

ROWING RULES TO SURVIVE

ROWING SAFETY SKILLS

1. **All rowers must be able to swim 100m** in full rowing clothes
2. **Study the map** in your club that shows local traffic flow and note **DANGER SPOTS, SAFE BEACHING AREAS and HOURS OF OPERATION**
3. **Right of way** - generally international rules say to keep the shore close to your left so that counter clockwise rotation in shared water
 - ▶ Rowing boats always give way to
 - sailing boats
 - faster rowing boats
 - ▶ Rowing boats should be careful with large powered vessels that cannot easily manoeuvre ~ Coxed boats give way to uncoxed boats
 - ▶ Boats travelling in opposite directions pass stroke side to stroke side
 - ▶ If a collision is imminent, **CALL OUT**
4. **Lights** - before dawn or after dusk rowing boats **MUST** carry a continuous whitelight on the bow and preferably stern of the boats
 - ▶ which must be visible for 500m and for at least 225 degree radius;
5. Emergency signals - two arms for emergency, one arm for non-emergency, lights over the head and/or whistle can be used
6. Wear appropriate clothing; see notes below for summer and winter
7. Check your equipment is safe
 - ▶ Bow ball fitted
 - ▶ Heel safety straps on footstretcher
 - ▶ Sealed bow and stern compartments
 - ▶ Gates on swivels to close and secure properly
 - ▶ All moving parts tight and in good working order
8. **Courtesy** - always be courteous to other water users; bad language or abuse does not do anything positive for safety or the sport

DRESS APPROPRIATELY

In winter

- Wear close-fitting stretch fabric rowing shorts/tights leggings) and bright tops
- Wear many layers of light but close-fitting garments rather than two thick layers - remove layers as you warm up (put into a plastic bag to keep dry!)
- In very cold conditions wear thermal underwear as a base layer, woollen or thermal socks
- Wear head gear such as a beanie, balaclava or hat, plus headband that covers your ears
- You may need gloves or rowing mittens on colder mornings

In Summer

- Wear a hat and sunglasses
- Wear long sleeved tops to avoid over-exposure to the sun
- Always apply sunscreen

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SURVIVING CAPSIZES

1. **Avoid going out alone**, especially outside peak times of early morning/ late afternoon. Row with a friend or have a coach accompany you. Otherwise, tag along with another group;
2. If you capsize use the **BUDDY SYSTEM** in crew boats where athletes pair up (Bow with 2 seat, 3 seat with 4 etc) to keep track of all crew members - don't forget the coxswain!
3. **If you capsize in COLD WATER, get back in the boat** quickly; if that is not possible
 - ▶ Stay with the boat; preferably lying over the boat with as much of your body out of the water as possible;
 - ▶ Roll the boat to increase flotation; use bits of the boat/oars if boat has broken; ~ Do not try to swim to shore, even if you are a good swimmer
 - ▶ Do not move around to try and keep warm; in cold water you will lose warmth and energy very quickly if you do
 - ▶ Try to attract attention eg whistle, waving arms
4. **If you capsize in WARM WATER, try to get back in the boat**; if that is not possible
 - ▶ **Stay with the boat**; roll boat to increase flotation if needed
 - ▶ **Do not try to swim to shore**, even if you are a good swimmer
 - ▶ **Do not move around** to try and keep warm;
 - ▶ **Try to attract attention** eg whistle, waving arms
5. **If you are with other scullers or rowers and capsize**, decide on the best of the following two options (choice will depend on circumstances)
 - ▶ Let them help you get back in the boat
 - ▶ Let them go for help, either from the nearest club or from a passing motorboat 6.
6. **RESCUE BOAT PROCEDURES..**
 - ▶ Safety boat needs at least 2 people to counter-balance weight as rower being rescued is lifted into the safety boat;
 - ▶ Ensure that safety boat capacity is not exceeded - make several trips if necessary;
 - ▶ Practice the rescue drill - approach rescue into the wind, rescue those in greatest stress first
7. **Get dry and warm as soon as possible**

TREATMENT OF HYPOTHERMIA

1. **Commence 'artificial respiration' if necessary**
2. **Get the hypothermic victim dry and warm** but not too warm too quickly
3. **Use thermal blankets, a warm room, or someone else's body heat** in a blanket to help the warming process
4. **Give warm fluids** eg cocoa, tea, coffee, soup

HEALTH WARNING

1. **Rowers over 40 years of age** should consider having a medical check up before rowing
2. **All rowers** should have a medical screening before commencing a serious training programme
3. **Please inform your club, coach and boat race officials** if you have a medical condition that may affect your safety eg asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, heart condition

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FOR COACHES

- Update your knowledge - local hazards, weather conditions, club emergency procedures, coach boat procedures, basic first aid and CPR
- Make sure your coach boat has all its prescribed lighting and safety equipment Ensure that you teach your crew/s the safety procedures and that you check whether they can swim
- Wear appropriate clothing for comfort
- Carry a mobile phone for emergencies
- Make sure you follow your rowers closely if foggy conditions commence
- Err on the side of caution in risky weather conditions such as electrical storms, rough water or heavy fog; choose alternative training eg ergo, bike, run, weights, aerobics Remember that you have a 'duty of care' to your rowers; don't make them take unnecessary risks that endanger their safety
- Remember to slow down and cut the wash from coaching boat when passing other crews
- It is a MAST requirement that speed boat drivers carry their boat driving license when out on the water at all times

FOR CLUBS

- Ensure that Risk Management Program is constantly evaluated and that Insurance cover is appropriate Ensure that your members are aware of the club rules and rowing safety procedures - post them in full view
- Ensure that the log book is completed each time a crew/sculler goes training Ensure that all coaching boats are properly equipped
- Ensure that all your club rowing boats are unsinkable ie canvasses at the bow and stern are sealed and seaworthy
- Ensure an adequate first aid kit and fire extinguisher are kept in the clubhouse Ensure appropriate CPR information is in full view
- Ensure that a supervising adult is always located at the clubhouse when juniors are rowing
- Know where the nearest phone is located - list emergency numbers for police, fire, and ambulance

CONSIDER THE CONDITIONS BEFORE GOING OUT

Do not row if...

- There are electrical storms about eg lightning/thunder
- The weather is stormy or squally
- The waves have 'white caps'
- There is thick fog
- It is extremely cold

Consider other forms of training when rowing conditions are risky
eg ergo, bike, run, weights, aerobics