

V-SERIES SURF SKI USER GUIDE



epic
KAYAKS

Congratulations on your purchase of an Epic surf ski! Whether you're a beginning recreational paddler or a highly competitive racer, your new Epic surf ski will improve your paddling experience. Our models are optimized for ease of handling, efficiency in the water, and are extremely light weight. We hope you enjoy our products as much as we do. See you on the water!

Greg Barton



2 X Olympic Gold Medalist
2 x Olympic Bronze Medalist
4 x World Championship Gold Medalist

Designed by Champions





www.epickayaks.com

The Epic Kayaks website ensures you have convenient access to the latest paddling news and articles, tips, user guides and product information -- all at your fingertips!

Ease of navigation and content layout are key elements of the Epic website. We hope you enjoy the website, and that it helps answer any questions you have regarding your new Epic and the exciting world of surf ski paddling. Refer to our FAQ page <https://www.epickayaks.com/faq> for answers to Frequently Asked Questions.

V-SERIES SURF SKIS:

Layup Information:

Polyethylene

Rotomoulded Polyethylene

Molded in graphics

Performance

Infusion grade foam core

A composite hybrid of fiberglass, carbon fiber, and Kevlar

Vacuum infused, heat-cured epoxy

Black bow & stern accents

Ultra

Nomex honeycomb core

A composite hybrid of Woven Kevlar fabric, carbon fiber and fiberglass

Vacuum bagged, heat-cured epoxy

Red bow & stern accents

Elite

Nomex honeycomb core

3K carbon fiber laminate

Vacuum bagged, heat-cured epoxy

Black or Grey gel coat with white bow and stern accents. light cosmetic imperfections should be expected in the finish of the Elite layup boats.

V-Series Specifications

See www.epickayaks.com for your model specifications or reach out to info@epickayaks.com

The V-Series Footboard System

The V-Series footboard system (photo 1) has been designed to enhance leg drive and body rotation for an optimal forward stroke. The carbon fiber footboard fits across the width of the single footwell, giving paddlers the luxury of comfortably centering both feet and knees. A centered foot and knee position allows better leg movement and full rotation for a more comfortable, powerful and efficient forward stroke.

The V-Series footboard system is fully adjustable. We recommend you initially set the footboard to your desired setting on land, or in calm shallow water, while protecting the rudder. This will allow you to get in and out if necessary, and easily make adjustments in a safe environment. Once set to the desired length, the footboard remains locked in position.

Two pedals on top of the footboard operate the rudder at the back of the ski. This provides a solid platform to brace your legs, while still allowing you to control the rudder with your toes.

See our FAQ page for videos on how to set up your new Surfski

<https://www.epickayaks.com/faq>



Photo 1. V-Series footboard system

Photo 2. V-Series back side of footboard system, dyneema cord and pins to adjust length

Footboard Operation

The footboard runs on two rails which are attached to either side of the footwell (photo 2). The rails have notched holes that catch pins coming from the back of the footboard. Follow the procedure below to adjust the settings of your footboard:

1. Reach behind the footboard and grasp the dyneema cord running the length of the backside.
2. Pull on the cord to release the pins that set the footboard in the rails.

3. While pulling the cord (with the pins released) use the palm of your hand to slide the footboard forward or back to the desired position.
4. Once the footboard is in position, let go of the cord. This will release the pins back into the rails.
5. Apply pressure to ensure that the holes on the rails capture the pins and lock in the footboard. The rudder lines running through the pedals on top of the footboard are self-adjusting. Simply set the footboard at the desired setting and you're ready to go.

It may take one or two tries to find the optimal position, but the luxury of this system is that you can try as many as you like! And, use the handy number scale on the side of the footwell to reset your footboard position if someone else uses your boat!

Correct Positioning of the Footboard

Setting up your surf ski is a personal task. We recommend you position the footboard so it provides a solid platform for your feet, allows comfortable leg extension on your forward stroke, and allows easy manipulation of the toe pedals for rudder control. A slight bend to your knees will ensure you can rotate and work your legs while paddling. Use the Velcro® strap adjustment to set footstrap tightness.

Footboard Maintenance

The V-Series footboard is very user friendly and you should not encounter any problems with its operation. Routinely rinsing the footboard, rails and footstrap after use will keep salt, sand and other debris from collecting and hindering the action of the footboard. A light application of silicone spray applied to the notched rails once or twice a season will keep your footboard moving smoothly.



The V-Series Rudder

Rudder Operation

The V-Series rudder is operated with the two toe pedals on top of the carbon footboard. This “gas pedal” type system is extremely easy to operate. To turn the bow of the surf ski to the right, simply push the right toe pedal forward. To bring it back to center, push the left pedal forward until the two pedals are back in line vertically (and vice versa to point the bow to the left.)

While underway the rudder does not lock in a fixed center position. To keep the rudder centered and “neutral”, keep equal pressure on the toe pedals, keeping them both in line. This is a natural and comfortable position, and allows for instant corrections while paddling.

Do not over-correct with your rudder! V-Series surf skis are surprisingly maneuverable, and the rudder is easy to use and very responsive. While underway, start your corrections in small increments, with small adjustments to the rudder, and then correct accordingly. Pushing the pedals back and forth aggressively will only frustrate you and keep the ski from finding the line you want!

Rudder Options & Initial Rudder Installation

V-Series surf skis are sold with either Epic’s surf, weedless, universal or roughwater weedless rudder depending on where the ski is purchased. All rudder designs are installed the same way. New surf skis are sent from Epic with the following materials included: rudder, rudder pin, spreader bar (with rudder lines attached), and an allen wrench. The smaller items are shipped inside the rudder access cover (photo 4) or inside the Velcro pouch on your rudder flag. The rudder is wrapped separately for protection, and then secured and shipped in the footwell.



Photo 3. V-Series – installed Universal rudder and small weed guard

Photo 4. V-Series – rudder access cover with materials as shipped: allen wrench, spreader bar, rudder pins

To install the rudder, begin by opening the rudder access cover (loosen in a counter-clockwise direction). Run the rudder post up through the rudder housing in the hull of the ski (photo 5). Then put the rudder pin through the small hole in the top of the rudder post and center the pin (photos 6 and 7). The pin ensures the rudder post is firmly captured and cannot spin in the spreader bar assembly once the assembly is tightened. Place the spreader bar over the top of the rudder post (photo 8) and tighten the two spreader bar bolts so that the top of the rudder post and the pin ends are pinched and held fast. Tighten the screws with the allen wrench (photos 9 and 10).



Photo 5. V-Series – run rudder post up through rudder housing in hull of boat

Photo 6. V-Series – place rudder pin through hole in top of rudder post



Photo 7. V-Series – center rudder pin in rudder post

Photo 8. V-Series – place spreader bar over top of rudder post



Photo 9. V-Series – once spreader bar is over the top of the rudder post, use allen wrench to tighten the spreader bar bolts so that top of rudder post and pin ends are pinched and held fast

Photo 10. V-Series – rudder installed

Correct Positioning/Adjustments of the Rudder

The rudder is controlled with rudder lines that run from the white barrel adjuster (turnbuckle), through the footboard pedals back to a spreader bar in the stern. The spreader bar is accessed by removing the small, round rudder access cover at the stern of the ski. The cover loosens in a counter-clockwise direction.

The rudder lines, by being joined at the barrel adjuster and spreader bar effectively form a complete loop. This allows the footboard to be moved forward or backwards along the track, without needing adjustment. If at any time the rudder becomes out of alignment (Pedals are parallel and the rudder is not straight), corrections can be made as follows: Align the rudder in a straight position (best done with a 2nd person who can hold the rudder in the straight position) take up the slack at the pedals, one will be further forward than the other (as they are out of alignment). Move the forward pedal back half the distance between the two pedals, this will create a small amount of slack behind this pedal, pass/work the slack through that pedal, through the rail end, across the front of the cockpit and back through the opposing pedal, by so doing you have brought the forward paddle back by half the distance between them and moved the rear pedal forward by the same amount. They should now be aligned. If not, a 2nd 'fine tune' adjustment using the same method may be required.

Adjustments to the pedal angles (typically they line up with the footboard) can be made using the barrel adjuster, to unscrew the adjuster creates more length in the loop, and will allow the pedals to be further forward, to tighten/shorten brings the pedals back towards the paddler. Those that paddle with footwear may want their pedals further forward to limit unwanted pedal input during the leg drive.

Rudder Maintenance & Removal

Maintaining and working with V-Series rudders is easy. They are designed to be low profile, unobtrusive and hassle free. There is very little hardware and few moving parts to worry about. Remove the cover and rinse the rudder in fresh water after you paddle.

To switch out rudders or completely remove the rudder for maintenance or repair, begin by opening the rudder access cover (loosen in a counter-clockwise direction). The

spreader bar assembly is opened by loosening the two spreader bar bolts -- use the allen wrench provided with your boat (photo 11). Once the spreader bar bolts are unfastened, the rudder will be loose. BEFORE pulling the rudder post free from the hull, be sure to remove the small pin inserted in the top of the rudder post. This will allow you to pull the rudder blade and post completely clear of the rudder housing. Keep track of your pin (e.g. tape it to your rudder) (photo 12)! Reattach a rudder by tightening the spreader bar assembly back around the rudder post and pin when the rudder is back in place (if needed see Initial Rudder Installation section above).



Photo 11. V-Series – loosen spreader bar assembly using allen wrench

Photo 12. V-Series – be sure to remove and keep track of rudder pin removed from top of rudder post, e.g., tape it to your rudder post

Smart Track Overstern Rudder

Some Surf Skis (V6) come standard with the Smart Track overstern rudder.

For installation instruction please see our FAQ page. <https://www.epickayaks.com/faq>

Bailer operation and Maintenance

Your Epic Surfski comes standard with the Epic bailer. Our Patented Epic Bailer drains up to 6 times faster than previous metal bailers or venturie systems. It also allows multiple positions that can be adjusted to suit conditions, or closed off completely for a more dry cockpit and no drag paddling in calmer conditions.

There is the least amount of drag and no back-filling when the bailer is closed. This is recommended for most paddling on calm and/or colder water.

There are four open positions. The full open position (lever all the way back) drains the fastest but imparts the most drag and is not recommended for continuous use. Usually, the bailer can be closed and then opened for 10-20 seconds at a time to drain as needed before closing again. In steady surf conditions, it may work best to leave the bailer continuously open in the in the first or second setting ($\frac{1}{4}$ or half open).

Deck Design Features & Rigging

Epic's groundbreaking seat design, adjustable footbrace, single footwell and high-capacity bailer guarantee a comfortable ride in all our surf skis. Front deck cutaways allow a close, efficient catch. In addition, all V-Series skis are equipped with deck rigging behind the cockpit and in front of the footwell. Elastic bungees immediately behind the cockpit are there for safety and to provide extra storage space. Store items such as extra safety gear and personal effects including: a spare paddle, maps and charts and other accessories. The small elastic bungee setup in front of the footwell provides just a little more space for accessories (photo 13). Many paddlers find this an ideal location to store their water bottle, or to attach a GPS unit.



At the top front of the footwell is the drain plug/breather tube (photo 13). Open the plug to drain water if necessary. Otherwise, keep the drain plug/breather tube closed to keep water out. On very hot days we recommend opening your drain plug, when you first set your ski in the water, before a paddle. Let your Surfski sit in the water for a

minute or two to allow for equalization of pressure inside the ski. Then close the drain plug and continue with paddle.



Photo 13. V-Series – footwell bungee and drain plug/breather tube in closed position

Hatches (only available select models)

Some models come equipped with a storage hatch or hatches. These hatches provided ample protected space for your personal belongings. 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 miniscule amounts of water will not reach and potentially damage

your belongings. The outside edges of the hatch covers are lined with a rubber seal that fits into the hatch deck contour, preventing water from entering the compartment. Four hatch levers fasten down to create a tight seal and keep each hatch cover firmly in place.



Photo 14. V5/V6 hatch & hatch levers

Hatch Cover Operation and Maintenance

Hatch Operation: Release the 4 hatch levers, open the hatch cover and access the compartment.

Reverse the steps to re-fasten the hatch cover in place. It is best to work diagonally when closing the levers to ensure the hatch cover is centered. Close one lever then close the next lever that is diagonally opposite it. And then repeat with the remaining two levers.

Hatch Maintenance: Check the hatches frequently to make sure your levers are in good working order. Rinse them thoroughly with fresh water after paddling, particularly when paddling in salt water. Look inside the hatches periodically, or when storing your kayak outdoors in the rain. Sponge out any water that may have seeped in. Make sure the hatch cover rubber seals remain sound and intact by keeping them 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 seals in good condition



OVERALL SURF SKI CARE

Your Epic surf ski is for the most part "wash and wear." If done on a regular basis, 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 surf ski. After all, your surf ski needs to take care of you as well. It's an important relationship!

Perhaps the simplest (yet important) task is washing your ski. 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 deck and its components (footbrace, rails, rudder, drain plug, bailer, 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 very fine sanding and polishing can help remove scratches, but usually it is better to just leave them alone. Check the condition of your deck bungee, cords and footstrap. 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 surf ski 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.

If the finish becomes dull from UV exposure, buffing with an automotive grade polishing compound can restore shine.

See our repair section on our FAQ page for more tips.

www.epickayaks.com/faq

NB!

Take Special Care of Your Elite & Ultra Layup!

Epic Kayaks is committed to manufacturing the finest surf skis available using only the highest quality materials. If you have purchased an Elite or 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 lightweight honeycomb core.

Wherever possible keep black gel coat elites out of direct sun when not in use. In Hot climates the surface temperature of the black elites can quickly exceed 150°F, which can potentially cause damage.

Storing Your Surf Ski

Available storage options obviously depend on your available space. Ideally, store your surf ski indoors, in a garage or barn.

Do not tie your Ultra ski directly onto hard metal racks! Appropriately shaped saddles or padding are required to eliminate stress concentrations when transporting and storing.

Your boat 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. Space the horses or cradles about 1/3 the distance from the bow and stern. For suspended storage, use polypropylene straps that wrap around rafters or hooks in the ceiling. Loop the straps under the surf ski about 1/3 the distance from the bow and stern, so that it is balanced.

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 surf ski from the elements. Store your surf ski out of direct sunlight. Keep rain, snow and ice off your surf ski; 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 surf ski 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 ski with the tarp. Wrapping can keep moisture and other contaminants trapped close to the hull. Also, make sure the surf ski 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 surf ski inside or outside, here are a few simple storage points:

- Place racks or straps under the surf ski for support; space about 1/3 the distance from the bow and stern
- Make sure the surf ski is clean and completely dry, inside and out (especially in cold climates)
- The decision of whether to store your surf ski in a cover is a personal one, however, use one for long term storage only if you are sure your boat will remain dry
- Apply a UV protectant for long term storage
- Store your surf ski with the bailer closed to prevent damage

Excellent storage rack options may be found at:

- www.maloneautoracks.com
- www.talic.com

Transporting Your Surf Ski

Even if you live on the water, eventually you'll want to load up and drive your surf ski somewhere. Luckily, there are a great selection of rack systems and car-topping accessories that make transportation a cinch. Many cars, vans and SUV's also now come standard with pretty decent factory roof racks. Transporting your surf ski right side up or upside down is personal preference, as is the use of a boat cover.



NOTE: close the bailer and do not leave the optional accessories like seat pads, hip pad or footwell cowlings on your ski, during transportation.

The main objective is to make sure your surf ski 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 surf ski.

Tying a Surfski directly onto hard, unpadded racks (especially small bars) can dent or crack your ski.

For flat rails please note : The “Rails” (top of the cockpit in footwell area) is a strong part of the ski and can be tied (upside down) directly onto flat and/or hard racks. Adding a thin (3/8” or 10 mm) piece of foam to the rear rack will usually allow the rear deck to be securely tied to a flat rack. It is not recommended to tie a Surfski upright onto flat racks.

For upright transport, appropriate fitted cradles or V-racks should be used. Be sure to check the fit of cradles to ensure that the pressure is not focused on the hard part of the cradle.

Below are a few recommended companies to consider for surf ski transportation:

- Thule – www.thuleracks.com
- Malone – www.maloneautoracks.com
- Goodboy – <https://www.goodboypaddlesports.com/home/>
- Yakima – www.yakima.com

Always evaluate the suitability of roof racks depending on the distance, speed, and conditions you will be transporting your ski under. If the racks and fit are not 100% secure then adding bow and stern lines can help – especially on windy days.

Recommended Gear & 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 regulations.

- PFD (Personal Flotation Device)
- Whistle or other sound-signaling device
- Spare Paddle
- Compass and/or handheld GPS
- Cell Phone / VHF radio
- Waterproof case for above
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Hat
- Water
- Leg leash.



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 surf ski 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 surf ski 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 email info@epickayaks.com with any questions, NEVER send product to Epic without an RA#

