



SAFETY GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES

Adventure Sun Valley is a professional outfitting organization that is totally dedicated to your safety and enjoyment. We hire first class individuals and ensure that they are trained to standards that greatly exceed state licensing requirements. We take great pains to ensure that our gear is selected for safety and very well maintained. But the biggest reason that we enjoy an impeccable record is our focused attention to safety details and guidelines, which we demand that our guides follow, and strongly encourage all guests to follow as well. There are some unavoidable risks associated with wilderness whitewater adventures, but these procedures will help limit the risks and allow everyone to have a fabulous vacation.

We ask you to read these guidelines and become familiar with our recommendations. We will have a safety briefing the morning of our departure to answer any questions. Your understanding and willing participation is critical. If you choose to disregard these procedures, you severely limit our ability to provide for your safety and enjoyment and, because this is a group outing, your unsafe actions could jeopardize the safety and enjoyment of all other members on the expedition as well. Because this is a remote wilderness setting, emergency evacuation would severely disrupt the expedition. As we are unable to force anyone to be safe, we ask for your cooperation. Thank you.

SLIPPING & FALLING

The most common injury people face in whitewater rafting is from slipping and falling while getting into or out of the boats. Please be very careful. The guides will show you where to step on the boats when loading and unloading. Both boats and rocks tend to be very slick and sometimes shift when you step on them. People can lose their balance when someone attempts to beach (pull the boat up on shore) while people are moving in the boat. Please be aware and allow the guides to assist you. If you need to retrieve something from the boat when we are ashore, just ask any guide and we will be happy to retrieve it for you.

There will be ample opportunity to go for hikes, but please ask any of the guides for ideas where to venture and always let us know when you are leaving, just in case. Be aware of the possibility of snakes, bears, cougars, and other wildlife. If you seek opportunities for exercise, we recommend you go for a good hike rather than a run down one of the trails. Traveling slower will allow more time for animals to sense your approach and avoid you, and decrease the chances of startling a potentially dangerous animal. Remember that the canyon is extremely steep in some areas and you could find yourself in a dangerous position if you are not careful. It is always a good idea to travel in groups of at least two or more. We highly recommend that you hike on established trails. PLEASE do not rock climb. Many of the rocks in the canyon appear to be very solid but there have been serious accidents with other company's guests, where people chose to scale rocks or cliffs and large sections of rock broke loose and caused severe injury to members of the party and ruined a good vacation for many.



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WEARING PERSONAL FLOATATION DEVICES (PFD) / HELMETS

We very strongly urge you to wear your PFD at ALL times when on the water. The State of Idaho requires that anyone under 15 years old has a life jacket on at ALL times when on a boat. We are required to enforce that law. Our guides are instructed to never run any named rapid until everyone has their PFD on and fastened. Please ask a guide to ensure that yours is adjusted correctly. Everyone who joins the paddleboat or rides in the kayaks is required to wear a helmet and PFD at ALL times, no exceptions. Please don't force an uncomfortable scene where we need to enforce these rules. We have helmets available for you to use anytime that would wish one. If at any time, you desire a helmet while riding in an oar boat, just ask any guide and we will make sure one is available for you.

RIDING IN THE BOATS

Ask the guides where you should hang on. The boats flex while going through waves and we do not want you to get your hands pinched. It is important to pay attention to your boat's travel and your guide's instructions. It is common for rafts to bump into rocks or other obstacles and if you are not prepared or hanging on, you could fall out.

If at any time your boat appears to be close to hitting any obstacle from rocks to other boats, please do not use your arms or legs to stop the hit. It is much safer to just hang on and let the big rubber boats take the shock. If your boat does impact a rock, log or any other obstacle that stops it from proceeding down river, your guide may command you to "high side" which means to move quickly but carefully to the side of the raft that is closest to the rock or obstacle. This may prevent the upriver tube (the one AWAY from the rock, log, et) from being pushed into the water and causing a "wrap". Just be attentive to your guide's commands.

INVOLUNTARY "SWIMMING"

If you ever find yourself swimming in swift water, because either the boat flipped, you fell out, or you tipped over in the kayak, your first response should be to "self-rescue". All of our guides will assist you to the best of their abilities, but it should still be your first response to try to help yourself. If you are near the boat, move aggressively to get to the upriver side of the boat, this will prevent you from being pinned between a rock and the boat. If the boat is upright, or you can get to one that is, you may consider swimming aggressively toward that boat. In some cases, swimming to shore could be your best option. In any case, try to look downstream and identify any hazards. If you are in shallow water or you are being washed toward rocks, roll onto your back with your feet downriver, so that you can use your feet to protect yourself. In this situation try to keep a rigid body to help keep your back end from hitting the bottom. You will need to decide between the options of aggressively swimming on your front or defensively swimming on your back with your feet downstream. NEVER EVER! stand up in swift water that is deeper than your knees. You may get one of your feet entrapped, then the water could push you over face down. Rescue from this position could be difficult. Remember this entrapment risk could be a result of wading in semi deep and quick moving water while fishing. If you end up swimming, someone may throw you a rescue rope. If this happens, grab the rope and not the bag. If you grab the bag, there may be a significant amount of rope that will continue to work out of the bag before it reaches the end and you will have that much further to go. Hold the rope tightly to your chest and roll on your back with the rope extending back over one of your shoulders towards whoever is at the other end (facing away from them). Hence when they pull you to them, you will be able to breath by facing away from your direction of travel in the water. DO NOT EVER tie the rope to yourself.



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STRAINERS

Anything in the river that allows water to pass through, but will snag a boat or swimmer is called a strainer and is VERY dangerous. Trees that fall into the water or closely positioned rocks are common strainers. If at any time, you are guiding your own boat or kayak (or swimming), and have any indication that you are approaching something that may trap you, move very aggressively to avoid that object. This is of special significance because we often allow very novice boaters to operate their own personal inflatable kayaks in sections of the water that are generally calm. However, we could at any time find that a new tree has fallen into the river and created an unexpected hazard. Thus, we ask you to always be alert and ready to avoid such items aggressively, and avoid a very real threat. When following another boat, you may see us use hand signs to alert you of potentially dangerous situations. We will NEVER point at hazards, instead we will ALWAYS point the direction that we need you to go. Generally if we signal a direction for you to travel, we suggest you maneuver aggressively and immediately in that direction. If you are in an inflatable kayak and the boat you are following gets stuck on a rock, that boat has now become a strainer to you. Aggressively avoid that boat. Always allow enough room between you and the boat you are following to ensure you do not get washed underneath a trapped boat.

KAYAKS / PERSONAL BOATS

Before anyone is allowed to run their own kayak or row their own personal boat under our permit, they are required to talk to our lead guide about water conditions and hazards and be approved by that guide. When you are running your own boat, we are limited in our ability to provide for your safety. It is very difficult for us to judge your responsibility and skills, so you must accept your own risk. It is critical that you be aware of the water conditions and hazards at each point. Therefore, we require that you remain close to our boats and NEVER ahead of our lead boat or behind our last boat. Our assigned lead guide has final decision authority at all times for all boats launched under our permit. If he or she determines unsafe conditions or abilities, everyone is required to follow his or her decisions. If a kayaker bails out and swims from his or her kayak twice in any day they will be asked to ride in a boat and enjoy the remaining day aboard one of our rafts. Every individual running his or her own personal kayak or boat will be required to sign their understanding of this agreement.

RUBBER KAYAKS

Many of our guests find their experiences in one of our inflatable kayaks to be the highlight of their trips. It is important, however, to understand that they are thus commanding their own ship. We will always instruct the kayakers which boat they should be following. It is very important to then follow that boat!!! We will attempt to lead you away from hazards. If you choose to lag too far behind or discover your own paths, you greatly increase your risks. If you are not willing to follow our lead and guidance, we cannot allow you to run one of our boats. Additionally, some sections of the river at certain water levels create hazards that are not acceptable for amateur kayakers in inflatable boats and as such, we reserve the right to limit their use at any time if we deem it necessary for safety. As discussed above, kayakers must constantly be alert for any strainers and aggressively avoid them at all times.

JUMPING & DIVING

We insist that you refrain from jumping or diving from our boats, rocks, ledges or bridges. The river is deceptively shallow in many places. There are certain places that we have found to be safe and the lead guide may allow guests to jump from only those locations. You always have the freedom to avoid this risk at your discretion.



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ALCOHOL

We require that you refrain from alcohol while we're boating and use discretion when in camp. Again, remember that EVERYONE'S safety and enjoyment is at risk, not just your own.

WILDLIFE

There are numerous wild animals in the canyon corridor, including some rattlesnakes, so be very careful about walking in tall grass and watch your step. They are especially common when hiking and or fishing the tributaries. If you have a known allergic reaction to things like bee stings, please inform us before the trip. We do carry antihistamine and epinephrine, however we STRONGLY urge guests with known allergies to please bring their own medication. Bears have come into camps searching for food at night and we STRONGLY recommend that you do not keep any food items with you in your tent or in your river bags. This will also keep the squirrels from chewing through your bags.

POISON IVY

There is poison ivy in a few places along the canyon. Our guides will point it out to you whenever you are with the group. This is another good reason to stick to established trails for hiking.

FIRE

The Forest Service requires us to contain our campfires in metal fire pans. If you smoke, please be very careful of fires. The risk of an inadvertent fire is very real and could be catastrophic. PLEASE dispose of all butts appropriately.

LARGE ROCKS & LOGS ON SHORE

People have been injured when climbing on hanging rocks or logs which are poised on the banks. Remember that even large logs may be balanced delicately. If they shift they could cause great harm. It is wise to leave them alone. Please do not roll rocks down the hills.

FLY FISHING

Please assure that everyone has sunglasses on when they are in the proximity of anyone fly fishing. A hook to the eye could be a very painful unfortunate event in the wilderness.

If you have any questions regarding these guidelines or any other question regarding safety, DO NOT hesitate to speak to us prior to the trip or talk to your lead guide while on the river.