

What Muscles Does Kayaking Work?



How fun does this exercise look?

What is not to love about kayaking? Out in nature, potentially experiencing marine life depending on where you are, it's beautiful. And as if that wasn't reason enough to get after it, your upper body is in for one heck of a workout. Your back, shoulders, arms, hands, abdomen, chest and especially heart are key target areas during this adventurous exercise. Even an hour of kayaking will produce more work for these muscle groups than you'd probably hit in any single gym session.

The Back Attack



Kayaking requires rowing.

Every stroke you take while kayaking is a single-arm row. Picture doing a single-arm dumbbell row or seated cable row; it's basically the same motion with a paddle. Every stroke works the lats to a great degree. While one arm is rowing back, the other is getting a stretch and then a contraction. It's an effective back workout and you can go at whatever tempo or variation you like: sprints, long sets, each pull as hard a possible, wide grip or narrow grip.