



Victoria Skimboards
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TIPS

Beginner Tips:

So you just bought a board, now what? Skimboarding is a total gas no matter what your skill level. Peel off the shipping tabs, and newsletter. Wax the deck with surfboard wax; this will keep your feet from slipping. You can also use car wax on the bottom; this will reduce the wear and tear from the sand. With adult supervision, Skimboards are a big thrill for kids as young as 5. They love to push them back and forth, sliding onto their knees and gliding across the sand on flat beaches. And with kid supervision, adults as stiff as 50 are enjoying the sport on a regular basis. Find a flat beach with a wide area that is covered with a 1/4" thin film of water from the previous wave. We teach beginners to slide along the shoreline, not directly into the waves. Some beaches have cusps which are the crescent shaped cuts in the shoreline made by the waves. Start out at the point nearest the ocean and aim your slide toward the back middle of the cusp where the beach is flattest. This will give you a nice long slide before you curve back toward the ocean. Waves tend to swoosh up onto the sand. Skimming up the shoreline and turning off of the swoosh is called a speed run. This is the safest, easiest maneuver in skimboarding. Pick out a wave coming in that looks like it will have a good swoosh. Keeping your eye on it, try to time your slide so you will hit it when it has just flattened out enough to ride up on. Start running up the shore, keeping your eye on the wave, look down long enough to drop the board and get on, look at the wave, bend the knees and prepare to ride up onto it and turn toward the dry sand. The wood Skimboards will not float if a thin layer of sand has washed over it. At the end of your slide it is necessary to get off the board before the sand can cover it. Just before you stop sliding, kick the board away from you, back up the slope of the beach. Then, as you turn to walk up the slope, the board is easy to grab. Wood boards are excellent for beginners because they are steady and they glide a long way across the sand. Plus the novice is going to abuse the board in the process of learning how to use it, so why wreck an expensive foam board if the rider is still learning the basics of running and jumping on. Foam boards become valuable once the rider has started trying to ride out over deeper water to catch the breaking waves.

Maintenance:

You must savor and preserve these sleds: Skimboards hate the heat of direct sunlight or being in the trunk of a car. The polyester resin will get so hot that it softens and the board can change shape. When you are through skimboarding, stick the tail in the sand and point the nose towards the sun so that as little of the board as possible is directly facing the sun. A white board is not that much of a problem, but any dark colored boards are very vulnerable. Skimboards are not unbreakable, if they were, they would be too heavy. It is not unusual to hit a wave too hard and snap the board. Also, some maintenance is required on all boards, especially wood boards.

Rocks and sand will wear away the finish and dings must be patched before the water can penetrate the wood or foam. Don't call us if the board delaminates because of water damage due to dings not getting fixed soon enough. Look for water stains regularly, and patch the holes as soon as possible. Let the ding dry completely, rough up the area with sandpaper, mix up some polyester resin or some 5 minute, 2 part epoxy and spread it over the ding. Use some fiberglass cloth to do it right. Sand smooth the next day. Patch the noses of Skimboards early, before the water peels the entire bottom off. Victoria will send you a basic 1 page guide to repair techniques if you send us a stamped, self addressed envelope.

Safety:

Be Safe!!!! Avoid skimboarding where people might get hit by a board. Check the water for rocks and sandbars before skimboarding. Never do flips into shallow water. Keep control of your board. Don't let the board get away from you. Learn slowly; don't run any faster than you are prepared to fall. Don't try going into the waves until you have mastered the basic run, jump-on, and slide maneuvers. Be responsible and encourage other skimboarders to be responsible as well. Be courteous to beach goers and respect the lifeguard's wishes. It can only reflect positively on the reputation of the sport.

Intermediate Tips:

Why do I sink before I hit the wave? The simplest reasons are the wave was too far out to begin with, the board is too small to carry you, the curve of the bottom of the board is too much and you may need a flatter bottom. Or you just weren't running fast enough. When you turn the board, you lose speed. So turn as little as possible. Approach the wave from a flat angle. Going straight out to a wave and expecting to make the turn and ride it back is the worst way to approach a wave. The hop: use your legs and body to the max. Lift up and push down as you skim over every little bump in the water. This will pump you much further out. On the other hand you don't want to look like a spastic grasshopper, hopping up and down and flapping your arms like a mad man. Keep it smooth. Keep the board flat on the water. Leaning on the rail to turn wastes a ton of speed. Touching the water to turn wastes less energy and keeps the rails lined up with the turn. Store the rotation in your torso until you get into your turn. Let the wave pick you up and accelerate your board, keep your body firm, you don't want to collapse down into the board during the turn. Keep the rear foot as far back as possible on the tail of the board. This will give you much more control in the turns and smoothes your transitions from the sand to the water. Doing some small turns before the main turn off the wave helps to establish a feel for the tail. Your body will follow where your head is looking. So if you are looking into the lip of the wave as you start your turn, then that is where you will end up. High on the wave. If you want to get in the barrel, look down there as you start your turn and that's where you'll end up. Tele-scoping. As you lose speed, crouch down lower and lower, this will lighten the load and prolong the plane. Smooth head keeps clear vision. Like golf, you must keep your head still and your eye on the ball. Same for skimboarding. Be steady and your vision and depth perception will improve dramatically. CAUTION: Once you start trying to ride back down the waves you are making a radical commitment to being thrown beyond the cushion of water and onto the hard sand. You must be prepared to get pitched onto the sand, but avoid this at all costs. Heavy joint tweaking is possible here so be mindful of hugging the face of the wave and not getting too far ahead of the water. I am a firm believer in the notion of conservative skimboarding. Conservative meaning falling as little as possible. So that my body will last as long as possible

before a major joint failure makes me take up golf as a full time sport. Showing control and style in the face of difficulty is the essence of skiing and most other things as well.