

Gunnel Launching my Kayak, Version 1.0

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I'm protective of my skeg. It is plastic and easily damaged. How do I put my kayak into the water without snapping off my beloved skeg?

Sure, I might be able to install the skeg while in the water, but that would be difficult, and I would get completely soaked.

Attaching the skeg first and then carrying the kayak out to deep enough water is equally fraught with danger. If I drop the kayak, bye-bye skeg.

At the places I put in, there is enough draft for the skeg if the bow is at the shore, and the rest of the kayak is in the water. No way around it, my feet will get wet. It is just a matter of degree.



My solution involves using a strap. I can do this with the kayak fully loaded.



When I am at the water's edge, I slip on this strap, which is a loose fit. I can then place the kayak on the starboard gunnel with the hull next to me, steady the kayak with my right hand by holding onto the strap, and install the skeg with my left hand.

I then lift the kayak and float the stern out on the side of the gunnel. When I'm sure the skeg will clear, I rotate the kayak down, unbuckle the belt, and remove it.

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At the end of my voyage, I place the bow at the water's edge.

Then I rotate the kayak, so it is on its starboard gunnel. Next, I drape the strap over the kayak. I can steady the kayak, reach into the water under the gunnel, and grab the end of the strap. After joining the ends, I lift the kayak by the strap and walk it ashore. Again steadying the kayak, I can remove the skeg and then rotate the kayak to its horizontal position.



I attach my cart to the bow, and away I go.

I welcome your comments and questions.

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