

Care and Instruction Guide for Poret's Pirogues

Care

1. Paint is your best friend. The paint creates a barrier from moisture and prevents wood rot. The paint we use is a specially formulated marine paint that provides a hard enamel barrier to protect from scratches and provides UV protection as well. None the less, this barrier will eventually begin to peel and will need to be sanded and repainted every 2 to 4 years. We offer repainting services at a charge.
2. The pirogue is designed to keep water out, not keep water in. Do not use your pirogue as a beer cooler. Water and ice is heavy. If filled to the top, our pirogue would contain over 1000lbs of water and ice. The weight being exerted against the side boards can potentially break the glue line with the ribs or break the glue line between the floor and sidewall. Do not use the pirogue for anything other than its intended purpose. If it was meant to hold water in, we would have installed the ribs on the outside of the boat. Also, enter the pirogue with your body weight only when the pirogue is fully in the water.
3. When storing the pirogue, it is best to store it under a cover and off the ground. If stored on the ground, the pirogue will wick moisture from the earth leading to premature rot. We make custom pirogue hangers that will allow you to hang you're your pirogue in the garage from joists in your attic. Placing it upside down on sawhorses in a shed is adequate. Leaning it on the ground, up against the house, under an eave is not good enough. Many people leave their pirogues in the field for the winter during hunting season. Again, store it off the ground. In addition, store it upside down for reasons stated in item two above. Rain will collect in it and potentially bust the glue lines. We nail two 2X4's between cypress knees and rest the pirogue upside down on them. Use your imagination and get creative if you aren't fortunate enough to hunt in timber.
4. Treat it with respect. This is an heirloom and should be treated as such. As with any pirogue, dropping them can have disastrous effects.
5. Do not drag your pirogue behind an ATV or vehicle. Pulling it by hand across grass or undergrowth is acceptable. Do not drag it on rocks or shells.
6. Do not tie straps, especially ratchet straps across the top. If you are forced to secure it with straps across the top, use bungee cords instead. This limits the amount of force that can be exerted on the sidewalls.

All of this information may seem prohibitive and limiting in the use of your pirogue. In fact, these practices should be followed in all pirogues, whether wooden or fiberglass. Following the best practices listed above will ensure the long life of your boat.

Instructions for Use

1. Hauling the pirogue can be done so in the bed of a truck, on a trailer, or any flat surface for that matter. The preferred method is in the bed of a truck. Tuck the nose of the pirogue in a front corner of the bed and tie a rope from the nearest anchoring point in the bed to the eye located on the point of the boat. Cant the boat over in the bed with the tailgate down making the pirogue sit diagonally in the bed of the truck. Make sure you do not extend the pirogue past your rear view mirror so as to avoid hitting oncoming traffic. Run two separate ropes from the eye in the rear of the boat to the nearest anchor point on each side of the bed. Tying the boat this way allows you to apply ample pressure without fear of breaking the boat. It has been my experience that most kayaks and canoes are broken in transportation, and that's typically because people use ratchet straps to tie their boats down. We suggest 550 parachute cord for our pirogues. Do not forget to tie a flag to the rear so its not rear ended.
2. Always wear a life jacket.
3. When entering the pirogue do not enter the pirogue when it is half in / half out the water. Put the pirogue completely in the water, then pull it parallel to the bank to enter. This alleviates the potential for the bottom busting out with the addition of your weight out of the water. Place your dominant foot onto the center of the pirogue in front of the seat, and bring yourself down to a squatting position. As soon as you can reach, grab the gunwhales with each hand and lower yourself to the chair making sure to center yourself in the boat.
4. There is no front or back to our pirogues. The seats can be placed on either side of the center rib and it will float the same. The best placement for the seat is typically between the center and outside rib with the back up against the outside rib. Distribute your gear throughout the pirogue for equal weight distribution so the point doesn't sit too high out of the water or get buried in the water. Ideally, you only want ¼" to 1" air gap under the point. More or less won't kill you but it will affect the speed or maneuverability of the pirogue.

5. Pirogues by their very nature, are not stable vessels. If you find you are having a hard time getting stable, your lower back is probably doing some kind of crazy dance to keep from flipping. Accept your fate and stop moving. That is when most people have a eureka moment. The boat wants to sit upright on its own! It just reacts to every move you make and shift in weight you make. As long as your weight is centered, the boat will not flip. From there, make an effort to make a stroke with your paddle. It's kind of like riding a bike. Once you get moving, it's easier to stay upright.

6. Tips on paddling. When attempting to paddle in a straight line, keep the paddle as close to the boat as possible when making the stroke. This will allow you to get 2-4 strokes on each side before having to switch to keep the pirogue going in a straight line. When attempting to turn, stroke the paddle far away from the boat. The additional leverage will immediately turn the boat. More detailed instructions can be learned in the videos portion of our website but this will get you started.

Following everything in this care and instructions guide will help to ensure many years of useful life. If you have any problems or issues, please feel free to call. We are also always interested in new ideas or suggestions.