

# Rolling Up A Sevylor Colorado Kayak, Version 1.2

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I am the proud owner of a (used) Sevylor Colorado kayak. It is an inflatable which is ideal for transport in my little Honda Fit. The guy that sold it to me mentioned that it barely fit in the transport bag. After a few trips, I came up with a procedure that compacts it enough to easily fit in the bag along with a few more pieces of gear.



The main reason I chose to write this up is because I didn't like the few YouTube videos on this subject. Granted, it *should*

be obvious how to roll up the kayak tightly. Yet it wasn't for me.

Starting with the blindly obvious: The inflatable cannot fully compact if there is any air trapped inside. Easier said than done. Secondly, in order to roll it into the shortest possible package, the sides have to be kept folded in. Also not so easy to do since you run out of hands. It takes both hands to roll the kayak and two more to hold the gunnels in.

So, at the risk of insulting your intelligence, here is how I roll up my Sevylor Colorado.

My air pump does have the ability to both inflate and deflate. I have found that it is much faster to press out the air than suck it out with the pump.

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Working backwards from the inflation instructions, I need to deflate the seat pads first. This is done by pulling out each nozzle and inserting the proper fitting into it. This is the same fitting used to inflate the seat.

*See the bottom of page 6 for a better way to let the air out which was suggested by Bill Glatzel.*

After bleeding as much air as possible from this seat pad, repeat the process on the other seat pad. I don't get all of the air out.



Next, I bled out the air from the floor. This is the same valve as on the seat pads. Leave the fitting installed in this valve.





With the floor partially deflated, I unscrew the two Boston valves to deflate the gunnels. I completely remove them.



I don't know if these elastic straps are standard, but they were on my kayak when I bought it. They sure are handy.

I strap the deflated gunnels together.



With the gunnels strapped in two places, it is a nice, narrow package.



Starting at the end that does not have the floor valve, I start to *slowly* roll up the kayak. When I get to the first seat pad, I stop and bleed air out of it. Roll a little, bleed, roll a little more. Eventually I will have rolled past the pad and it will be flat. I continue to roll up until I get to the second seat pad. Then I repeat the procedure. All the while, the floor will continue to deflate because I have left in the fitting.



When I get to the floor valve, all of the air should be out of the kayak. If not, I rolled too fast.



The roll should be a dense cylinder.



It is hard to make out much in this picture, but the kayak is in its carrying bag. There is plenty of room for the seat and even a life jacket.

Once I get the kayak home, I unroll it to let it fully dry. Here in Phoenix, AZ, this does not take long.

Dirt can then be easily brushed off the hull. Since it was not in salt water, I don't bother rinsing it off.

Bill Glatzel had a few insights on the subject:

*“Ever try a pump that also vacuums. A lot of higher quality air pumps also suck air by moving the hose. I have had Sevylor rafts over the years and all kinds of beach toys. Most compact method was to use suction to empty them flat. Valves that have flaps that resist de-inflation, I use coffee stirrers, the type that look like small soda straws. Insert them in and allow most of the air to escape. Then suction out the remaining air. Most items can fit back into their original package after using this method.*

*Also do not store your raft folded. If there is any moisture inside it can adhere to itself. Best to lay it flat and open air valves. I had a raft that would not unroll after storage, it was so badly stuck together.”*

I have tried using a pump to better deflate my kayak but was happy with the compaction without this step. I also wonder if the reason the inside of Bill's raft stuck to itself was due to plasticizer coming out of the surface of the air chamber. It tends to be sticky and would certainly fuse the inside surfaces together if all air was sucked out.

Recently I tried using small soda straws to hold open the valves in the floor and seat pads of my kayak while I was rolling it up. This technique worked perfectly. I removed these straws as I reached them while rolling so the valves did not take a set and subsequently leak.

## Acknowledgments

Thanks to “jdurand” of homemadetools.net for finding a typo. Thanks to Bill Glatzel for sharing his experiences.

I welcome your comments and questions.

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