

## Bombproofing Your Roll By Eric Jackson

Let's learn how to Bomb proof your roll!

Anybody can have a bombproof roll.- Just like you learned how to roll in the first place, you can learn how to always roll up. You will be a much happier person on the river when you know you will always roll up. Kayaking will be safer, and more rewarding, as your skills increase quickly with a bomb proof roll. Get the idea? Good.

So where do you start? Let's start with your head, then go to the techniques that work, then finish with ways to practice.

Your head- you aren't as smart underwater as you are right side up. In fact you can be downright dumb when upside down in your boat. So you need to eliminate any major decision making while underwater. The only real decisions that you make when upside down are "should I roll or should I swim now...", if I roll there will be trouble... If I swim there will be double..." You can sing to that one. So let's decide now that you will roll if you tip over. That is step one, simple but critical.

Now you need the techniques and consistency to back that decision up. What is the best kind of roll? Any roll that gets you right side up with ease. Rolling where you come up on the back deck is much easier and more likely to be successful than a roll on your front deck. (no space for discussion on this subject here, sorry). When you come up on your back deck you are in a good position to do an additional brace to keep you up or finish the roll off. When forward, you are much more likely to fall back in the water. So, learn to roll from anybody who will teach you, using any technique they show you, and you can still have a bombproof roll if you started with your head and decided to always roll, and then follow that up with the following practices.

Yes, practice makes perfect, but no, 90% of kayakers don't practice their roll in a way that prepares them for the real world. So, here is where you separate yourself from those poor soles who enter each rapid in fear of their next swim.

Rule Number 1 - Never tip over set up for your roll. Always practice by tipping over in some obscure position and then setting up underwater. Why? Because you begin to expect a certain feeling when you tip over set up and that feeling never happens in a combat situation, so you panic, then you lift your head and miss a roll, then you do that again, then you swim, simple as that.

Rule Number 2 - Practice your roll every time you paddle, and in the whitewater. In fact, you should try to mimic any situation you can imagine happening and practice your roll there. Fear of the unknown is another source of panic and only after you have tried your roll in a variety of situations can you go into any situation knowing that you have rolled in it.

Summary-

- Anybody can have a bombproof roll
- It starts in your head
- It requires that you can roll in flatwater first
- It happens when you practice according to my prescription

For visual descriptions and underwater shots on bombproofing your roll, get my DVD- Strokes, Concepts, and Bombproofing Your Roll at my online store page at: [www.jacksonkayak.com](http://www.jacksonkayak.com)