

HOW TO PUT SURFBOARDS ON A CAR EQUIPPED WITH A RACK WITH CROSSBARS

YOU WILL NEED TO PROVIDE: A CAR RACK WITH TWO CROSSBARS

Make sure that your rack is strong enough and solidly attached to the car. Your two crossbars should be at least 2.5-3 feet (70-100 cm) apart, and the further apart the better.

The Surf Club has everything else you will need.

DISCLAIMER: IF YOU DAMAGE CLUB EQUIPMENT MOUNTING IT ON A CAR RACK, OR IF IT COMES OFF THE RACK WHILE DRIVING, YOU WILL BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY AND ALL DAMAGE CAUSED, NO MATTER HOW CAREFULLY YOU FOLLOWED THE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW!

A surfboard flying off a car while driving at high speeds will cause not only the certain destruction of the board itself, but is also very likely to cause a serious accident if there are any cars behind you. Please be very careful. You are entirely responsible in all cases.

1. Use a pair of nylon webbing straps. The Club has a pair your can use, which are kept in the wetsuit cabinet in a plastic bag. You can also get your own at REI or Sport Chalet (\$10-20). The straps should be at least 1 inch wide and 6-15 feet long, and **MUST HAVE A METAL BUCKLE**. (Surfboards may not be very heavy, but are large, and at high speed can generate large forces from the wind, and so sturdy straps and a strong car rack are essential!). **NEVER USE ELASTIC BUNGIE CORDS!**

Make sure to find straps that have a **PADDED BUCKLE**. This will protect the surfboards as well as your car. **TIP:** If you can't find straps with protected buckles, wrap an old sock or rag around the buckle to pad it.

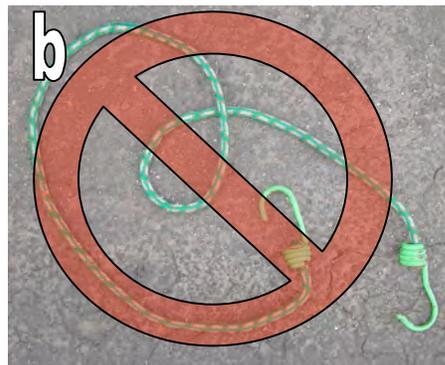


Figure 1: (a) Two kinds of webbing straps. The one below is better: it has better rubber padding around the metal buckle. The one on top has minimal but sufficient padding. Do not use straps without a padded buckle! (b) Never use elastic bungee cords.

2. Use foam padding around the crossbars of your rack. You can buy fancier versions, but the Club has perfectly functional ones you can borrow (ours are just pipe insulation, available at OSH for a couple bucks). The Club's pads should fit over most types of crossbars.



Figure 2: Pad your crossbars with foam tubes that you can borrow from the Club, or buy the name-brand version. In a pinch, a towel or a blanket wrapped around the bars will work also.

If there are any protruding parts on your crossbars, no matter how small, make sure that they are protected by the foam padding.



Figure 3: Protect any edges or protrusions on the top of your crossbars.

3. Before putting the surfboard on top of your car, loop the straps around each of the two bars, laying the webbing over the windshield and back of the car.



Figure 4: Put the straps around the bars before putting the surfboards on the car.

4. Take the surfboard and carefully lay it down on the foam padding on your rack. This can be difficult and clumsy, especially on a car or SUV with a high roof. **BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO BANG THE BOARD INTO THE ENDS OF THE CROSSBARS OR ANY OTHER HARD OBJECT ON THE CAR!** Make sure antennas or other protrusions are out of the way.

ALWAYS PUT THE BOARDS WITH THE FIN FACING UP. You can put the board(s) with the fin towards the front or the back of the car. The fin will provide some extra security against the board sliding off the car. Would you rather the fin stop the boards from sliding off the back of the car if the straps get a little loose, or would you rather the fin stop the boards from shooting off the front of the car if you stop short? Take your pick! I prefer having the fins in back myself...

The leashes should be tightly wrapped around the back of the board and attached so it will not come loose while driving (**Figure 5b**). If you can't wrap the leash securely, you can take it off to drive, but ALWAYS PUT THE LEASHES BACK ON THE BOARDS. Please do not leave boards in the clubhouse without attached leashes.



Figure 5: (a) Padding between the boards is essential. (b) Attach the ankle strap to the fin to secure the leash. Make sure it will not come loose while driving! Also, note the space between the board on top and the bottom board's red fin.

5. To mount just one board, skip ahead to **Step 6**. You can stack boards to carry more, but **DO NOT STACK MORE THAN 3 BOARDS ON TOP OF EACH OTHER!**

To stack two or more boards, **YOU MUST PUT FOAM PADDING BETWEEN THE BOARDS (Figure 5a)**. In the clubhouse, you will find strips of foam padding (pieces of the same foam tubes used to protect the crossbars). Place a pair of these foam strips on top of the board, one directly above each crossbar. Then place the next board on the foam pads. **TIP:** If it's windy, have somebody else hold the foam strips while you place the surfboard on top.

When putting stacking surfboards on top of each other, always put the longest board on the bottom. **MAKE SURE THERE IS A 1-2 INCH GAP BETWEEN THE FIN OF THE BOTTOM BOARD AND THE ON TOP (see Figure 5b).**

6. Make sure that the center of mass of the board(s) is centered over the two crossbars. This is very important when stacking 2-3 boards on top of each other. This may mean that the bottom-most board is fairly far back (forward if mounted fin in front). However, the boards should not extend much past the windshield or back of the car.



Figure 7: A stack of boards centered over the crossbars is most stable.

7. Lay the straps over the top of the boards. The straps should not be twisted and should run flat over the edges of the boards so that the strap does not cut into the board. Take the end of the strap without the buckle and loop it through the rack. **DO NOT JUST LOOP THE STRAP AROUND THE END OF THE CROSSBAR!** Run the strap around the rack tower (crossbar bracket) or the bar the rack is mounted on, as in **Figure 8a**. **ALWAYS MAKE A CLOSED LOOP** with the strap so that even if it comes a little loose, it **CANNOT COME OFF THE RACK!**

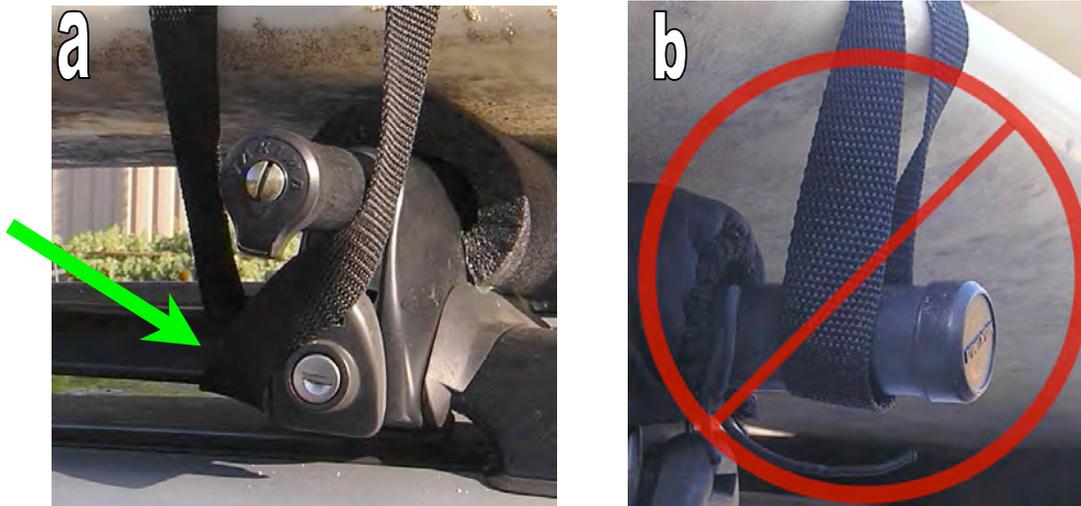


Figure 8: (a) Always run the webbing strap around the rack tower or the front-to-back bars that the rack is mounted on. You can also make a closed loop by mounting the boards in the middle of the crossbars and running the strap around the crossbar on the **INSIDE** of the tower or bracket. (b) **NEVER** loop the strap over the end of the crossbar, if it extends out as shown here.

Run the end of the webbing strap through the buckle (usually running from below up through the buckle). Before tightening the strap, **SLIDE THE STRAP SO THAT THE BUCKLE IS LYING FLAT ON TOP OF THE BOARD!** **NEVER HAVE THE BUCKLE RUNNING OVER THE EDGE OF A BOARD.**

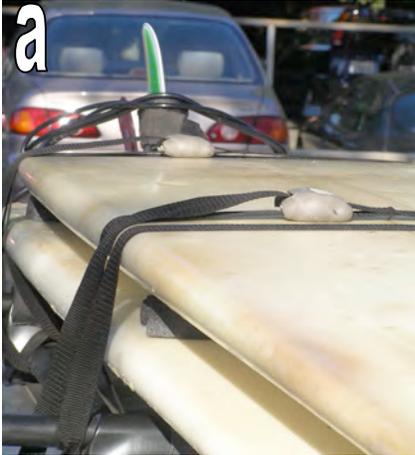


Figure 9: (a) Slide the straps around before tightening so that the buckle is on top, (b) NEVER running over the edge of a board!

8. Gently, but firmly, tighten the straps until the boards are securely fastened. **DO NOT OVER TIGHTEN THE STRAPS!!!!** You can easily crush the edge of the board with the strap! The board should simply be immobilized! If mounting two boards, make sure there is a gap between the two boards from the padding so they are not touching each other anywhere.

Once the tightened, you can add a safety knot in the webbing for good measure... a simple slip-knot works well. Then, tuck any excess strap inside the car through the window or car door to keep it from flying around.

I have found that vibrations and small movements from by driving will cause the stack of boards to settle somewhat. **CHECK THAT YOUR STAPS HAVE NOT LOOSENED UP BEFORE DRIVING ON THE FREEWAY! RE-TIGHTEN YOUR STRAPS IF THE BOARDS MOVING AROUND ON YOUR ROOF WHILE DRIVING!!!**



Figure 10: (a) Straps tightened, with safety knots, and the excess strap tucked into the car. (b) You can wrap the excess around the handle as shown.

9. To mount a second stack of boards, go back to **Step 3** and repeat.

When mounting boards next to each other, make sure your rack is wide enough to fit both stacks of boards! **THE BOARDS SHOULD NOT TOUCH EACH OTHER! THERE MUST BE 1-3 INCHES OF SPACE BETWEEN THE STACKS OF BOARDS (Figure 11).** With a good rack and long straps, it is possible to carry a total of six boards this way, two stacks of three.



Figure 11: Make sure there is a gap between the sets of boards when mounting pairs next to each other. (The arrangement in the picture is actually a little borderline — a little more space would be better!)

DRIVE CAREFULLY AND KEEP YOUR EYE ON WHAT IS HAPPENING ON TOP OF YOUR CAR! IF IN DOUBT, PULL OVER AND CHECK!

**SURFBOARDS FLYING OFF A CAR CAN KILL PEOPLE.
ATTACH THEM SECURELY.**

10. When you return the boards to the clubhouse, please make sure to put the leashes back on the boards (please keep track of which leash goes with which board). If you borrowed them, return the pair of webbing straps to the locked wetsuit cabinet, hanging in a plastic bag from a clothes hanger.



Figure 12: Return the web straps to the locked wetsuit cabinet!