for paddling:

- Release the bungee that holds the seatback to the seat pan.
- Adjust the side strap tension buckles so that your seat position is comfortable.

Gear Storage

Deck Rigging

Elastic 'bungee' cord on the deck of your kayak is installed to hold items you want to reach easily while you're paddling. Your stored items will be exposed to the elements and splashes from paddling, so choose items that are water resistant or waterproof. Store items on the deck that are fairly light: heavy items may make the boat feel unstable while you paddle.

When you are on the water, check items stored under the bungee deck rigging periodically to make sure they are snug and secure.

Hatch Storage

(Featherlite 12, 14 only)

The hatch is accessible by a specially-molded hatch cover. It

- allows you to get to your gear quickly and easily
- tethers to the boat so it won't get lost, and
- creates a waterproof seal.

A bulkhead (available on the Featherlite 12 and Featherlite 14) is located between the hatch and the sitting area. Bulkheads improve hull rigidity and help keep the storage compartments dry by blocking water from entering end chambers from the cockpit area.

To open the hatch: Find the tab molded to the hatch cover. Insert your fingers under that tab. Work them around the entire edge of the hatch cover, gently lifting pulling it up and away from the boat. Once you've lifted the entire hatch edge from the boat, pull it free. Place your gear into the dry storage space, placing heavier items towards bottom of kayak and lighter equipment on top.

To seal the hatch: Place the hatch cover over the hatch rim and engage an inch or two of the hatch by pressing down with your thumbs, or the heels of your hands. Press down on each side of the hatch around to the far end. When you've made your way around, you'll feel the hatch cover drop down and lock onto the hatch rim.

The bow compartment and space behind the seat are available for stowing gear. To stow gear in the bow compartment, slide your equipment forward from the cockpit.

Gear stored in an area inside the hull should be stowed in such a way that it won't shift or slide while underway and possibly impede safe operation of your kayak. *We recommend stowing gear in waterproof bags unless it can get wet without harm.* It is also wise to tether gear to the seat or to other stowed items so that if you capsize your gear will remain with the boat.

Footbraces

Adjustable foot braces allow you to reposition your foot position quickly and easily while ashore or while you're paddling. To adjust your kayak's footbrace position, pinch the footpad and trigger on the bow side between your thumb and fore or middle finger to release the pad from the track. Move it along the track until it finds a position at which your legs are comfortably bent and your feet can apply firm pressure, to provide comfortable control while you're paddling.

Carry Handles

Handles attached to the front and rear ends of your kayak allow you to carry your end of the boat with ease. They also provide tie-down attachment points when you are securing your boat to a roof rack or trailer.

Rudder (optional)

The rudder comes secured to the boat with a bungee cord. When you release this, your rudder will become available to use and your footbraces will be free to direct the rudder position.

To lower the rudder:

- Look for the rope on the deck that is used to raise and lower the rudder. It features two barrel knots.

- Grab the barrel knot that is farthest aft (toward the stern) and pull it forward.

Adjust your footbraces so that your knees are comfortably bent. You should be able to exert a reasonable amount of force on either footbrace before your knee is completely straightened. You should now be able to steer to the right or left by applying pressure on the right or left footbrace, respectively.

To retract the rudder:

- Check to be sure the rudder is centered behind the boat. This will be the case if your footbraces are positioned at the same distance from you.
- Look again to the rope on the deck that features two barrel knots. Choose the knot that is farthest aft, and pull it pull it forward. Your rudder should exit the water easily and land in the ‘vee’ notch of the rudder holder.
- When you’re ready to load your boat on to a vehicle or trailer, re-secure the rudder with the bungee as it was when you started out.

Care and Maintenance

The ideal environment for storing your kayak is a shaded, dry one.

A **fresh water rinse** for the hull and all moving parts is all that is necessary to keep your boat clean. It is heartily recommended after paddling in salt water, especially if your boat is outfitted with a rudder system. Thoroughly rinse the rudder, rudder cables, and foot braces with fresh water to remove dirt, sand and salt.

We also recommend that you treat your DVC seat with a **mold retardant cleaner** (found at grocery or home improvement stores) if you use it infrequently or if it will be stored in either a moist environment or one in which there is little air circulation.

You should periodically **lubricate** the hatch cover, rim and all moving parts (like the footbraces) to keep them in top working order. We recommend using 303 Lubricant, available at outdoor specialty and select home improvement retailers.

Superlinear® polyethylene is a tough, resilient material. It can withstand a reasonable amount of impact and usage over rough surfaces. While Superlinear is not indestructible, it is repairable. Contact your local Heritage Kayaks dealer for additional information regarding polyethylene repair.

303 Lubricant can be also used to protect the luster of the boat's surface. Over time and with continued use, abrasion can reduce the hull's ability to glide smoothly through the water. You can minimize raised texture on the hull with a sharp knife or sand paper.

An off-the-shelf wax like that which you use on your car will protect your **elite Composite kayak** exterior from the long term effects of water, wind and mild abrasion.

If you incur damage that compromises the boat such that it requires a repair, contact your local Heritage Kayaks dealer for assistance.

To remove the DVC seat for periodic cleaning:

- Pinch the quick-release buckles.
- Loosen the two straps at the base of the seat back by lifting the release tab with your finger(s)
- Unthread the straps, through the pad eyes.
- Unhook the rear attachment bungee from the seat tensioning bungee at the intersection of the back and seat pad.

To reinstall the DVC seat:

- Attach the seat webbing straps by threading them through their respective pad eyes and release buckles.
- Attach the side straps via their respective quick-release buckles.
- Attach the rear attachment bungee hook to the seat tensioning bungee in the rear at the intersection of the back and seat pad.

Periodically check the tension in the buckles at the back base of your DVC Seat to keep it from sliding around. This will minimize the wear on all straps

To repair bulkhead leaks: Small gaps may develop between the hull and bulkhead from normal use, over time. They will allow water to enter the otherwise dry storage area. You can seal such gaps easily by applying Lexel® caulk, available at hardware and home improvement stores.

Storing your Featherlite

If you store your kayak above the ground or floor: disperse the kayak's load (so the entire weight is not focused on two narrow points, inviting deformation) by effectively widening the bars with attachments such as 1" x 4" wood or closed cell foam (e.g., pipe insulation or foam 'noodles' often sold as pool toys).

Polyethylene softens somewhat when it is exposed to extremely warm conditions. If your kayak is strapped tightly to a roof rack or sitting on a storage rack during a series of hot days, it may deform. You can encourage your boat to remember its original shape by unstrapping it and setting it on a flat or padded surface in the sunlight.

We recommend "burping" the hatches or releasing the hatch covers entirely if the air temperature remains high for extended periods.

Transporting Your Featherlite

In order for you to transport your kayak securely, we strongly suggest that you install a rigid bar sport rack system on the roof of your vehicle. In addition, kayak cradle-shaped accessories are available which support the hull's rounded (in cross section) profile: we recommend these, as well.

Additional Gear

When you paddle you should use a paddle that is comfortable to use, wear a PFD's (life vest, life jacket), and carry safety equipment and appropriate personal gear.

Paddle

The choice of a paddle is as personal as the choice of your boat. Factors to consider in selecting your paddle include blade shape, length, weight and material. Synthetic paddles are the most care free. Most paddlers use paddles between 225 and 240 cm in length: you should try different lengths and types of paddles before you make a purchase, just as you'd test paddle your boat.

Take-apart paddles offer the ability to change its blade angle ("feather") to suit your preference, and are easy to store and transport. A spare paddle is

good to have as well. It can be an inexpensive take-apart paddle that can be stowed easily on deck.

PFD – Personal Flotation Device

A comfortable and securely-fitting PFD is an absolutely essential paddling accessory that should be worn when you're in your kayak. Try your PFD on before you make a purchase, to be sure it fits comfortably. Swing your arms and rotate your torso to make sure you can move your arms freely without feeling restricted.

If you will be wearing a sprayskirt or have a short torso, wear it while sitting in a boat: it should not ride up more than an inch or two, and someone should be able to pick you up by its shoulders without it riding up over your head. If it does, adjust the outfitting or try another model / size.

Sprayskirt

A sprayskirt is handy to ward off small, infrequent waves or to hide your legs from the merciless sun. It is essential when you want to venture from shore, or when there is even a remote chance that you'll encounter rough conditions.

Test all sprayskirts ashore prior to using them afloat. It should go on fairly easily, and release quickly when you pull the grab loop at the front of the skirt. Each time you attach your spray skirt to your kayak, double check to make sure the grab loop is available.

Cockpit Cover

A cockpit cover may become your favorite “off water” accessory. Its waterproof fabric attaches around the cockpit rim to keep the inside of the kayak dry, clean and free of critters. In addition, if you transport your kayak on a trailer or roof rack with the cockpit up, using a cockpit cover will allow you to carry items in the boat while you transport it, and will keep rain out of the boat which, if substantial, can create difficulty when you unload it from your rack.

Safety Equipment

You should carry a bilge pump with your sit inside kayak to rid the interior of standing water that can destabilize your ride. You should also carry a paddle

float (perhaps attached to your PFD) to either assist you in your Eskimo roll, or to simply re-enter the boat if you capsize. United States Coast Guard regulations require an audible signal device (horn or whistle) on all watercraft.

Note: Safety equipment is not worth much unless you know how to use it. We recommend that you obtain qualified instruction and practice under controlled, comfortable conditions.

Personal Gear

The following is a list of items that you should keep with you on every trip in a dry storage bags or cases:

- drinking water
- sunscreen
- a brimmed hat and sunglasses
- insect repellent
- compass
- waterproof flashlight
- matches or a lighter, and
- a first aid kit

The following should also be considered:

- A dry set of clothes, if the weather and water will not dry you quickly after a capsize
- Weather radio
- Global positioning device (GPS)
- Cell phone
- Navigation charts
- Repair kit
 - o Duct tape
 - o Screwdriver
 - o Vise grips
 - o Spare cord
 - o Knife

If you have additional questions about your new product from Heritage Kayaks or would like to learn about any of our suggested accessories, please ask your dealer. They will be happy to help you get to your next day on the water safely, and soon!

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www.heritagekayaks.com

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