



# Owner's Manual

Thank you for purchasing this adventure vehicle! This owner's manual contains basic information about your Alpacka raft. For more in-depth information, we recommend you visit our website at [www.alpackaraft.com](http://www.alpackaraft.com). Extensive information on the usage and performance of your boat is available on our website.

In this manual you will find:

1. **Basic Specifications & Performance**
2. **Seat Installation**
3. **Mooring & Lanyards**
4. **Pack Attachment**
5. **Spray Deck Usage**
6. **Floor Pad Usage**
7. **Inflation & the Inflation Bag**
8. **Care & Maintenance**
9. **Basic Repair & Troubleshooting**
10. **Warranty**
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## 1. Specifications & Performance

Your Alpacka Raft is designed to turn quickly, accelerate quickly, and provide a great deal of flotation. It is built to be very stable and extremely portable.

**Construction:** Urethane-Coated Nylon. Your Alpacka Raft will endure environmental extremes of temperature (desert heat, arctic cold) and humidity.

**Maximum Speed:** Effective maximum water speed for Alpacka rafts is usually in the 2-3 mph range, exclusive of water speed. This is due to the short hull length. The Explorer has the highest top speed.

**Buoyancy & Loading:** Your boat is extremely buoyant. When lightly loaded, it will often ride over eddy lines and the crests of waves, as opposed to punching directly through them. As a rule of thumb, it will remain maneuverable with yourself plus up to 100 pounds equipment. Beyond that, you may experience major handling loss. Although an Alpacka raft can float multiple people, Alpacka Raft makes no claims about the performance or durability of an excessively loaded boat.

**Durability:** Your boat is made of strong fabric and will absorb shock from impacts with many obstacles encountered in normal and reasonable use. However, all inflatable boats are vulnerable to puncture, especially from sharp objects. Boat with care! Prolonged abrasion, pinching forces, and other stresses can puncture the boat. Alpacka Raft does not recommend running any stretch of water you cannot swim in an emergency.

## 2. Seat Installation

Raft seats are removable, and are shipped loose with the boat. Your seat assembly includes:

- A combined seat pad & seat-back assembly with 4 pairs of perforated tabs on the outer edge of the horseshoe-shaped seat pad.
- 4 matching perforated tabs on the interior stern of your boat, welded into place.
- 4 lengths of black cord to secure the seat in place.

To install the seat, match the seat & boat tabs together, inserting each single tabs (on the boat) between the double tabs (on the seat), so that the single tab is “sandwiched” between the double tabs. Align the holes, and thread the cord through the tabs. Once the threading is complete, tie off the end of the cord, and clip off the excess cord length if you so desire. Repeat this process for all four sets of tabs.

The result is a seat that is both removable and highly secure. Your seat is an integral part of the raft, and protects your pelvis and spine from impacts.

### 3. Mooring & Lanyards

Your Alpaca Raft has multiple “grab loops,” or attachment points, onto which cord, mooring lines, and other items can be fastened. Alpaca Raft recommends safely and securely stowing any mooring lines or lanyards not currently in use so as to eliminate entanglement hazards, particularly in moving water. Alpaca does not recommend using a lanyard system to yourself, your paddle, or other equipment in moving water, as it can cause serious injury or death in the event of an entanglement.

### 4. Pack Attachment

The four grab loops on the bow of your raft are placed for the securing of a backpack, rucksack, or other reasonable equipment to the bow. Attachment of equipment may affect boat handling and performance. Heavy equipment secured on the bow of your boat may make righting a capsized boat much more difficult.

### 5. Spray Decks

As of 2010, Alpaca Raft spray decks open for entry and exit via a Velcro closure, and are fully removable from the boat via two zippers. A spray deck adds approximately **8 ounces** to a boat. Alpaca spray decks are general purpose, designed to keep the boater warmer and drier in whitewater, inclement weather, and cold conditions. They are not meant to be 100% dry. The deck is not intended to be completely sealed. It is more like a “raincoat for your Alpaca.”

2010 spray decks can be removed and stowed in your equipment or at home, creating an “open boat” with only the spray-deck’s attachment ring remaining on the boat. This is intended to maximize versatility of the boat and ease spray deck replacement or repair.

***Emergency Exiting from the Spray Deck.*** Smaller boaters can emergency-exit from the spray deck simply by pushing on the boat tubes and ejecting out through the spray deck opening. For larger boaters, there is a webbing handle sewn onto the spray deck at the boater’s left side. Pulling this handle will open the spray deck, even underwater. Familiarize yourself with opening the spraydeck using the handle. We strongly recommend practicing your emergency exit technique in a safe environment before entering dangerous water, as perfecting it requires practice. Be certain bulky equipment on your lower body will not prevent exit.

**Care of your Spray Deck.** Attached spray decks are made of lightweight fabric to minimize bulk and weight. They should not be used to carry the boat or support loads. Think of your spraydeck as a light-weight tent attached to your boat. Treat it with care. The boat itself is quite tough, but the spraydeck is delicate in comparison.

## 6. Floor Pads

It is a personal preference of some technical and cold-water paddlers to use a short inflatable sleeping pad as a packraft floor pad. To do this, insert the pad into the bottom of the boat, under the tubes-edges and the seat. Using a floor pad stiffens the floor, improving surfing capability and some other handling characteristics in moving water. Floor pads also provide insulation to keep paddlers warmer in cold water, and provide extra cushioning when the boat hits a rock or other obstacle.

Some paddlers prefer not to use floor pads. We recommend experimenting. If you are planning to paddle very cold water for long periods, however, we definitely recommend a floor pad.

## 7. Inflation & the Inflation Bag

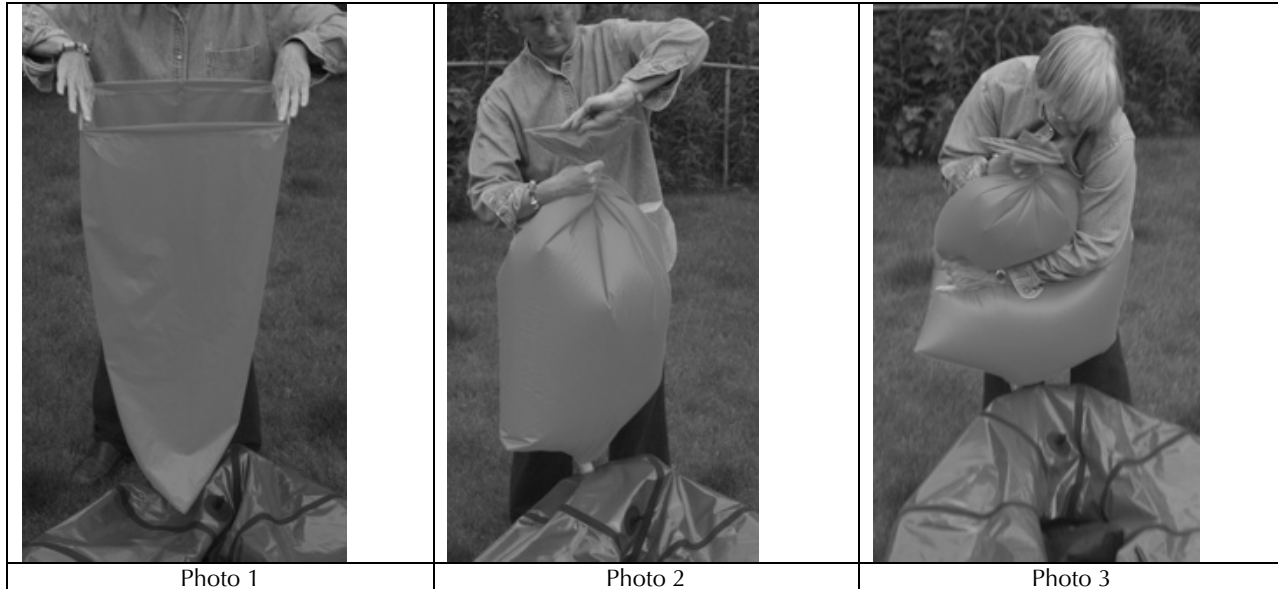
Your Alpaca inflation bag is a compact high-volume air pump. It is lighter, cheaper, and more effective than foot-pumps or other methods, but requires a little practice to use effectively.

**Weight:** Approximately 3 ounces.

**Air Volume:** similar to a garbage bag.

Initially, the inflation bag may be difficult to use. **Don't be discouraged. You'll get the hang of it.** An experienced user can inflate fully inflate a raft in under 2 minutes with the inflation bag.

### *Using the Inflation Bag:*



### **Follow these steps:**

- 1) Screw the inflation bag's plastic nozzle into boat's opened main valve. After doing this, untwist the bag so air can flow freely from the bag into the boat.

- 2) Open the bag mouth wide by spreading the two bars inserted in the top rim of the bag. Lower the two bars so the bag is collapsed, with the mouth/opening near the valve connection to the boat.
- 3) Lift the bag up with the bars held apart, scooping air into the bag. See Photo 1. Don't pull the bag up all the way, stretching it tight. This will squeeze all the air out. **Your goal is to scoop air into the bag.**
- 4) Close and seal top of the bag by bringing the two bars together and then giving them half-twist. Grasp the twisted top with one hand. See photo 2.
- 5) Wrap your arm around the inflated bag and squeeze the bag against your body, forcing air into the boat (see photo 3). Done properly, this will force a large amount of air into the boat.
- 6) Don't worry about squeezing all the air from the bag into the boat. Only squeeze as much air into the boat as is efficient. A good guideline is to get 75% of the air in the inflation bag into the boat before re-inflating the bag.
- 7) Open the bag mouth, scoop air into the bag again, and repeat the process.
- 8) When the boat is **mostly full**, the inflation bag becomes ineffective. Quickly remove nozzle from the main valve and replace the main valve cap. Finish inflating the boat by mouth. Final inflation usually takes about a minute.

***Inflation Tips & Troubleshooting:*** If you have difficulty getting enough air in the inflation bag, this usually results from inadvertently squeezing all the air out of the bag by pulling it taut when scooping air. Be a little less ambitious. Don't try to "pull" the bag as far as possible from the boat: just scoop air into it, and stop before you've pulled it tight.

If you find you can't force air into the boat, there is probably an accidental twist at the bag-nozzle junction. Hold the bag shut and untwist it by rotating the whole inflation bag.

***Using the breeze.*** Inflation bags work great when there is a breeze to help fill bag. *Make sure to point the bag opening in the direction of the breeze.* The wind will only actually fill the boat for you in very high winds.

***Tempering your boat.*** Inflate your boat as tightly as possible, by mouth, for the best performance. You cannot over-inflate an Alpaca raft by inflation bag or mouth. Place the boat in the water for a few minutes to cool air inside, then top boat off again by mouth so it will remain firm while you paddle.

If a fully inflated Alpaca is left outside in direct sunlight, the air inside may expand. Periodically vent the boat through the mouth-valve. Too much internal pressure may damage the seams. Likewise, never use a source of compressed air to inflate your Alpaca raft to high pressures: the boat is only designed for the mouth and bag inflation.

***Deflating your boat.*** Open all valves and let the air escape from your boat. Fold your boat in half lengthwise, with the floor to the inside and the tubes to the outside. Roll your boat up from **bow**

**to stern** as tightly as possible. This bow-to-stern rolling action will force air out of the boat through the open main valve on the stern. When the boat is almost totally rolled up, squeeze the remaining air out of the tube through the main valve, if possible, then close main valve. Finish rolling the boat.

## 8. Care & Maintenance

Your Alpaca Raft is a low-maintenance vehicle. We recommend that you rinse your boat of debris and dry it before storing. Store boats with the valves open (it lets the interior of the boat breathe). If you store a boat wet, bacteria and mold may grow on or inside it, giving an unpleasant odor.

Keep your boat away from high heat sources and solvents. Fold or roll them loosely to prevent creasing for long-term storage. Your boat's urethane coating is ultraviolet resistant, but prolonged exposure to direct sunlight will ultimately weaken the urethane. Therefore we recommend storing your boat out of direct sunlight.

Keep sand and dirt out of the inflation valves, as it may result in a poor seal or slow leak.

## 9. Basic Repairs & Troubleshooting

Alpaca rafts are relatively easy to repair. We explain three basic field repairs in this manual. For further repair & modification information and techniques, visit the "Tips & Techniques" section of our website.

Each boat is shipped with a minimal repair kit. We recommend that paddlers carry a repair kit containing the following items, which should easily fit into a small zip-lock bag:

- **Aquaseal®.** A ¾ oz. tube is recommended for long trips. A micro-tube is fine for short trips.
- **Patch-N-Go® adhesive patches.** This product bonds extremely well to Alpaca Raft fabric and allows permanent repairs to be completed in minutes. Repairs require alcohol swabs. Patch-N-Go® is not solvent-based and can be shipped by mail or carried on passenger aircraft.
- **Tyvek® Tape – 15 feet (4.5 meters).** This tape can be bought in most home improvement stores. It is designed to work with Tyvek-brand house wrap, but we find it also works fantastic on Alpaca rafts! It works much better than duct tape. Tyvek tape can be used as a temporary patch in an emergency, and is useful for reinforcing permanent patches (see instructions below).
- **Alcohol (wipes or small bottle).** Alcohol is a highly effective way to clean a damaged area of the boat so glue and tape will adhere properly. Acetone works better, but isopropyl alcohol, especially as wipes/swabs, is easier to carry and is allowed on commercial aircraft.
- **Knife or scissors** for cutting patches & tape.

### ***Permanent Patch-N-Go Field Repair.***

Slices, tears and punctures can be repaired in the field. You can best patch large tears with Patch-N-Go® tape. Be sure to read and follow the manufacturer's instructions in conjunction with the instructions we give here.

- 1) Carefully clean and dry the damaged area.
- 2) Use Patch-N-Go® tape, duct tape or Tyvek® tape to tape the inside edges of the tube together by applying the tape sticky-side out to the inside of the tube. Press the rip line on both sides into the tape. You should not see the tape when you are finished, only the tube fabric. If the puncture is too small to tape the inside, you may skip this step.
- 3) Wipe the area around the tear with acetone or isopropyl alcohol.

- 4) Apply the Patch-N-Go tape with at least one inch of tape beyond the ends of the tear. If you don't have Patch-N-Go you can use two layers of Tyvek tape for a temporary repair.
- 5) Use the Patch-N-Go scraper or other flat object to vigorously rub the patch onto the tube. The rubbing action eliminates air bubbles and activates the Patch-N-Go adhesive.
- 6) The boat can now be inflated and used immediately. It is now permanently patched.

### ***Aquaseal® or Seamgrip® Field Repair***

Tears, slices, and punctures can also be repaired with Aquaseal® or Seamgrip®, but dry time is longer than with Patch-N-Go®. Please read and follow the manufacturer's directions for safe use of adhesives and solvents.

- 1) Carefully clean and dry the damaged area.
- 2) Duct, Tyvek, or fabric tape the underside of the tube together as described above in step 2 for the Patch-N-Go repair. If you don't have any tape, then lay the ripped edges together so they are very flat. If the tear or puncture is very small, you may skip this step.
- 3) Wipe the surface of the damaged area with acetone or isopropyl alcohol.
- 4) Apply a thick bead of Aquaseal® or Seamgrip® over the torn surface. The bead should be about half an inch wide so it gets good adhesion on each side of the tear. When this bead sets up it will hold air very well. Dry time is typically **1-8 hours**, depending upon glue thickness and conditions. Ideally, let the glue cure for at least 12 hours.

**Note:** We do not recommend sewing tears before patching. With the techniques listed above, it is not necessary. Stitching creates lumps that are more difficult to seal, and thus more likely to slowly leak air, although it is effective if expertly done.

### ***Mouth-Valve Foreign Debris Repair***

Dust or grit can get in the mouth valves, where it results in a leak. To clean the mouth valves, simply unscrew the valve 'nozzle' all the way, then pop the nozzle off the end of the elbow valve. Clean both the interior of the nozzle and the end of the elbow valve.

Replace the nozzle on the elbow valve by pushing hard until it "pops" back on. It can now be used normally again.

## **10. 3-Year Limited Warranty**

Alpacka rafts are extremely well made and will stand up to the use for which they are designed. In standing by this guarantee, Alpacka Raft provides a 3-year limited warranty, to the original owner, on all boats against defects in materials or workmanship. All defective boats should be returned to us for evaluation and will be repaired or replaced at our discretion, free of charge. Rips, burns, tears, and damages due to accident, normal wear and tear, improper care, mis-use or the natural breakdown of colors and materials over time are not covered by warranty, but can be repaired for a reasonable fee at Alpacka Raft's discretion. This warranty does not apply to products with unauthorized

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modifications or alterations, or if the product is used for a purpose for which it was not designed.

This warranty gives you specific legal rights, and you may also have other rights which vary from State to State. This warranty policy supercedes all previous warranty policies. For warranty evaluation, your product must be returned directly to Alpaca Raft, Box 1091, Mancos, CO 81328.

## **Exclusions**

Spray decks are not covered by this warranty. Spray decks are deliberately designed to be light-weight at the expense of durability and longevity, and may be damaged during the course of normal use. Alpaca Rafts are designed for use as watercraft in riverine, lake, and sheltered saltwater environments, in accordance with reasonable and generally accepted whitewater and inflatable boating practices. Alpaca Rafts may be used at the owner's discretion for exceptional uses beyond this, but these uses may cause severe damage or exceptional wear-and-tear to the boats, as the boats are not designed for this. Damage resulting from these activities is not covered by warranty, nor shall Alpaca Raft be liable for any personal injury or additional damages resulting from these uses or the resulting damages. You trust your life to your boat – be careful! Some States do not allow the exclusion or limitations of incidental or consequential damages, so the above limitations or exclusions may not apply to you.

## **11. Safety Warning: Exercise Good Sense and Caution!**

Packrafting can be very dangerous and physically demanding. The user of this product should understand that participating in packrafting might involve serious injury or death. You are responsible for your own actions and decisions. The fabric used to manufacture these rafts is selected with lightweight and packability being the most important factor. Lightweight raft fabric can easily be punctured and this risk must be a constant consideration during raft use. Individual paddlers assume all responsibility for keeping their boats from being punctured or damaged by any of the numerous obstacles and dangers present on rivers, lakes and oceans. You are responsible for deciding if you can safely float in or across a body of water or float down a river. You are responsible for not overloading the boat or using it in situations that you cannot control your safety. Do not float any water in which you are not prepared to swim. A punctured tube will result in an immediate immersion in the water and you must be prepared to deal with the resulting danger. Familiarize yourself with your boat's capabilities and limitations. Alpaca Raft® makes no claims to the durability of its product or to the type of water that its boats will handle.

### **National Paddle Sports Association Standard Safety Warning**

Paddle sports can be very dangerous and physically demanding. The user of this product should understand that participating in paddle sports might involve serious injury or death. Observe the following safety standards whenever using this product.

- 1) Get paddle sports instruction specific to this type of craft.
- 2) Obtain certified first aid training and carry first aid and rescue/safety equipment.
- 3) Always wear a nationally approved personal flotation device.
- 4) Always wear a helmet where appropriate.
- 5) Dress appropriately for weather conditions; cold water and/or cold weather can result in hypothermia.
- 6) Check your equipment prior to each use for signs of wear or failure.
- 7) Never paddle alone.

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- 8) Do not paddle in flood conditions.
- 9) Be aware of appropriate river water levels, tidal changes, dangerous currents and weather changes.
- 10) Scout unfamiliar waters; portage where appropriate.
- 11) Do not exceed your paddling ability; be honest with yourself.
- 12) Consult a physician prior to your paddle sports training.
- 13) You must not use alcohol or mind altering drugs prior to using this product.
- 14) Follow the manufacturer recommendations for use of this product.
- 15) If additional outfitting is added to this craft, use manufacturer's approved materials only; do not impair entry or exit access.
- 16) Read owners information package prior to using this product.
- 17) The user of this product acknowledges both an understanding and an assumption of the risk involved in paddle sports.

*Alpacka Raft® packrafts are manufactured in the U.S.A. Fabric content: Boats and spraydecks are 100-percent polyurethane-coated nylon. Stuff sacks and inflation bags are made from silicone-impregnated nylon.*

Visit <http://www.alpackaraft.com> for more information about Alpacka Raft® and packrafting.

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