

**** SAFETY ****

Life vests must fit securely.

Be aware if there are **paddlers with medical conditions** (asthma or heart).

**** In event of Emergency ****

DO NOT attempt to swim to shore; all paddlers need to stay with the boat.

DO NOT extend self to swimmers; ONLY EXTEND PADDLES for them to grasp.

Launch driver will provide assistance and/or call for aide.

**** Steersperson's instructions supersede drummer's.**

Paddlers should be **LISTENING** at all times – **NO talking**

BOAT BALANCE is achieved by proper seat position during strokes, focus and synchronicity
Eyes should be in the boat focusing on strokes or drummer

PREPARING FOR PRACTICES

All paddlers present?

All paddlers completed **waivers**? **NO non-registered paddlers in boat.**

All paddlers have **life vests/approved Personal Flotation Devices (PFD's)**

All paddlers have **paddles**?

Determine best paddle length by sitting down, raising arm up

– *handle of paddle should extend to mid-palm*

Dockside:

All paddlers assembled BY dock ready to load as soon as the boat is ready or other team has disembarked – Do NOT go onto dock if another team has to unload

Paddlers should get lined up by row – Remember: Balance the boat

Assist, as necessary, with tie-down of boat or holding lines

Hold boat at Row 5 to facilitate loading by calling out the rows to be filled

PADDLERS

Placement according to skill/strength AND WEIGHT

BALANCED BOAT = GREATER STABILITY

ENTERING THE BOAT – One person at a time

DO NOT step on the seat bench – step onto the floor of the boat

Begin with row 5, waterside paddler then dockside paddler,

Then proceed **ONE ROW AT A TIME**:

row 6, row 7; then up to row 4, row 3;

then back to row 8 and 9; up to row 2 then 1;

followed by row 10, your drummer then your steersperson.

SEAT POSITION – **** Body position facilitates rotation and reach ****

Outside hip - against the gunnel and angled forward

Outside leg – stretched forward and against the gunnel

Inside hip – angled towards the back of the boat

Inside leg – bent and foot tucked under the seat

BOAT TERMINOLOGY	BOAT DYNAMICS
Bow = Front of boat	Weight
Stern = Back of boat	Balance
Port = Left side	Hydroplaning
Starboard = Right side	Surging
Gunwale (gunnel) = sides of the boat	
Helm, Till or Tiller = Steersperson	

PUSH-OFF FROM DOCK

Coordinate with Steersperson – Steersperson may want to provide directions

Starboard (right) side gently pushes off with **HANDLE of paddle** NOT paddle blade

Slow pace, all together, in unison with the commands and drum

STROKE – the SEVEN STEPS

1. **ROTATE** – twist torso at waist, your back to the water, your chest to your seatmate
2. **REACH** – Outside arm straight and reaching out in front. Inside/top arm up, slightly bent and over the gunnel
3. **TOP ARM DRIVE** – once fully rotated and extended, drive down with upper arm
4. **CATCH** – Blade is square and completely buried
5. **PULL** – Continue forcing paddle downward with upper arm, keeping outside arm straight and strong while using large back muscles and abs to unwind. Sit up, bringing the outside shoulder back, pulling the blade right beside the boat.
6. **EXIT** – Blade is about mid-thigh. Pull blade up and out of the water easily with upper arm
7. **RECOVERY** – (a fraction of a second) Bend outside elbow slightly which takes you right back into the beginning of the stroke. **BREATHE>>>>>RELAX**

STROKE variations: Tempo, Length and Intensity

COMMANDS

SIT READY – Sitting upright with paddle across lap

READY READY – Rotated Reach with paddle immersed in water up to little pinky finger

HIT – Paddle enters water on the drum beat

LET IT RUN (or RIDE) – Stop paddling, paddle across lap

HOLD WATER – (for braking the boat) Paddles in water, blades buried and perpendicular to boat. Hold position until told to release it.

D R I L L S

SIT UP/REACH & ROTATE DRILL

Purpose: to have paddlers feel how their body movement affects boat propulsion

Paddles across lap, paddlers' outside hand on gunnel

Paddlers slowly reach forward as they rotate chest inward toward seatmate

Command: **Reach & rotate,**
SIT UP (strive for this happening in unison),
Reach, then repeat five to ten times until done in unison

ONE ARM DRILL

Purpose = to increase arm strength and endurance; to emphasize paddle position in water;
to emphasize torso rotation; and, to emphasize top hand position over water

Using only the outside (waterside) hand, hold paddle just above blade

Command: **ROTATE, REACH, DRIVE, CATCH, PULL, EXIT**
Paddlers are paddling, *but just with one arm*. Repeat until in unison.

STIRRING DRILL

Purpose = to emphasize rotation of upper body

Blades (Paddles) start buried in the water and remain in the water for the entire exercise.

Boat will not move much, but this is intensive, because of the water resistance. It's a slow exercise.

Command: **Bury your blades at mid-thigh position.**
Keep them buried while rotating and reaching your body... Push
Now, using your back and ab muscles, unrotate and sit up... Pull
Repeat: Push, Pull, Push

PAUSE DRILL

Purpose = to reinforce stroke technique and to get team paddling in unison at the drum beat or call
Pause at beginning of each stroke in Rotate/Reach position

Command: **SIT READY**
PADDLES READY (steps 1 and 2 of Stroke)
HIT (all paddles in the water and complete steps 3 4 5 6 7 of stroke)
PAUSE (all in Rotate/Reach position) waiting for your next command as
boat glides

POWER DRILL

Purpose: building strength, endurance and timing

Command: Let's have some really strong paddling. We'll start off easy, and when you're all in sync, we'll do 10 strokes digging deep and pulling hard, and then settle back to some easy paddling. Remember: the pulling is not with your arms...It's with your abs and torso in your unwinding. Let's try to stay together through the power changes, We'll start easy and end easy, and push 10 hard strokes when I call for them.

Sit ready

Ready ready

Hit Hit.....etc. till the boat is going well.

Give me a power 10 in 3....2.....1...Hit Hit ...etc for the ten strokes, or count them, then Paddle easy.....and finally let it run.....

HALF BOAT DRILL

Your commands:

I'm going to give you a break. Half of you can rest, while the other paddles....But keep alert. Your rest lasts for 10 strokes, and you **MUST** come in on the next count....We'll alternate resting and paddling for 10 strokes.

Divide the boat in half

Rows 1 - 5 = FRONT

6 - 10 = BACK

or Odds and Evens

BUT NOT Left side and right side (that's a joke !!!! I know you'd never do that)

OK starting with the front paddling and the back resting with paddles handles down, between your feet, blades up.

Front: Sit Ready

Ready ready

Hit Hit 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 (back get ready) 10

Hit hit 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 (front ready) 10

Returning to the Variations in stroke we'd talked about earlier.....

THE RACE START

Race starts are made up of 3 parts

ALWAYS work on them separately when teaching your team the start.

FIRST PART = 6 Long Deep Hard strokes

Do these until the team has it together. **ONLY** then will you introduce the

SECOND PART = 16 short choppy strokes.

Emphasize the difference in character of these two parts.

Build up from 6 to 10 short choppy strokes, before you attempt 16 of them..

Remember the Command **LET IT RUN** after each trial.

ONLY after the team has done these in sync should you attempt to put the 2 parts together...

This is hard work and takes a lot of coordination. Be clear and concise in your directions so the team understands what you want of them.

DO NOT USE DRILLS DURING A RACE They are for practices...to improve stroke technique, to improve synchronizing the team, to build stamina and endurance. There is one exception...you can call for a Power Ten (or 5 or 20) at any time during a race.

RULES OF THE BOAT

quiet

focus in the boat

orders are from steersperson and drummer only.

COMMANDS DURING THE RACE

The start command is **ATTENTION PLEASE**, paddles are buried in the water, followed by a 2 - 3 second pause. Then an air horn blasts to start the race..

CLARIFYING SOME POINTS

----- The race start is :

Paddles buried in the water

6 long deep hard strokes

16 short fast choppy strokes

Lengthen in to a pace the team can maintain.

There is no pause between these three. Move right from one to the next....keep the momentum going.

Do NOT return to short choppy strokes. You may ask for a Power Ten if your boat needs it.

-----Although I used a paddle to demonstrate in our dry land clinics, when you are in the drumming seat.....you will have only a drum. You may borrow a paddle to show a point.....but mostly rely on your words.....concise, clear and to the point.

Your team is scheduled for 3 onwater practices. It's a good idea to meet prior to those for team building and learning boat basics. Doing so makes for a more productive and efficient practice session.

Everyone is in the boat. The steersperson is ready. Drummer or steersperson says "Starboard side Gently push off". Drummer "The trick here is for all of us to put the paddles in the water and out, at the same time. We're paddling together at an easy pace till we cross the river to the other bank.

Listen to my drum and hit the water when it sound. My beat will be like this. Hit Hit Hit.

Sit Ready

Ready Ready

Hit.Hit.Hit. Together Hit etc.

Check with the steersperson before you say :Let it run".

Give feedback and answer questions.

Set up a one minute paddle...all in sync.....Let it run....

Give feedback.....(probably they aren't working together...so...

explain (briefly but clearly) the Pause Drill

Do a Pause Drill..Let it run.....

Give feedback. Do another Pause Drill so they really get it. And then another and continue paddling without the pause as soon as they are together....and make it a nice long rewarding paddle

Let it run.. Water Break .. Stretch.

Explain the Power Strokes you'll be asking for next. "you'll paddle 5 nice easy strokes all together....and then I'll call for 5 power strokes. Maintain the tempo, but just pull harder....remember, the pulling is NOT in the arms....it's in the unwinding of your torso and the sitting up. We'll alternate 5 easy, 5 hard strokes, 5 easy all at the same speed with my drum beat."

Be enthusiastic, but honest. Be aware of increasing the teams power and endurance. Simple stretches before and after practice are helpful.

The Power Drill is a good introduction to Race Starts.

Some afterthoughts....

1. Things to bring to the boat. Your car key on a lanyard around your neck or in a zipper pocket. Water, a butt pad (optional), paddle, life vest (we provide last 2 items) No Beach Bags or towels. Gloves (optional). Leave all valuables locked in the trunk of your car and invisible.
2. Wear comfortable clothes, Shoes should be non slip that you don't care if they get wet. Wide brimmed hats will get in the way and/or fly away.
3. Search the web for interesting Dragon Boat Sites.