



# A DAY OUT IN ALVERSTOKE

## *Kayaking in Hampshire*

BY TIM SAUNDERS

**In our attempt to embrace this new covid way of life Caroline and I have revisited the days when we used to kayak before the children.**



During those home schooling days we had chance to plan what we would do with the little kiddiwinkles during their holidays and so we purchased a second tandem kayak, roof rack and j-bars that allow us to strap these two enormous lumps of plastic to the roof of my tiny 18-year-old Ford Fiesta but as you can see from the photo, it works. It's not as easy as it looks though, be warned. Firstly fitting the roof rack yourself is difficult and a small fortune can be spent on this apparatus if you're not careful. Then fitting the actual kayaks can be an absolute nightmare. But teamwork, a little chair and a mini stepladder achieves success. Caroline and I have learnt masses about correctly fitting the roof bars and lifting the kayaks and fitting them in the correct way. It's frightening to think that if they are not fitted correctly they could simply slide off the roof. There are stories of this happening.

After much care we all drive to Alverstoake in Hampshire

with the children holding the oars in the middle of the car. And we arrive safely.

Unloading such a tall load is a bit of a worry for us but we soon realise that if we roll them over the j-bars that is the easiest way of getting them off. Prior to this we were trying to lift them off, which was ridiculous.

It takes about half an hour to load and another half to unload and prepare ourselves for our adventure. We fit fabric seats front and back in each for that extra comfort and then carry them to the shore. I fit my Akaso Brave 7 LE waterproof camera to the carrying handle on the front of the kayak, which acts as a steady tripod for me to take photos and videos, easily pressing the photo or video buttons on the remote wrist strap. The children clamber in. Caroline sits at the back of one with Heidi in the front while I sit in the back of the other with Harriett at the front. Henry sits in front of me and holds a strap for added safety. The children all have life jackets. I push the girls off in theirs and then push my own one into the water and push off with the oars.

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