

Topic:

## Choosing a SUP

QC-1704

Resource:

[USCG SUP Regulations](#)

**Basics:** Stand Up Paddleboarding is a trendy new sport. It has many engaging factors including: ease of entry, ease of transport and low starting cost. But most SUP paddlers should plan only to paddle in calm waters, with low wind and within swimming distance of a shore. Even surfboards on which the SUP is based are near-shore devices. But know that the US Coast Guard considers them vessels in most cases, subject to all safety rules and regulations.

**Question:** *What might I look for in a SUP?*

**Answer:** Do you want a rigid board or an inflatable? Inflatables are compact but take time to inflate, are more susceptible to wind and may deflate if punctured. Do you want fins or not? Fins add directional stability and if the board comes with them they are usually dismountable for transport. The longer and narrower the board the faster it will go, but also the less stable it will be. Choose a board that will support your weight and don't forget your gear or your dog if you want to paddle with them.

**Question:** *What else should I consider for my SUP?*

**Answer:** A paddle is a must. You might choose a fixed length paddle if you are experienced, but the beginner might be better off with an adjustable. A PFD is a critical safety element: SUP paddlers often use an inflatable, but know that they need to be recharged if inflated and this takes time and money. A leash that goes from your ankle to the board can save you a long swim or even your life if a squall pops up.

**Advanced Concepts:** You may want to get more information on the following:

- How does one balance on a SUP?
- Where do I stand and what is "walking the board"?
- What strokes do I use to control a SUP?
- What is the most effective way to turn a SUP?
- Can I use a SUP on whitewater? ...paddling in surf? ...for long trips?

*For more information contact*

**Changing Tides PaddleCraft Instruction**

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