Viking Six Inch Kayak Hatch by Tom Holtey - All images by author
Installation Instructions with links to purchase

NOTE: For some detailed photos of hatch installation principles that may assist with your six-inch hatch project, see: "Installing The A Style Hatch."

Tools needed:

- **Six-inch Hatch** contents: Hatch (Rim, Screw Top Lid & removable Fat Bag)
- Jigsaw
- **12 Rivets**, or **Well-Nuts** or your own hardware, such as stainless steel nuts & bolts.
- **Rivet tool** for rivets or screw driver for well-nuts
- Drill
- 3/16 bit
- Small tube of silicone
- Surform Tool would be helpful
- Measure tape
- Fine point magic marker
- Putty knife
- lots of rags and/or paper towels
- A light hammer can be useful for tapping down the heads of rivets that pull too far up

INSTRUCTION:

Gather all tools and parts before starting. Arrange the kayak in a comfortable workspace in a stable manner. Kayak placed at waist level while standing is best. Read directions thoroughly before starting, silicone hardens fast.

1. Identify a suitable place to install 6-inch hatch. Use rim to find a flat place on deck large enough and flat enough to accept full diameter of hatch with some room to spare. Avoid low areas such as cargo or scuba wells. Central location in cockpit is acceptable but be sure to seal well with silicone.

2. Use LID as a template, upside down. Draw a circle using the outer edge of the LID as a guide with a fine point marker. Hatch Rim can be used to help center in the space.

3. Use Drill to make a hole inside the circle you have drawn. This will allow you to insert the jig saw blade.

4. Use Jig Saw to cut out the opening for the hatch. Cut just inside of the circle you have drawn, just barely leaving the marker's line. Check the fit with the Rim by inserting it into the opening. If necessary trim with a small SureForm tool, sharp knife, or the jig saw. If opening was cut too large apply a bead of silicone to underside of hatch rim in the corner where the flange makes a 90 degree angle, and let harden.

5. Apply a thick bead of 100% pure silicone sealant (clear is best) all the way around the flange of the hatch rim. Apply enough silicone so that when the rim is secured a small amount will squeeze out all the way around. A second bead of silicone can be applied to the very edge of the opening on the deck. Too much silicone can be a problem, and messy! Bear in mind that you must work quickly, as the silicone will harden and gel after only a few minutes.

6. Insert Hatch Rim into opening, do not press down hard. Make sure it is seated properly. Using drill, with 3/16 drill bit, drill your first hole using a screw hole in the rim as your guide. Insert a silicone coated rivet, (Dip rivet tip into silicone tube.) into the hole and fasten. If using well-nuts apply a tiny bit of silicone under the screw head. Do not let the silicone come in contact with the rubber well-nut as it will make it slippery and hard to tighten. Apply silicone under the head of nuts and bolts if using those. Drill your next hole in the opposite hole on the rim, seal fastener with silicone and secure. Some silicone should squeeze out from under the head of your rivet, screw or bolt, wipe that off immediately. Continue drilling, sealing and fastening in the order of opposite holes, much like you would tighten lug nuts on a car wheel.

7. For best results drill 6 more new holes centered in-between the first 6 holes along the hatch rim. This will result in 12 rivets or well-nuts holding down the hatch rim. (Some Ocean Kayak installations will sport 18 holes! This is good, but over kill in my opinion.) You will have to "eye ball" your 6 additional holes, but a ruler can be helpful as an aid. Seal and fasten each as described above. Drilling 12 holes, and applying the fasteners, ONE AT A TIME in place will ensure proper alignment.

8. Wipe up the squeezed out silicone after the hatch rim is secured to deck. Remember work quickly before the silicone has hardened. A small putty knife or screwdriver can be useful to scrape up the mess; a paper towel will do a fine job too. If the silicone is hard to remove and has started to gel it is best to wait and let it harden. Thin layers of hard silicone can be rubbed off; thick layers need to be scraped or peeled off. Be very careful NOT to remove too much, do not wipe or pull silicone out from under the hatch rim. That is why it is best to use clear. Removing hardened silicone is hard! Work quickly and clean up a little bit at a time as go, being careful not to remove silicone from under rim.

9. After the silicone has been cleaned and is hard, insert the Fat Bag and screw on the Lid. For a finishing touch, a strap eye can be installed in the finger slot, where "OPEN" is printed on the top of the Lid. A second strap eye can be installed adjacent to the Hatch Rim on the deck of the kayak. A short cord slipped into each eye and knotted at each end will make a handy leash to keep your lid from getting lost. Make sure cord is long enough to turn lid. Follow standard procedure for installing strap eyes.

Other useful tips:

Keep the threads on the hatch free of sand and grit, this can jam the hatch and make it hard to open. I keep an old toothbrush in my hatch to brush out debris. If your hatch lid does get jammed use a large pair of pliers and a large screwdriver to open the hatch as shown in the diagram (right). The six inch hatch has an O-Ring that is thin and hard to see. This O-Ring is crucial to maintaining a waterproof seal. Do not attempt to remove it or aggressively clean it. It is fragile and very hard to re-seat. If the O-Ring is missing the hatch will not be waterproof, and your kayak may flood.
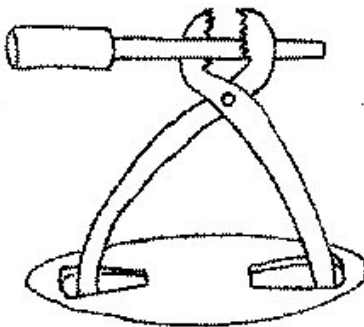
To purchase a six inch hatch and the hardware needed visit **The TopKayaker Shop**

Related Links & Articles:

Some helpful tools for kayak work are the Stanley Surform and a Marson HP-2 Hand Rivet Tool. I also highly recommend reviewing our article: **Basics of Strap Eyes, Rivets, & Well Nuts** For Customization & Repair of Your Sit-on-top Kayak.

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