

Airfusion Elite

The new AirFusion Elite features a streamlined set up procedure with fewer poles, while a wider beam of 28" makes the AirFusion Elite roomier, more stable on the water and allows for an integrated rear storage hatch providing easy access to gear.



Getting started



The kayak comes with the standard Advanced Elements carrying case – rugged enough to ship as aircraft baggage. Weight is approximately 36 lbs in the bag.



We unpacked the kayak and laid out the parts – three aluminum tubes with a quick-snap shock-cord system (similar to most tent pole setups), a small floor cushion, the seat, two air bags, repair kit and the kayak itself.

AirFusion Elite Setup/Inflation



Unfold the kayak body, locating the kayak bow (front) and stern (rear) – this is easy as the integrated storage hatch is located at the stern.



Layout the bow and stern thwarts. Each of these is tapered. The front airbag (which also acts as a footbrace) is larger than the rear airbag, while the larger side of each airbag faces the cockpit/center. Lay them out in correct orientation next to the kayak.



Next, put the foam floor into position by setting the wider end in the cockpit – this will position the small rectangular cutout over the velcro tabs in the floor. Make sure you pull the velcro tab through the cutout. Tip: the foam floor only covers the area where your feet rest.

The AdvancedFrame series features two aluminum ribs – a vertically-positioned, foot-long Vee/U-shaped flat bar that is inserted in the bow and stern of the kayaks. The AirFusion Elite has the same bow and stern aluminum ribs, except they are tubular, allowing the pole frame to be inserted/attached. In the new AirFusion Elite, these two ribs are already installed.



There are three aluminum numbered poles, and one sleeve; these snap together easily and quickly.



Connect and layout each of the poles.



To install the frame, take pole #1 and insert it through the sleeve on the underside of the front thwart, making sure that the numbered side is pointing toward the cockpit. Then, insert the thwart into the bow of the kayak, pole side down. Open up the front top zipper (a little narrow for larger hands) – inside is a mass of velcro, at the bottom is the receiving tube. Slide tube #1 up and insert into the bow bottom tube. Note – it is a little easier to insert if you give it a slight twist while pushing.



Next insert pole #2. Once again, push this through the sleeve on the bottom of the rear thwart, with the number facing the cockpit. Then insert the thwart into the stern of the kayak, also with pole side down. Open up the rear hatch cover, and push the velcro out of the way to locate the rear bottom tube. Again, insert pole 2 into the stationary bottom tube opening.



Take the connector sleeve #3, and slip it over pole #2 with the hole facing pole #1 (or put it on pole #1 with the hole facing away from pole #2).



Push down on both pole #1 and #2 until they pop into position, forming one long pole.



Slide connector three over the connection point of the two poles, to lock in place with the receiving push pin.



There are two sets of velcro on the floor (one poking through the cutout in the floor). Wrap these around the center floor pole, forcing the bottom pole to be centered. This performs a similar function to the “backbone” used in the AdvancedFrame series.



Locate the sleeve on the “underside” of the top bow hull. Take pole #4 and push it through the sleeve, and guide it into the top bow tube. Make sure the rounded side is facing the cockpit. Frame is now done!

There are seven inflation chambers: Four side chambers (top and bottom each side) and two airbags/thwarts utilizing Boston valves. The seventh is a twistlock valve on the coaming tube.

Inflation of the side chambers – even to 4.5 PSI – is surprisingly easy. They suggest 7 pumps each initially, then inflate the two thwarts to 2PSI, then top the kayak sides off to 4.5 PSI and inflate the coaming tube to 1PSI.



Partially inflate the four side chambers, starting with the lower bladders – about 7 pumps each will give it some shape.



Next position and pump up the thwarts. This is probably the most critical step in the process to ensure a balanced setup. Line up the rear thwart with the line printed on the kayak body. It is important to keep the rear thwart at full inflation of 2 PSI; its function is to spread the sides, and the full airbag is used in weight capacity calculations. Make sure the thwarts/airbags are even across the floor, and the side chambers even with the thwarts.

The front thwart is where you will modify for legroom, so this position will probably change. Pump the thwart up to 2 PSI, taking care to make sure the thwart is flat on the floor, and not on top of the side chambers.

Finish pumping up the main chambers to 4.5PSI. (Please note: Most pressure gauges work on back-pressure. As the Boston valve has a flap that shuts once pumping stops, the gauges will only read as the stroke is being made, and then will return to zero.)



Position the seat at the “edge” of the floor cushion and attach the seat utilizing two forward clips and two rear clips. Do not put the seat farther back, as it will upset the balance – if you need more legroom, partially deflate and adjust the front thwart.



Inflate the coaming tube to 1 PSI using the Boston valve adaptor OVER the twist lok. This helps keep water from running into the seating well.

Last step, locate the velcro tabs on the underside of the kayak upper hull (behind the seat) and fasten the long thwart “bronchial tube” out of the way. Do the same with the front thwart, utilizing interior velcro tabs above the top left bladder. You’re done!

Text & Images:

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