

What's SUP? Top 5 Tips!

6 July 2012



Stand Up Paddling, aka SUP, is one of the fastest growing water sports in the world. If you want to look good on the board your first time out, follow these 5 tips from a pro before you go!



STORY BY:

KAREN CATCHPOLE AND ERIC MOHL OF THE TRANS-AMERICAS JOURNEY

FOLLOW: [@TransAmericas](#)



Stand Up Paddling, aka SUP, is one of the fastest growing water sports in the world. If you want to try it, and don't want to look like a complete newbie, follow these five tips from Candice Appleby.

Candice, 26, has been SUPing since 2006 and competing professionally for years. She's a four-time Battle of the Paddle SUP champion and the first woman to beat men in a professional SUP competition.

"I love stand up because it allows me to be in the ocean for a living and travel the world competing and making new friends," says Candice. "And it keeps me healthy and driven."



Here are Candice's top 5 tips for first time SUPers

1. NEVER call the sport “Stand Up Paddleboarding.”

That's a different sport in which people paddle traditional paddleboards either on their stomach or on their knees. Stand Up Paddlers take part in Stand Up Paddling and they're a little bit touchy about the terminology.

2. Learn how to hold the paddle.

Candice says the most common mistake she sees first timers make is holding the paddle backwards. “This is a sure sign of a total newbie,” she says. Candice also warns against looking down at your feet too much. “This doesn't help you gain any balance.” Plus you look silly and you could paddle right into someone.

3. Find calm water.

“To get the most out of your first stand up paddling experiences, find somewhere with flat water, light wind and easy access,” Candice says. Start in a lake, pond or protected bay and work your way up to waves.

4. Start training now.

SUP involves your entire body and requires a strong core. “I do a lot of work on a [BOSU ball](#), both right side up and inverted. This is great leg work for getting better balanced on the board,” advises Candice. “I also like to run in the sand for cardio. Using a medicine ball and stability ball are also great ways to strengthen your core.” Candice also runs underwater carrying a boulder as part of her training, but that's for the pros.

5. Invest in your own paddle.

“Having your own paddle that's sized for you will allow you to test different boards with more consistency,” Candice says. “It's also important to get used to having the paddle in your hands. If you have your own paddle you can also do exercises with the paddle at home to get more comfortable using it.” Owning your own paddle will also help you avoid newbie mistake #2 (see above).

To find a certified SUP instructor go to the [World Paddle Association](#) website. Once you've got your SUP skills down, consider putting them to the test. [Moab Adventure Center](#) offers two-hour SUP tours on the mighty Colorado River (\$75 ages 16 and up, \$55 ages 10 to 15).

Look for [Karen Catchpole and Eric Mohl's Just Add Adventure!](#) [series](#) every Wednesday and Friday all summer long on Travel and Escape!

KAREN CATCHPOLE AND ERIC MOHL OF THE TRANS-AMERICAS JOURNEY



In April of 2006, journalist Karen Catchpole and photographer Eric Mohl left their jobs and apartment in New York City and embarked on the [Trans-Americas Journey](#) , a 200,000-mile working road trip through all 23 countries in North, Central and South America. After many years on the road they are still nowhere near their goal of Tierra del Fuego at the tip of South America where the road literally ends. Until then, their slow and steady overland exploration of The Americas continues.

FOLLOW: [@TransAmericas](#)