



---

# OLD SALTS SENIORS CANOE CLUB

---

## **Handbook & Club Rules**



Version 6– 2025

Copyright © Old Salts Seniors Canoe Club

No part of this manual may be reproduced without the express written permission of the  
Old Salts Seniors Canoe Club



# Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Who Are the Old Salts? .....	5
What Else Do We Offer? .....	5
<b>PART 1: CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP .....</b>	<b>6</b>
RELEASE OF LIABILITY, WAIVER OF CLAIMS, ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND .....	6
INDEMNITY AGREEMENT .....	6
<b>PART 2: CLUB RULES/GUIDELINES.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Fees .....	7
What is Provided by the Club .....	7
Responsibility of Members .....	7
Trip Schedule .....	7
Intermediate Outings .....	8
Basic Outings .....	8
Important Points to be Aware of.....	8
Towing & Car Topping .....	8
Guests .....	8
Privacy.....	9
<b>TRAINING.....</b>	<b>10</b>
Overview .....	10
Orientation Training for New Members (1 day) .....	10
Pool Training .....	10
Pond Training (Canoe Stroke Practice Sessions) .....	11
Basic River Training (2 days) .....	11
Intermediate Skills Training (2 Days) .....	11
Refresher Skills Training Course (1 day) .....	11
<b>SO, YOU WANT TO GO ON A CANOE TRIP? .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Step 1- How to sign up .....	12
Step 2 – Details to remember! .....	12
<b>CANOE TRIP PROTOCOLS .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Meeting Times .....	13
Why Meet at the Shed? .....	13
Last Minute Trip Changes/Cancellations .....	13
On the River .....	13
<b>CHECK LIST ON WHAT TO DO ON CANOE DAY! .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>PROTOCOLS BEFORE GETTING ON THE WATER.....</b>	<b>14</b>
Establishing Responsibilities .....	14
Lead & Sweep Canoes.....	15
Emergency Contact Cards .....	15
Paddle & Whistle Signals .....	15
<b>Leading a Trip.....</b>	<b>16</b>
Trip Leader's Responsibilities .....	16
Tower Responsibilities .....	19
Appendix A - Blog Post Format & Required Information .....	19
<b>PART 3: KNOW YOUR EQUIPMENT .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Parts of a Canoe Paddle.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Types of Canoe Paddles .....</b>	<b>20</b>

<b>Parts of a Canoe .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Gear.....</b>	<b>21</b>
PFD – as per Transport Canada.....	21
Whistle .....	21
Flashlight.....	21
<b>PART 4: KNOW YOUR STROKES AND WHAT THEY DO!.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Forward Stroke (Power Stroke).....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Back Stroke (Reverse Stroke) .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>J-Stroke (Stern) .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Canadian J-Stroke.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Draw Stroke .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Cross-Bow Stroke (Bow) .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Pry Stroke .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>PART 5: SAFETY.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>EQUIPMENT .....</b>	<b>26</b>
Mandatory (All boaters must have).....	26
Required by the Club .....	27
<b>PERSONAL GEAR .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>ACQUIRING THE SKILLS.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>PRE-TRIP INFORMATION.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>TRANSPORTING CANOES .....</b>	<b>28</b>
Trailering.....	28
Car Topping.....	28
<b>CARRYING A CANOE .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>EMBARKATION.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>DURING THE TRIP .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>END OF TRIP.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>READING WATER.....</b>	<b>30</b>
River Obstacles and Hazards.....	31
Waves and Holes .....	31
Standing Waves .....	32
Riffles and Slicks .....	32
Eddies .....	33
Dams (Weirs) and Waterfalls .....	33
Strainers and Sweepers .....	34
Boulders, Rocks and Ledges .....	34
<b>EMERGENCY PROCEDURES .....</b>	<b>35</b>
Emergency Contact Cards.....	35
Overturn.....	35
Hypothermia .....	36
Drowning.....	36
Bodily Injury .....	36
Inclement Weather .....	37
<b>CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>37</b>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:.....	37
ENDNOTES (AND THINGS THAT ARE GOOD TO KNOW!).....	37
<b>PART 6: VOLUNTEERISM .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>OSSCC Executive.....</b>	<b>39</b>
Past President .....	39
President .....	39
Vice President.....	39
Secretary .....	39
Treasurer.....	39
<b>OSSCC Committee Chairs .....</b>	<b>39</b>
Training Co-Ordinator .....	39
Trip Co-Ordinator/Scheduler .....	39
Membership Co-Ordinator.....	40
Social Committee Chair .....	40
Equipment Chair.....	40
<b>Other Ways to Volunteer.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>PART 7: OSSCC BY-LAWS &amp; CONSTITUTION.....</b>	<b>41</b>
By-Laws .....	41
OSSCC Constitution .....	42
<b>PART 8: MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>46</b>
All About the Blog .....	46
How Does It Work?.....	46
Email Notifications .....	46
▪ Blog Issues .....	46
• Notification Issues .....	46
Top Menu .....	46
Welcome to Our Communication Hub!.....	46
What's Happening! .....	46
Resources ( .....	46
▪ Training.....	46
▪ Club Handbook & Rules.....	46
▪ Membership list.....	46
▪ Printable Materials .....	46
▪ Canoe Terminology .....	47
▪ Link to OSSCC Website (available to the public) .....	47
▪ Trip Videos.....	47
Trip Schedule .....	47
Trip Organizing.....	47
▪ Canoe Trip Times & Pre-Trip Measures .....	47
▪ How to Organize a Trip.....	48
▪ Maps & Directions.....	48
▪ Alternate trip.....	48
Printable Materials .....	48
Forms:.....	48
Trip Schedule .....	48
Waiver for non-members.....	48
Contact Card .....	48
OSSCC Handbook & Rules .....	48
Canoe Terminology .....	48



# OSSCC

## HANDBOOK & RULES

### INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Old Salts Seniors Canoe Club (OSSCC)!

#### Who Are the Old Salts?

We are canoe enthusiasts aged 55+ who enjoy the outdoors, the water and each other's company.

Members of the Old Salts Seniors Canoe Club get together for a weekly canoe trip on Tuesday mornings and twice a month on Thursdays (weather permitting) throughout the season on lakes and rivers in southwestern Ontario. Although most of our trips are within an hour's drive from the KW area, some trips may be further away to give our members a change of scenery with new experiences and challenges.

We've enjoyed exploring the Grand River, as well as other rivers like the Saugeen River, Conestoga River, Beaver River and the Speed River (to name a few). Lake paddles (flat water) have included Floradale Lake, Nith River in New Hamburg, Hespeler Pond, and Stratford. We always have fun and ice cream seems to be the reward at the end!

Trips are planned with the skill levels of our members in mind from our easy paddles to our more challenging paddles that include navigating some rapids and practicing skills learned in our training sessions! Whatever your skill level, we always have fun.

#### What Else Do We Offer?

Although canoeing is our main focus, many of our members like to organize and get together for other activities and events both during and after the canoe season ends. These include but are not limited to:

- |                                   |                                  |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ✓ Hiking & Biking                 | ✓ Annual Christmas Dinner        |
| ✓ New Member Potluck Get-together | ✓ Annual Autumn Retreats         |
| ✓ Bowling                         | ✓ Annual Mini Golf Tournament    |
| ✓ Paradise Lake Fun Day           | ✓ Annual Fall Equipment Clean-up |

The Club is run by volunteer members who comprise a Board of Directors. All members are expected to volunteer in some capacity to ensure the viability and the ongoing success of the Club when asked.

# PART 1: CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

## RELEASE OF LIABILITY, WAIVER OF CLAIMS, ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

I **acknowledge** and **agree** that:

1. I am participating voluntarily in the sport of canoeing organized by the Club. I agree, as a precondition to my participation in the Club, that I will be strictly bound by the terms of this Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims, Assumption of Risks and Indemnity Agreement, and Conditions of Membership.
2. I fully understand that participating in canoe activities organized by the Club might involve inherent risks and dangers that could cause serious injury and possible death to participants.
3. I assume responsibility for all risks, dangers and hazards related to canoeing planned by the Club.
4. I alone am responsible for the welfare and safekeeping of myself, and any family members or guests I bring with me to Club canoeing activities.
5. I hereby waive any and all claims which I may have against the Club, their Executive, trip leaders, trip coordinators, trainers, and activity organizers (hereafter called "Agents"), and release the Club and the Agents from all liability for injury, death, property damage or any other loss sustained by me as a result of my participation in Club canoeing activities, due to any cause what so ever, including negligence, breach of contract, or breach of any statutory or other duty of care by the Club and/or the Agents.
6. All expenses associated with non-scheduled or emergency evacuation, rescue or first aid will be my responsibility and will not be covered by the Club or Agents. It is my responsibility to carry with me a completed and up to date **"Emergency Contact Card"** listing my medical conditions, medications and contact information in case of emergency.
7. I will always wear an approved personal floatation device (PFD), fully done up, while participating in any on-water canoeing activity.
8. It is my responsibility to ensure that I have the physical ability, the ability to swim, skill level and training to participate in canoeing activities planned by the Club. This includes but is not limited to taking mandatory training for new members to acquire necessary canoeing skills, assess skill levels I currently have, and refresher training to maintain skill levels as required.
9. I will read and abide by Club rules as set forth in the **"Old Salts Seniors Canoe Club (OSSCC) Club Handbook/Rules"**.
10. I am also aware that my participation in the activities of the Club may put me at an elevated risk of contracting or being exposed to viruses or other illnesses that may be present in the general population and/or in public spaces, and that I nevertheless choose to participate in the activities and fully assume the risk of doing so. I agree to take whatever precautions necessary to protect myself and fellow Club members.

# PART 2: CLUB RULES/GUIDELINES

## THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

### Fees

- The annual membership fee is \$55.00 plus a one-time charge of \$10 for a name tag. This fee is **non-refundable** once training starts.
- Fees are charged for each trip where the canoe trailer(s) is used. The trip fee is based on the distance travelled at \$8<100 km and \$15>100 km\*\*. These fees are used to pay the tower(s) for mileage when they tow the trailer(s).
- Once in a while, we canoe at conservation areas where entrance fees may need to be paid.

\*\*Fees are subject to change as required

### What is Provided by the Club

- The Club provides a canoe trailer, canoes, and certain mandatory equipment (paddles, ropes, bailers and a first-aid kit), but NOT personal gear such as PFDs.
- Each scheduled trip is led by a Trip Leader with additional assistance by experienced, volunteer members.
- The Club offers mandatory pool (when available) and dryland training for new members to assess skill levels for maximum safety as well as additional training in more progressive paddling and water safety instruction.
- Some training is done by a professional instructor which carries a fee.

### Responsibility of Members

All who participate in Club activities must recognize that canoeing is not without risk and be willing to accept that risk by taking responsibility for their own actions. The Club offers leadership and training by volunteers on a "best efforts" basis only. All who participate in a scheduled Club trip should abide by the following:

- Ensure you have the skill level for the scheduled trip
- Arrive at canoe shed promptly at 8:30 am.
- Pay fees immediately as per schedule.
- Ensure that you have your **"Emergency Contact Card"** with you in case there is an emergency.
- Have sufficient cash to pay for trip-fees (see posted schedule).
- Bring your PFD, dry pack, sunscreen, water and food as called for.
- Help with loading and unloading canoes and other equipment if able.
- When possible, provide car-pooling to the destination as required, or offer gas money to driver (including the tower) if being carpooled.
- If driving, have sufficient gas for the trip.
- Please be punctual so we can leave on time!

### Trip Schedule

All Club trips are subject to change depending on weather and water conditions. If change or cancellation is necessary, members will be notified by email the morning of the trip.



The trip schedule is posted on the Blog with names of trip Leaders and towers, as well as their contact information (for member viewing only).

## Intermediate Outings

- Trip **less than** 100 kms - Meeting time is at 8:30 a.m. at the canoe shed.
- Trip **more than** 100 kms - Meeting time is at 8:00 a.m. at the canoe shed.

## Basic Outings

- Meeting time is at 8:30 a.m. at the canoe shed.

**Please note:** There may be exceptions to these times at the discretion of the Trip Leader. Check with the Trip Leader or the Blog if you are unsure!

## Important Points to be Aware of...

- Since we cannot guarantee our return time, members **should not** schedule appointments for that day.
- **Punctuality** is important so we can make the most of our time on the water.
- If you are going to be late due to unforeseen circumstances (road delays, detours, accident, etc.) let the Co-Ordinator know, so alternate arrangements can be made, **otherwise, latecomers will be left behind!**

## Towing & Car Topping

- The Club relies on member volunteers to tow our canoe trailers to and from our canoe excursions as well as to car top canoes as required. Towers will be compensated for mileage at the current rate of .59 per kilometer\*, but must fill out the "[Towing/Mileage Expense](#)" form and submit to Treasurer. Volunteers are always welcome! (\*subject to change as required).
- Members volunteering to tow or car top canoes need to consult with their own insurance company to ensure that they have proper auto insurance in place regarding towing/car topping.
  - The Club insurance policy does not provide insurance coverage for those towing or car topping.

Towers who car top **Club** canoes will have their trip fee waived. Members who bring their own canoe/kayak will not have any fees waived as they will still be part of the shuttle and **are not** assisting the Club with transporting **Club** canoes.

- Tower Responsibilities can be found on the Blog [here](#).

Towing and car topping are as follows:


# Canoeists	Trailer &/or Cartop
0-4	cartop 2 canoes (discretion to cancel trip due to lack of interest)
6-12	"A" trailer
13	"A" trailer (use kayak for odd numbers)
14	"A" trailer + cartop 1 canoe
16	"A" trailer + cartop 2 canoes
18- 24	"A" trailer + "B" trailer

## Guests

Members are responsible for any guests (age 18+) they bring on our canoe excursions with the following stipulations:

- The Trip Leader must be notified prior to the trip to discuss the guest's canoeing skills and suitability for the trip.
- A "[Waiver for Non-Members](#)" must be signed by both the member and their guest and given to the Trip Leader prior to departure.
- The member will be responsible for their guest as their canoeing partner for that particular trip.
- Members are only permitted to bring a guest twice per season.

## NON MEMBER GUESTS



**OLD SALTS SENIORS CANOE CLUB (OSSCC)**  
Waiver for Non-Members (18+ Years)

NAME: (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

GUEST OF: \_\_\_\_\_

EMERGENCY CONTACT: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE # \_\_\_\_\_

1. I acknowledge that the sport of canoeing, and this canoe activity organized by the OLD SALTS SENIORS CANOE CLUB, (hereafter called the "Club"), in which I am participating, may involve risks, and assume responsibility for these risks and hazards.
2. I hereby waive any and all claims which I may have against the Club, their Executive, trip leaders, trip coordinators, and activity organizers (hereafter called "Agents"), and release the Club and the Agents from all liability for injury, death, property damage or any other loss sustained by me as a result of my participation in this Club canoeing activity, due to any cause what so ever, including negligence, breach of contract, or breach of any statutory or other duty of care by the Club and/or the Agents.
3. I agree to pay the cost of any emergency evacuation of my person and belongings that may be necessary.
4. I affirm that I am aware of the specific nature of this Club sanctioned canoe excursion, its length, duration and degree of difficulty and that I am properly equipped, trained and physically able to participate.
5. I am not aware of any medical or other conditions which might preclude my participation
6. This liability waiver applies to my personal representative, successors, heirs or assigns.

I HAVE READ THIS AGREEMENT AND UNDERSTAND IT. I AM AWARE THAT I AM SIGNING THIS AGREEMENT FOR MYSELF AND ANYONE ENTITLED TO ACT ON MY BEHALF. I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS A PROMISE NOT TO SUE THE CLUB AND/OR AGENTS AND THAT IT CONSTITUTES A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND AN INDEMNITY FOR ALL CLAIMS.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I ASSUME FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ABOVE-NAMED GUEST WHILE CANOEING WITH THE OLD SALTS SENIORS CANOE CLUB.

MEMBER: (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE SUBMIT THIS FORM TO THE TRIP LEADER BEFORE SIGNING IN AND PAYING TRIP FEE.

Members may bring a guest twice per season:

- Must have approval of Trip Leader
- Must sign a waiver
- Member will be responsible for their guest
- Member will be a partner with their guest

### Non-Members: Conditions and Waiver

## Privacy

- In compliance with Federal Privacy Legislation, we expect all members to respect the privacy of others by refraining from revealing, beyond the limits of Club Membership, any contents of Club documents that contain personal information.
- This applies to Membership Lists, Trip Schedules and any other documents containing names, addresses and telephone numbers.
- **Do not** keep membership lists in your vehicle, unless you are leading the trip.
- Membership registration forms will be destroyed at the end of the canoe season.

# TRAINING

## Overview

**Basic** canoe training is **mandatory for all new members** so skill levels can be assessed and participation in the different trips offered can be determined. *(If members have moving water training i.e. from Paddle Canada, and/or are ORCKA certified, they should make note on their registration form.)*

- **Safety** for all our members is of the utmost importance to us as a club and is a big part of our training. With the basic training skills our trip leaders and any potential canoe partners can be assured that you have the required knowledge and ability for the types of trips you wish to participate in. **Basic training** allows you to participate in most trips, depending on your skill level. The **Intermediate Training** allows for full participation in all canoe trips. It is very important that you **understand your limitations** and **paddle within your ability. All trip blogs with indicate training needed.**
- **Fees** for training are very reasonable, but are **non-refundable** due to the commitment required, limited spaces available, and the instruction provided by our paid, certified instructor and experienced volunteers.
- River training for both the **Basic** and **Intermediate** sessions are two days each with rain dates. Please keep those dates **free** and ensure that you are able to participate on **all** posted dates to get the full benefit of the training.
- All of our training sessions are very worthwhile and designed to enhance your canoeing experience with the Old Salts while ensuring your safety!
- Current members are also encouraged to continue taking training sessions regularly to keep their canoeing skills sharp and to improve their river reading abilities. There is always something new to learn no matter how many times you take a training session!
- Training is not just for learning and reviewing skills but is also a lot of **fun** and a great way to meet new people and start the canoe season under the guidance of a qualified instructor and experienced volunteer members!

Please note, training dates are subject to change due to weather and/or river conditions which is why rain dates are necessary. Please plan accordingly!

## Orientation Training for New Members (1 day)

Training includes, but is not limited to:

- who we are as a club and how we operate
- equipment needed
- getting in and out of a canoe properly
- river signals
- paddle strokes and what they do
- communication
- canoe safety

\*\*inside instruction

## Pool Training

Training includes, but is not limited to:

- Swimming with canoe clothes and a PFD
- Practicing canoe entry from deck
- Canoe stability
- Capsizing
- Self-rescue (swimming a canoe to shore and righting an over-turned canoe)
- Towing a canoe

- Canoe-over-canoe rescue (T-Rescue)
- Shore rescue using a throw bag

\*\*pool training- bring a towel, canoeing clothes, water shoes, PFD, and a change of clothes.  
YOU WILL GET WET!

### **Pond Training (Canoe Stroke Practice Sessions)**

This is a chance to practice canoe skills in an outdoor setting to get ready for the season after a long, cold winter before formal lessons begin.

\*\*on the water-bring PFD, dry sack, lunch, snacks, and water. Dress for the weather!

### **Basic River Training (2 days)**

Training includes, but is not limited to:

- Outdoor training on flat water (day 1) and a slight current (day 2)
- Review of dry land, pool, and pond training
- Review and practice paddle strokes in bow and stern for flat water and moving water
- Water and canoe safety
- Introduction to river maneuvers

\*\*on the river-bring PFD, dry sack, lunch, snacks, and water. Dress for the weather!

### **Intermediate Skills Training (2 Days)**

Training includes, but is not limited to:

- Water and canoe safety/risk management/river hazards
- Perfecting of paddle strokes for both bow and stern in faster flowing water & stronger currents
- “reading the river”
- Maneuvers on the river particularly in faster flowing water ie launching & landing canoe, ferries – front and back, C-turns, S-turns, navigating river bends
- Understanding concepts on the river—river left and right, MITH, eddy lines: entry and exit, waves, standing waves

\*\*on the river-bring PFD, dry sack, lunch, snacks, and water. Dress for the weather (including early evening)

### **Refresher Skills Training Course (1 day)**

Training includes, but is not limited to review of:

- Canoe safety refresh
- Whitewater bow & stern paddle strokes review
- Properly navigating and “reading the river”
- Review of canoe maneuvers & concepts in moving water
- Leadership/rescue/risk management skills

\*\*on the river-bring PFD, dry sack, lunch, snacks, and water. Dress for the weather!

**SO, YOU WANT TO GO ON A CANOE TRIP?**  
**{HERE’S HOW}**

## ***Step 1- How to sign up***

Information will go out to the membership in the form of a Blog post/email notification. Make sure that you **read and follow the instructions carefully**. Respond to the person listed in the email. **DO NOT REPLY** to the email notification; it will go to an unmonitored email box!

Once the canoe season starts, emails will be sent regularly for both Tuesday and Thursday trips. The Information included will tell you what you need to know and the skill level required:

You must **call or email the Trip Leader** to register for your chosen trip rather than just show up at the shed. This helps the Trip Leader know who is expected so they can organize accordingly in advance of the trip--confirming towers, car-toppers, etc.

Trip leaders will confirm you are registered on the trip. If you don't receive confirmation that you are registered, contact the trip leader.

Make sure you have the skill level, training and stamina required for the trip you register for.

All members are still expected to **meet at the shed on canoe day** at the designated time to check in, pay fees, and arrange shuttles.

If you are not able to make the trip or are going to be late, let the Trip Leader know asap. They will leave without you if you are late and don't let them know!

Show up for the trip with the exact amount for the trip fee (there will be no change available).

**DO NOT** make other plans for canoe day. We **do not guarantee** our return time and will not make alternative plans to accommodate you!

## ***Step 2 – Details to remember!***

Names of members who register for a trip are noted on a Trip sheet. When you arrive at the shed, you will check in and pay your trip fee. Trip fees are **\$8**<100 km and **\$15**>100 km going one way. The amount will be noted on the email notification.

**Trips may be cancelled** due to: **1) excessive rain/thunder/lightning**, **2) dangerous water/flow rates**, **3) if there is no Trip Leader or no Tower**, and **4) if not enough people sign up**. This will be at the discretion of the Trip Leader. **If a trip is cancelled, an email notification will go out either the evening before the trip or the morning of, so check your emails before you head out to the shed. If unsure, contact the Trip Leader listed in the trip details.**

If there are odd numbers, someone will have to use the kayak.

If more than 18 people sign up, both trailers will be used and 2 towers will be required.

Non-member guests will be allowed this year at the discretion of the Trip Leader, but it will depend on the skill level required for a particular trip. A member may bring a guest only 2 times.

All members are expected to bring an up to date **"Emergency Contact Card"** with them on each trip. You must let someone else on the trip know where it is among your gear.

# CANOE TRIP PROTOCOLS

## Meeting Times

- Unless otherwise stated, **meeting times** for our canoe trips are outlined in this handbook or on our web page under [OSSCC Rules](#)
- Details about trips will be provided by the Trip Leaders prior to each trip. Check the schedule to see who they are and contact them directly if you have any questions. Email addresses can be found on the membership list that will be available to members at the beginning of the season.
- **“Trip Details”** posts on the Blog outline pertinent information about trips that are coming up and will be posted days before the trip. To plan further in advance, you can check the trip schedule on the Blog so you can check your schedules and prepare accordingly. General trip info is on the schedule. When the “Trip Details” email notification is sent out, mark your calendars accordingly. There will be NO REMINDERS!

## Why Meet at the Shed?

- Participants need to sign in and pay trip fees and organize shuttle.
- Trip Leaders need to organize carpools – some put ins/take outs do not have enough parking spaces for everyone who want to drive themselves. Shuttling vehicles are also organized at this time. (Even if you bring your own canoe, you still have to be part of shuttling either to the take out or back to the put in point.)
- Should there be a last-minute change in the schedule, you risk not getting the notification and may end up being at the wrong location.

## Last Minute Trip Changes/Cancellations

- Check the Blog/your emails regularly for notices of any trip changes. This can happen if there is a change in water levels due to excessive rain the night before, or if there hasn't been rain and the water level is too low.
- Trips may be cancelled due to extreme weather forecasts, etc. Check your emails for notices or contact the Trip Leader.

## On the River

- When on the river, stay between the **“Lead”** and **“Sweep”** canoes!
- For safety's sake, don't rush down the river, keep some space between your canoe and the one in front of you, and don't get so far ahead of the last (sweep) canoe that you can't see them. (They have the first aid kit should it be required) Take the opportunity to practice some maneuvers learned during training.

## WHAT TO BRING ON A CANOE TRIP

When we go on any of our canoe excursions, whether they are for training or fun, someone always forgets something. Here is a checklist that should help you remember what to bring:

- ☐ PFD (Personal Flotation Device) -Transport Canada approved and worn correctly (buckled up)
- ☐ Emergency Contact card - medical information, your health card, personal medication
- ☐ waterproof whistle – attached to PFD
- ☐ dry sac to hold a complete change of clothes (should you get wet), towel, rain gear, toilet paper, zip lock bags
- ☐ lunch/snack (depends on excursion) in small cooler/lunch bag

- ☐ water bottle (extra water for longer trips)
- ☐ hat, sun glasses, sunscreen, insect repellent, lip balm
- ☐ waterproof flashlight (extra batteries)
- ☐ bungee cord, carabineers (to attach things to canoe), straps or elastic loops to hold in extra paddle
- ☐ cell phone, camera in waterproof container
- ☐ money to pay for trip (\$8 for shorter trips, \$15 for longer trips)
- ☐ money - "tip" driver if being carpooled (to say thanks!) (Guideline: \$5 for shorter trips, \$10 for longer trips)

## **CHECK LIST ON WHAT TO DO ON CANOE DAY!**



Our main goal whenever we set out on a canoe excursion is to have fun and be safe. With that in mind, we have certain guidelines that we like to follow to make sure we can all have a fun day on the water. Here is a check list to show how everyone can pitch in to help make each outing run smooth:

- ☐ Make sure you are familiar with OSSCC Rules as outlined in this handbook.
- ☐ When we get to the put in site, make sure you assist with unstrapping and transporting the canoes to the launch area as much as you are able.
- ☐ Pick out the correct size paddle for yourself. Ensure that you and your partner have secured an extra paddle and bailer to the canoe as well as obtained a throw rope and sponge from the canoe trailer.
- ☐ Secure your dry sack and personal belongings to the canoe.
- ☐ Don't forget to put your PFD on! It must be zippered and buckled up. (**No PFD = No Canoeing!**)
- ☐ Carry the canoe to the water with one other helper. (Four makes it even better!)
- ☐ Place the canoe correctly in the water – no bridging (canoe must be floating completely on the water)
- ☐ Keep low when entering and leaving the canoe and keep your weight centered – see video on Blog!
- ☐ Be in control of your half of the canoe. Know your strokes!
- ☐ Always communicate with your partner if you need to change position so you don't catch them by surprise (and cause a potential dunking:)
- ☐ Work together with your partner at all times and take whatever opportunity you can to practice canoe maneuvers and strokes learned in your canoe lessons.
- ☐ At the end of the excursion, help to transport canoes back to canoe trailer and strap them in (as you are able), and/or return paddles, bailers, sponges and throw ropes into the canoe trailer.
- ☐ Bring extra cash.....we sometimes stop for a treat at the end of a canoe excursion as a reward for a job well done:)
- ☐ Don't forget to reimburse the driver if you are carpooling. (General guideline – \$5-7 for short trips, \$10-15 for longer trips)

## **PROTOCOLS BEFORE GETTING ON THE WATER**

### **Establishing Responsibilities**

- Who is the trip leader of the trip?
- Establish who will be in the **lead** and **sweep** canoes – should be experienced paddlers
- Establish roles in the event of an emergency
  - Who are the rescuers?
  - Who has first aid experience?

## Lead & Sweep Canoes

### **Lead canoe**

- Leaders of the trip - strong, experienced paddlers
- Paddlers **between** the lead canoe and sweep canoe **are not to go past** the lead canoe

### **Sweep canoe**

- Has first aid kit in the event of an emergency
- Brings up the rear of the group and has the group within their sights
- Able to participate in emergency situation as required
- Paddlers are expected to keep the sweep canoe in their sights

## Emergency Contact Cards

Remember to complete cards and have in a location that can be easily accessed in the event of an emergency. It has been suggested that we either tell someone else on the trip where it can be found, or to exchange with someone else for the duration of the trip.

OSSCC  
EMERGENCY CONTACT CARD  
YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER NAME (please print clearly)  
\_\_\_\_\_






In the event of an emergency, please consult the back of this card for my medical info and notify my contact person ASAP. Thank you.

OLD SALTS  
OUTDOOR SPORTS CENTER

## Paddle & Whistle Signals

Whichever trip you go on, it is important to be aware of both whistle and visual safety signals.

### Canoe Safety Paddle Signals

- 1.**  FOLLOW ME/  
THIS IS THE  
PROPER ROUTE  
HOLD PADDLE  
UP VERTICALLY
- 2.**  ROUTE IS TO  
THE LEFT  
POINT LEFT
- 3.**  ROUTE IS  
TO THE RIGHT  
POINT RIGHT
- 4.** HELP/EMERGENCY/STOP  
 PADDLE STRAIGHT UP  
AND WAVE BACK & FORTH  
MAY INDICATE A PROBLEM  
OR SOMEONE SHOULD  
STOP
- 5.** STOP  
 PADDLE HELD OVER HEAD  
PARALLEL TO THE WATER  
MEANS: STOP, POTENTIAL  
HAZARD! WAIT FOR  
"ALL CLEAR" SIGNAL  
BEFORE PROCEEDING

### Canoe Safety Whistle Signals



- 1. ONE BLAST**  
-stop-to get attention  
-look this way  
-pass info using audio  
or visual signals
- 2. TWO BLASTS**  
-non emergency-a paddler wants to stop
- 3. THREE BLASTS**  
-emergency alarm-get off river **NOW!**

**If you hear any of these signals, respond with ONE blast**

**Each blast should last 3 seconds.**



# Leading a Trip

## Trip Leader's Responsibilities

On any OSSCC canoe trip, ultimate responsibility for safety lies with the individual. The Trip Leader may discourage a member or guest from going on a trip if they feel the member does not have the required training, skills or stamina required. (i.e., a person who has not taken the intermediate training should not go on advanced trips). However, participants are solely responsible for their own safety as per signed waiver.

Trip Organizers' Responsibilities	Information to Assist Trip Organizers
<b><i>Before the trip:</i></b>	<b><i>Before the trip:</i></b>
1. Arrange to have tower(s) for the trailer(s) and car-toppers if required. (You will get an idea what will be required as people register for the trip) Towers do not pay trip fee.	1. Arrange for the tower(s) well in advance of the trip. An up-to-date list of towers can be found <a href="#">here</a> . Check to see if anyone has already volunteered for your trip first. Check out the Trip Schedule on the Blog.
2. Assure the towers bring their keys for the shed and trailers.	2. All towers on the towing list should have keys to the shed and trailers. If the towers don't have keys, contact the Equipment Chair.
3. Check the flow, level, and temperature of the river ahead of and the day of the outing. Also check the distance and time to the put-in and take-out as well as the shuttle distance and time. -combined air and water temperature must be above 40 degrees	3. Flow rate guidelines are posted on the wall near the shelf in the canoe shed. As well, copies are available in the blue binder. For up-to-date flow rates and river temperatures for the Grand, Conestogo, Nith, Speed and Eramosa Rivers go to the Grand River Conservation Authority site at <a href="http://www.grandriver.ca">www.grandriver.ca</a> . Go to <b>River Data, choose river</b> - then <b>flow summary</b> to get the level in (m) and the flow in (m <sup>3</sup> /s) You may also choose your river and then tap at right side at end of lines on chart to get an exact reading for your put-in. To find the <b>water temperature</b> scroll down left side of page and tap on <b>water quality data</b> . Find <b>water temperature</b> on left hand side. Again, tap on right side at end of chart to get an exact reading. For the Saugeen River conditions, you may call Cowan Canoe & Kayak Livery in Paisley at (519) 353-5535 or Thorncrest Outfitters at 888-345-2925. Another good website to check water flow on all rivers is: <a href="http://wateroffice.ec.gc.ca">wateroffice.ec.gc.ca</a> . Go to <b>Real-time hydrometric data - map search - Ontario</b> . On the map zoom into the area you want and then tap on the Station Marker and then view report.
4. Send an e-mail by Friday (week prior to trip) to: <a href="mailto:info@oldsaltsClub.com">info@oldsaltsClub.com</a> with trip information. (See Appendix A at the end of this document for posting format and what information is required. Please ensure all pertinent information is included)	4. Include pertinent information about the trip. See <b>Appendix A</b> for required information.

5. Trip pre-registration	<p>5. Members are asked to pre-register for trips.</p> <p>As members contact you to pre-register, fill in the names of the members on the trip sheet. This will give you an idea how many people to expect on a given trip and will let you plan for how many trailers and towers that you will need or if canoes will need to be car-topped. It will also allow you to determine if paddlers have the skill level necessary for our more challenging trips and allow you to pair paddlers up before the trip.</p> <p>Contact Training Co-ordinator if you want to know if paddlers have the intermediate training required for the more challenging Tuesday trips.</p> <p>Sent a confirmation email to people who register to confirm their spot on the trip.</p> <p>Should you need to cancel a trip for any reason, email those who pre-registered directly to let them know.</p>
6. Get a copy of the river map if available. (on the <a href="#">Blog</a> )	6. Ensure that route is still doable and put-in and take-out are still accessible. May have to do some scouting. Ensure adequate parking for trailers and cars.
7. Get copy the road map and/or write up directions to the put-in and take-out, including the shuttle, for the drivers (info can be found on the Old Salts Blog under <a href="#">trip organizing</a> ).	7. Make a few copies to bring to the shed on trip day, email copies to participants before the trip or direct people to the <a href="#">Blog</a> to get their own copies to print.
<b>At the shed:</b>	<b>At the shed:</b>
<p>8. Sign in members, matching names with those on the trip sheet and collect fees for the trip (no change will be given)</p> <p>Ask if anyone has First Aid training</p>	<p>8. Put the money along with the trip sheet in the brown envelope. Ensure that the money collected matches the members on the trip list and verify by signing at the bottom of the sheet. Take the trip sheet/money with you so that you can keep track of the participants and lock in your vehicle to keep secure. Give money and trip sheet to the treasurer or a board member when the trip is completed. Money is <b>NOT</b> to be left in the shed!</p>
9. Ensure everyone has their “ <b>Emergency Contact Card</b> ” with them/in their dry bag.	9. <b>Emergency Contact cards</b> can be found in the blue binder for people who don’t have one.
10. Get a waiver form signed by guests. Guests must be experienced, and it will be up to the leader’s discretion as to whether or not a guest will be allowed	10. Waiver forms are also in the blue binder.
11. Decide the number of canoes needed, if one or two trailers are required, and arrange for car topping of extras. Any driver who is car-topping will get their trip fee refunded. Trip Organizer will make a notation on the trip form as an explanation for the treasurer for accounting purposes.	<p>11. The solo kayak is available on the "A" trailer for use if there is an odd number of paddlers. If there are &lt;6 people signed up, the trip can either be cancelled at the discretion of the leader, or canoes must be cartopped. If &lt;17 people sign up, 2 cars will be needed to cartop canoes. If 18 or more people sign up, the "B" trailer will be required. If car-topping, ensure there are extra paddles, bailers and throw ropes. Take from "B" trailer. Make sure you put them back in the "B" trailer after the trip.</p> <p>See <b>Appendix B</b></p>
12. Ensure the first aid kit and at least one extra PFD is in the trailer.	11. There is one in "A" and “B” trailer.

Exchange cell phone numbers. In case of emergency, have at least one cell phone on river.	
13. Call for a short <u>briefing</u> . Make sure everyone has a canoe partner and ride. Make sure that new members feel welcome and are partnered with a strong partner. Distribute road maps if required. -review safety signals (paddle or whistle) -remind everyone that this is supposed to be fun and not a race -remind people leave room between canoes (especially when there is a need to maneuver moving water)	13. Remind passengers to help pay for gas money. <b>Trailer driver should be paid as well.</b> When determining number of cars, ensure enough cars to do the shuttle. (All drivers drive to the take-out and then some cars will have to drive the drivers back to the put-in. The drivers driving back to the put-in should be the cars that had the least number of people in their cars for the trip to the river. Encourage and facilitate carpooling (depending on people's comfort level). All vehicles should take same route to put-in to provide help if needed on route and to ensure all arrive safely and at the same time. This will ensure we get on the water in a timely fashion!
14. Check tie-downs on canoes. <b>LOCK SHEDS!</b>	14. Ensuring the canoes are tied on properly is ultimately the responsibility of the tower and cartopper.
<b>At the site:</b>	<b>At the site:</b>
15. Ensure all cars have arrived and initiate the unloading.	15. Everyone who can help, should help in some way as they are able. Keep safety in mind when unloading and carrying canoes.
16. Organize the shuttle.	16. The trailer(s) and all vehicles go to the take-out. Drivers, only, do the shuttle while other paddlers remain at put-in to prepare for trip. Only the vehicles necessary to return the drivers to the put-in make the return trip. <b>Study the take-out at the river to ensure it is not missed at the end of the trip.</b>
17. Arrange for a lead and sweep canoe.	17. <b>No canoe should pass the lead canoe <u>or</u> get behind the sweep canoe.</b> First aid kit is carried by sweep canoe.
<b>On the river:</b>	<b>On the river:</b>
18. <b>Stop and do regular canoe counts.</b> Also stop for regular water/snack breaks.  <u>In the event of thunder/lightning</u> , leave the water immediately and find a safe location on shore. <b>Remain on shore for 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder.</b>	18. Try to keep all canoes in sight. Do not get spread apart. All canoeists are encouraged to do their own water reading. Ensure that the end canoes get adequate break times.
19. Ensure all paddlers are off the river at the take-out.	
<b>After the trip:</b>	<b>After the trip:</b>
20. Supervise loading of equipment and check tie downs. Ensure all canoeists whose cars are at the starting point, get transportation back.	20. Ensure all equipment (paddles, ropes, bailers, throw bags) marked A or B get returned to the appropriate trailer.
21. Return to the shed to ensure all equipment has been returned.	21. Make sure towers have enough help to get trailer(s) back into the shed.
22. Lock up.	22. Make sure shed is locked with bar and chain.
23. Remind Tower to fill out " <a href="#">Towing/Mileage Expense Form</a> ". Hard copy can be found in blue binder in the shed.	

## **Tower Responsibilities**

- Arrive at the shed 10 – 15 minutes ahead of scheduled time to allow time to hook up trailer before others arrive.
- Record beginning odometer reading of your vehicle.
- Unlock shed and hook up trailer to your vehicle and lock down coupler with padlock.
- Check all trailer lights to assure that brake and turn signals are functioning properly.
- Check to be sure all canoes are tied down securely.
- Assist with loading car-top canoes if needed.
- Relock shed at all points including: pinning both large doors to bottom plate; hooking both doors to crossbar; wrapping chain securely around both hooks and crossbar and locking chain with padlock; locking padlock and deadbolt on walk-in door.
- Supervise unloading of canoes and equipment at launch site.
- Ensure that kayak and/or extra canoes are locked to the trailer before driving to take-out point.
- After canoeing, supervise reloading of equipment and canoes being certain that the equipment boxes are locked and canoes are tied down securely.
- Return trailer to shed and repeat locking of shed as before.
- Record ending odometer reading and fill in towing expense form. Expense form can be found on the Blog under "[Printable Materials](#)". Submit completed form to club treasurer.

## **Appendix A - Blog Post Format & Required Information**

**Blog Title:** RIVER - Route {Date} e.g. GRAND RIVER – Glen Morris to Birley Gates {July 16<sup>th</sup>}

**Blog Body:** Please include the following information:

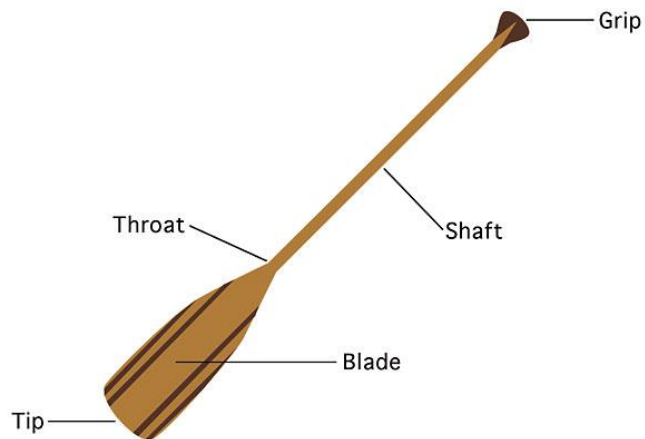
1. Where (destination)
2. When (date)
3. Time (meeting time at the shed)
4. Trip Organizer
5. Tower
6. Trip details
7. Skill level required
8. Trip fee
9. Contact information for Trip Organizer (email & telephone)

Please send this information to: [info@oldsaltsClub.com](mailto:info@oldsaltsClub.com) so it can be posted on the Blog. An email will automatically go out the membership.

The post will go out the week before the trip. There will be no reminders, so mark your calendars accordingly.

## PART 3: KNOW YOUR EQUIPMENT

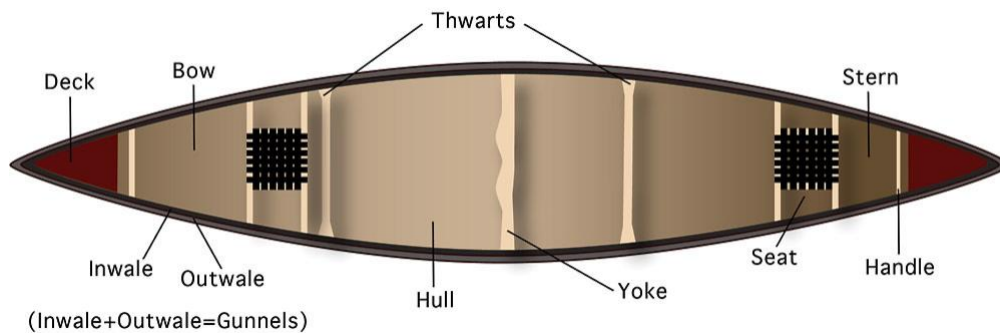
### Parts of a Canoe Paddle



### Types of Canoe Paddles



### Parts of a Canoe



## Gear

### PFD – as per [Transport Canada](#)

- PFDs are approved for recreational use only.
- PFDs come in many types, sizes, and colours
- Not all are red, orange, or yellow; but it is a good idea to choose colours that are visible when in water.
- may be more comfortable because they are designed for constant wear
- are lighter, less bulky, and may be designed for specific sport activities
- usually offer less flotation than a lifejacket
- have limited capability to turn you in the water
- usually offer less thermal protection than a lifejacket



### Whistle

- should be pealess

### Flashlight

- Must be watertight
- Make sure batteries are still good before every trip so it works if you should need it



## PART 4: KNOW YOUR STROKES AND WHAT THEY DO!

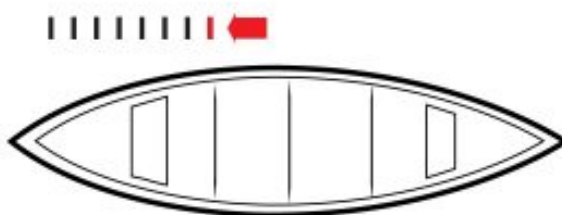
### Forward Stroke (Power Stroke)



Though the forward stroke may appear to be simple, there are lots of ways to do it wrong. The goal is not to simply move your canoe forward, but to move it forward with the greatest power and efficiency possible so you don't waste energy and possibly hurt yourself.

- To start this stroke (the wind-up), the grip hand, (the hand at the top of your paddle shaft), should be at about chin level and away from your face. Lean slightly forward with both the shaft and grip hands and rotate your torso forward as you place the paddle in the water.
- Keeping your arms slightly bent, draw the paddle straight back through the water with the face of the blade perpendicular to the water, twisting your torso through the stroke (catch and power phase). This is done by applying forward pressure (like a punch) with your grip hand and using your shaft hand as the pivot point (fulcrum), so the paddle is used like a lever. The shaft hand should be loose for easier rotation of the shaft. The power of the stroke comes from your torso and hips, not from your arms.
- To complete the stroke (recovery phase), slice your paddle out of the water up by dropping the grip hand and rotating the wrist so the grip hand thumb is pointing forward and then "feathering" around to your starting position just skimming the water. ("Feathering" simply means swinging the blade forward, flat above the water's surface so it cuts through the wind instead of catching it.)

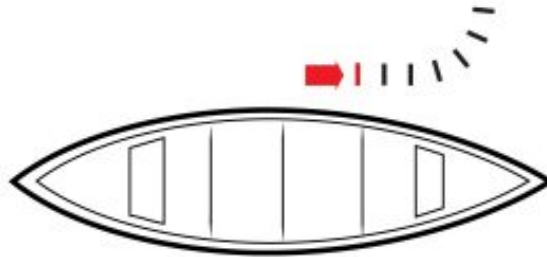
### Back Stroke (Reverse Stroke)



- This stroke is the reverse of the forward stroke where you rotate your torso toward the stern and place the paddle in the water to the rear of your body.

- You then push forward with the shaft hand and pull with the grip hand. Unwind the torso until the shoulders are square with the gunwales with the shaft hand fully extended.
- Complete the stroke by lifting the blade out of the water and arcing the shaft hand backward over the water and dropping the grip hand to chest level.
- This stroke can be used to stop the canoe or to back up for hazard avoidance, to ferry across the current, or hold position in a current.

## **J-Stroke (Stern)**



The canoe J-Stroke is probably the most important canoe stroke to learn yet most recreational canoeists don't even know it exists. Every person who has ever sat in a canoe knows how difficult it is to keep it going straight. The reason for this is that with every stroke of the paddle, the canoe wants to turn to the opposite side. The canoe J-stroke is the remedy to this problem and actually allows the canoeist to correct the direction of the canoe while paddling forward. This is a steering stroke used extensively by the stern paddler in tandem canoeing.

To perform this stroke, be sure that you are holding the canoe paddle properly and that you are sitting up straight.

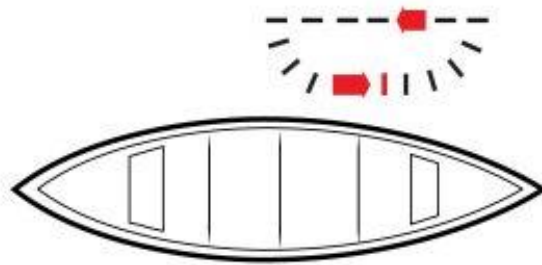
- The J-stroke begins with the forward stroke and then the correction phase.
- When your shaft hand reaches the point between your knees and hip, twist the power face of the blade away from the canoe and out.
- Rotate the grip hand so that the thumb moves forward and down.
- Keep a fairly loose grip with the shaft hand on your paddle to allow the shaft to rotate.
- This movement will allow you to "pry" (push out) the blade out of the canoe's gunwale, like a "J" and correct the direction of the canoe.
- Slice the blade out of the water and carry it flat (parallel) over the water and forward to begin the stroke again.

### ***Tips:***

- J-stroke can be used as often as necessary, depending on the winds and currents, to keep the canoe moving in a straight line.
- The more accustomed you become to this stroke, the more you'll know how much to push out at the end.
- The bow person (front of the canoe) should paddle on the opposite side from the stern person and should use the forward stroke. Both bow and stern persons should paddle in unison and use the same power of strokes to be most efficient.

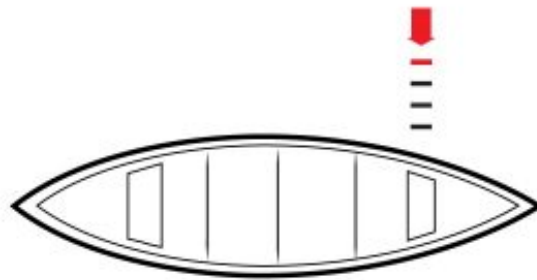


## Canadian J-Stroke



This stroke is similar to the J-stroke only the paddle stays in the water.

- Starts off the same as the J-stroke, but rather than pulling the blade out of the water at the end, the blade is “knifed” forward under the water. Then you are ready for the next power stroke without taking the blade out of the water.
- If done carefully, there is no sound from the paddle, making it possible to paddle in calm water without sound. This version of the J-stroke is more relaxing & doesn’t make you as tired on longer trips.



## Draw Stroke

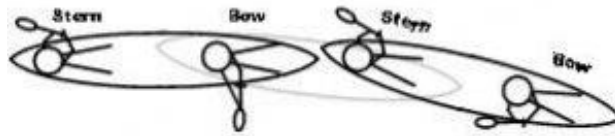
This is a steering/turning stroke used by both bow person and stern person to pull the canoe to the paddling side. It can be used to move the canoe sideways, avoid obstacles and to turn the canoe around in a circle.

The draw is executed the same for both the bow and stern, but the effect is quite different. A right draw in the bow turns the boat to the right, while a right draw in the stern turns the boat to the left, and vice versa.

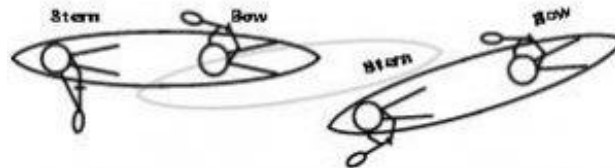
- Begin by maintaining proper form: hold paddle properly and sit up straight.
- Start the stroke by raising the paddle up, bringing the grip handle to about head level, and the shaft hand out to the side and not angled across the body
- As you are bringing the paddle up and out, rotate your torso to the side and place the blade vertically into the water at a comfortable distance from the canoe. Both arms are fully extended.
- Draw the paddle toward you through the water perpendicular to the canoe. You are actually pulling the canoe toward the paddle.
- When you stop pulling, your paddle should be vertical and practically touching the side of the canoe. Imagine pushing water under the canoe!

- To finish your draw, slice your paddle out of the water behind you, then feather around to the starting position for your next stroke.

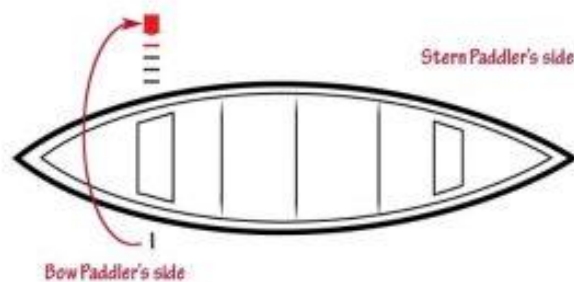
### Right Draw in the Bow



### Right Draw in the Stern



**Tip:** Use the torso and upper body rotation to aid in the stroke to give maximum power. You shouldn't be using your arms as much as you use the rotation of your torso.

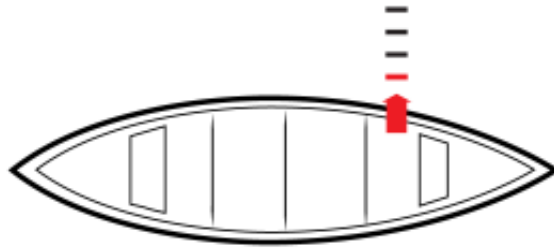


## Cross-Bow Stroke (Bow)

Designed for the bow paddler, the cross-bow draw is like the draw stroke but done on the opposite, or "off," side than you are paddling on. This stroke is used to quickly turn the canoe (pivot) and to avoid obstacles.

- To execute this stroke, it is essential to hold the paddle correctly.
- Keep that hold and lift the paddle over the bow by rotating your torso to place the blade in the water on the opposite side without changing your grip.
- Reach out and insert the blade of the paddle into the water away from the canoe and toward the front.
- Pull towards the canoe with your shaft hand and push with your grip hand to draw the paddle through the water so your paddle faces the bow of the canoe (your thumb on the grip hand will be facing away from you).
- By holding firm and not letting your paddle get pulled away from you, you'll cause the canoe to turn towards your paddle.

## Pry Stroke



The pry stroke is excellent for turning your canoe quickly or, if you're solo, for moving sideways in the water. The opposite of a draw stroke, the pry stroke starts next to the canoe and pushes the water away.

- Sit or kneel in a stable position in your canoe.
- Hold the paddle correctly! To start the stroke, the shoulders should be rotated parallel with the gunnel so you are facing the stroke.
- Your shaft hand is on the gunnel about 6 to 8 inches behind the hip. The arm is bent.
- The grip arm is nearly straight and at a right angle to the keel line with your grip hand pushed out over the water.
- Insert the blade of the paddle vertically into the water directly next to the canoe on the side opposite the direction you wish to move.
- Rest your shaft hand on the gunwale. Pull with grip hand and push with your shaft hand.
- Use the gunnel of the canoe as a fulcrum (lever) for the paddle to push against the water.
- Turn the blade of the paddle sideways, perpendicular to the canoe, and slide it back through the water to the starting position to begin another stroke.

## PART 5: SAFETY

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section is to assist members of the "Old Salts Seniors Canoe Club" to identify risks associated with canoeing, to reduce the likelihood of unwelcome events occurring and to lessen the severity of their consequences, should they occur. While we agree that canoeing is not without risk, we suggest that "risk" is a relative concept. People tend to ignore common risks (crossing the street), but dwell on less well-known risks (hang gliding). Canoeing, for people well-trained and properly equipped, can be just as safe as crossing the street, perhaps even safer.

### EQUIPMENT

To go canoeing, proper equipment is a "must". There are two categories:

#### Mandatory (All boaters must have)

- A personal flotation device (PFD) approved by Transport Canada for each person
- A floating rope for throwing for each boat
- A pealess whistle for each boat<sup>1</sup>
- A painter (bow-rope) for each boat

- A bailer for each boat
- A spare paddle
- Flashlight (must be watertight)

**Note:** The Regulations governing mandatory equipment for small boats may change. Members should consult the latest Transport Canada rules.

### **Required by the Club**

- A PFD must be worn, properly buckled, at all times on the water
- A paddle for each paddler plus a spare in each canoe
- A painter at the stern as well as at the bow
- A communication device for the group<sup>2</sup>
- A first-aid kit for the group

**Note:** The Club does not supply PFDs or whistles

## **PERSONAL GEAR**

Members are responsible for their own safety and comfort but should not hesitate to ask the Trip Leader or another experienced member for advice about what to wear or bring for a trip. We **strongly** suggest the following:

- Wear comfortable clothing, making provision for changing weather
  - **Don't wear cotton.** It soaks up water and takes a long time to dry when wet
  - Layers help trap heat and fend off water. Remember "wick, warmth, and weather" as you arrange your layers: light wicking fabrics first, then warm insulating sweaters or fleeces, and finally a waterproof outer layer to protect you from the elements.
  - Neoprene socks are great for keeping feet warm in colder weather
- Wear soft, rubber-soled shoes or ideally, shoes specifically made for water sports<sup>3</sup>
- See page 9 for more detailed list

## **ACQUIRING THE SKILLS**

New members who join the Club are required to attend training sessions so skills can be assessed and trips planned accordingly. The Club provides such training early in each season. Other (professional) training can be arranged depending on interest, cost and if a qualified teacher can be hired.

The Club provides 3 levels of training: Beginner, Intermediate and Refresher. These lessons are important to acquire the skills necessary for our canoe excursions. Current members should also take lessons to keep their skills updated and refreshed. You always learn something new no matter how many times you take the training!

Skill levels are important, particularly on our more challenging trips where paddlers need to know their strokes and how to avoid river hazards. It is not fair to your partner if you don't know how to do your job due to lack of training.

**\*\*Note:** Trip Leaders have the authority to turn away a would be paddler if it is viewed that their paddling skills are insufficient for a particular trip or a danger to the group in general and potential canoe partner in particular.

"Reading water" – recognizing underwater features from surface irregularities, is a skill that is learned mostly by experience, but a later section in this manual provides a few general principles. In any case, be observant.

## **PRE-TRIP INFORMATION**

Trip Leaders check the flow, water level and temperature of the river ahead of and on the day of the outing. They will make a final decision, on the day of the outing whether the trip is doable based on the latest river and weather conditions. Trip Leaders, being volunteers, use their best judgement but are not responsible for unforeseen events, as mentioned in the Club's membership waiver form. Some of the criteria used are:

- Avoid very high river flows: based on GRCA advisories
- Avoid very low river flows (inconvenient): based on experience
- Avoid significant probability of heavy rain or storms (discomfort)<sup>4</sup>
- Avoid any probability of lightning (potentially lethal)
- Obtain the Pollution and Humidex Indexes for the day of the outing

## **TRANSPORTING CANOES**

### **Trailing**

The Club owns two trailers that carry six canoes each and have a box for paddles, ropes, etc. They are towed by members whose vehicles are equipped with hitches.

- As loading and unloading canoes requires strength and coordination, make sure that there is adequate help (preferably with 4 people)
- Secure the canoes by tie down straps stretched over the hulls fore and aft and secure to the trailer's supporting arms
- Check all the fastenings for security before departure, and close and lock the trailer box
- Lock the trailer hitch to the ball of the tow car and attach the safety chains to strong car components
- Connect the trailer's lighting system to the tow car's circuits, and check that all lights function (stop, turn and flasher) before moving off

### **Car Topping**

If a car is not equipped with a roof rack, foam blocks are available (from the Club storage shed) to support a canoe. Drivers are responsible for:

- The canoe must be attached so as to prevent lateral as well as fore and aft movement under acceleration, braking and turning forces
- Attach the doubled bow and stern painters to four strong (steel, not plastic) car members at front and back
- Pass a rope or strap transversely over the hull near the midpoint, and secure it to the car's roof rack or door frame
- The driver is responsible for making sure the canoe is fastened securely to the vehicle so the canoe will not come loose
- To avoid injury, get help from members to load and unload a canoe

# CARRYING A CANOE



Club canoes, being designed for stability and durability, may be heavier than average for their size. Therefore, to avoid strain, adequate help is required for unloading and carrying canoes, especially if the ground is slippery or uneven.

- After unloading, turn the canoe right side up
- A canoe should be carried by four people: two at the bow and two at the stern
- Take extra care on steep or slippery banks

## EMBARKATION

For Club outings, members should (except in emergencies) use the put in and take out points that have been determined. The Trip Leader is in control of the group from the start to the end of the trip.

- Each member must wear a properly fitted and fully fastened PFD
- Launch the canoe by passing hand-over-hand: avoid dragging
- Stow all gear not immediately needed in the bottom of the canoe, out of the way of the paddlers
- Hold the canoe steady while each person enters
- Enter the canoe by bending low, stepping in the middle of the craft and grasping the gunwales, then sit or kneel at the paddling position.
- Wait for all canoes to be launched before leaving the starting point
- Do not overload the canoe<sup>5</sup>; know the weight limit
- There must be at least two canoes on any Club outing

## DURING THE TRIP

While enjoying the scenery members should observe stream conditions and be aware of potential hazards.

- Remain between the “lead” and “sweep” canoes; stay in the convoy
- Avoid crowding, especially in swift water, but do not become isolated. Leave space so the canoe in front of you has room to maneuver
- Watch for underwater rocks and other hazards (see below)
- Learn to “read water”; (see below)
- Bow and stern paddlers need to communicate, especially for any potential hazards ahead
- If you must make an emergency stop<sup>6</sup>, let the “sweep” know by relaying the message through following boats via whistle and/or paddle signals (see p. 9)



## END OF TRIP

Normally, the pre-trip car shuttle will have placed the canoe trailer and any cars that have car topped canoes at the destination. Thus, the procedure to be followed is essentially the reverse of that at the embarkation.

- Members should render help (according to ability) to reload equipment
- Make sure canoes are secured and all other gear safely stowed
- “police” the area for personal and Club belongings
- Ensure that every member has transport; leave none stranded
- Ensure that there is help at the storage shed to put away equipment and park trailer(s)
- Ask about the next outing and thank the Trip Leader

## READING WATER

“Reading water” refers to the ability to predict the size and location of underwater features from the appearance of surface irregularities. It is not an exact science, but some skill can be acquired through observation, experience, training and an understanding of a few basic principles.

- Moving water, having mass, tends to go in a straight line until deflected
- Once deflected by a solid object (rock or stream bank), water takes a new course, which may be revealed as a wave, eddy, etc.
- By observing the surface disturbance, one can deduce the cause and even predict the location of the underwater object

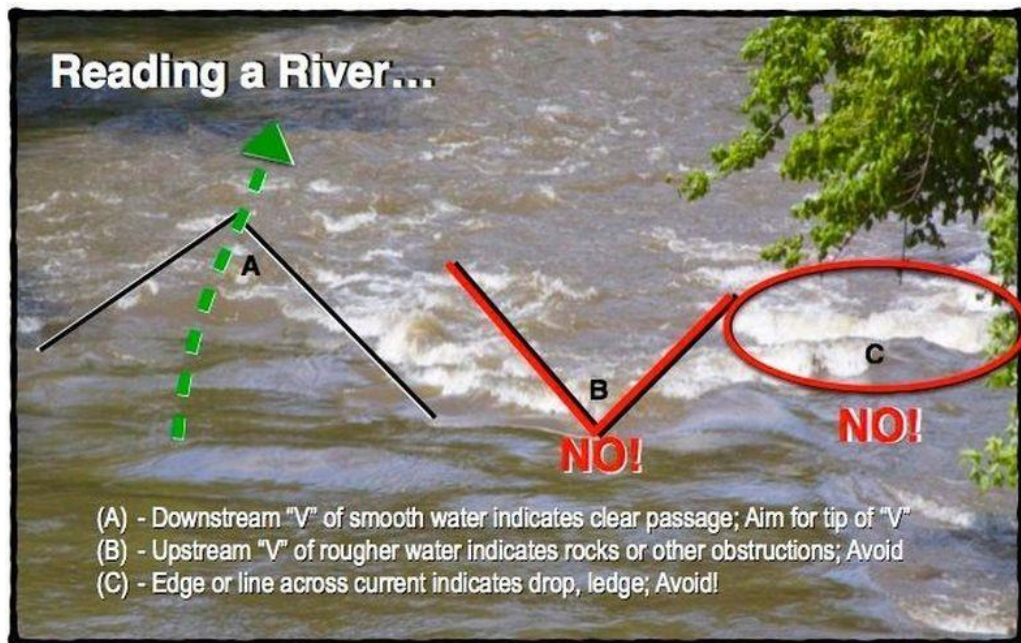


Figure 1 – Examples of what you may see on the river!

## River Obstacles and Hazards

The following are river obstacles and hazards that may be encountered on our canoe trips. This information is for informational purposes only. Our canoe training, practices sessions and “Easy Breezy” outings are structured to provide training on how to handle these obstacles.

### Overhead View of Typical River Obstacles & Hazards

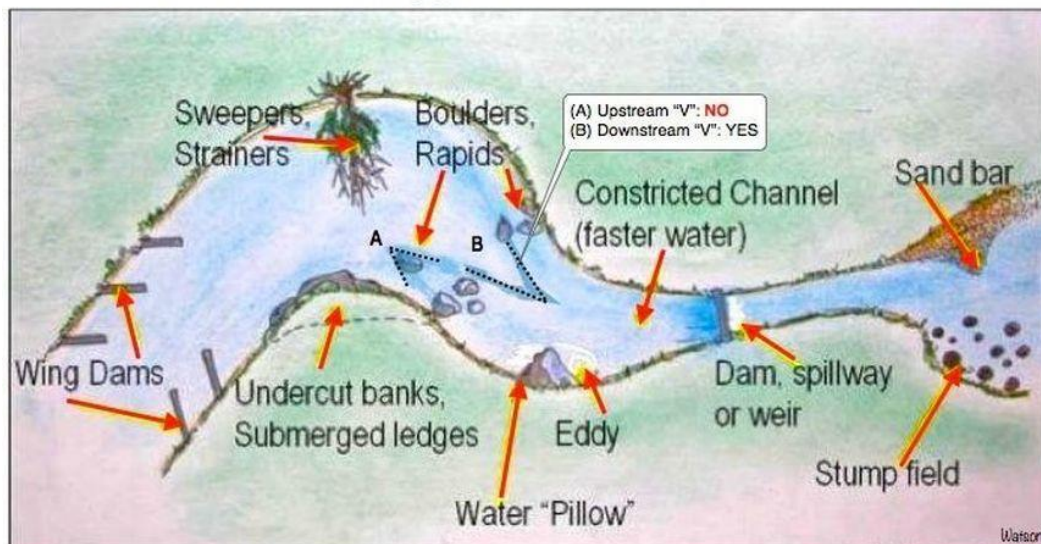


Figure 2- Reading a river comes with time, experience and training!

## Waves and Holes



Figure 3 – Waves & Holes

When flowing water encounters an obstruction (i.e. rock), it is deflected and moves aside, leaving a gap, until pushed back by the surrounding stream flow. Thus, we see a “hole” and “wave” downstream of the obstruction.

- The “hole” can be up to two meters downstream of the rock, and the “wave” a meter beyond that (i.e. the rock is closer than it seems)
- The rock that causes the disturbance may be far down (e.g. a meter) in large, fast rivers, but probably closer to the surface in slower streams
- Take evasive action (e.g. “draw”) ASAP to avoid hitting rocks broadside.



## Standing Waves



*Figure 4 – Example of Standing Waves*

When the stream flow exceeds a certain velocity, the smooth, laminar flow becomes turbulent. Fast water is forced upward forming waves at the surface that stay more or less in the same place (they do dance about!)

- Standing waves in our local rivers are not dangerous, except under flood conditions, which we aim to avoid in any case
- Standing waves do not necessarily indicate shoals; they can occur in water a meter or more deep
- Standing waves may partly obscure a rock with its accompanying “hole and wave”, so be observant
- Maintain “steerage-way” – keep paddling: don’t drift in standing waves

## Riffles and Slicks

Water flowing over shallow sand or gravel bars forms small wavelets, 5 or 6 cm high that stay in the same place. The only problem here is getting stuck.



*Figure 5-Water flowing over shallow sand or gravel bars. Water appears shallow and quick moving over a riffle due to sediment deposits*

- Riffles can occur anywhere, but most often on the inside of a river bend
- If a tongue of smooth water (the “slick”) appears between the riffles, it indicates slightly greater depth, so go for it!

## Eddies

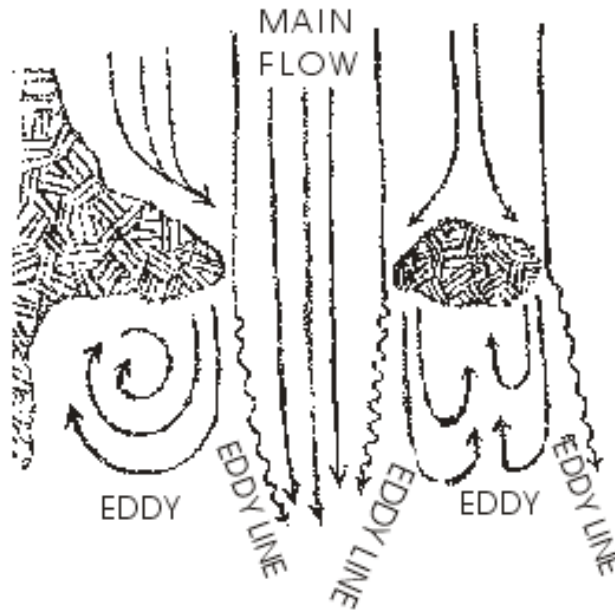


Figure 6 – Eddy Illustration

When flowing water in a stream is deflected (say by a point of land or a boulder) the current just beyond that point may take a circular motion: (an eddy)

- Eddies are rarely dangerous, but may cause the canoe to rotate a bit
- An eddy is a handy way to get out of the main current if you want to stop

## Dams (Weirs) and Waterfalls

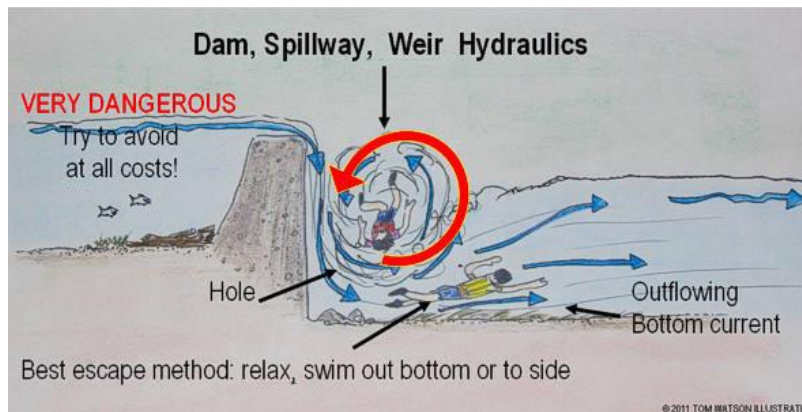


Figure 7- The dangers of getting caught in a Weir/Dam

The dangers of dams have been publicized in the Waterloo Region as the result of drownings. Depending on the direction of approach to a dam, there is more than one source of danger. Therefore, canoeists are advised to **keep well away**. Strong currents that can overwhelm paddlers may occur close to dams

- Water may spill over the entire length of a dam(weir), or may be confined to a gate structure (spillway)
- Operation of gated dams may cause unpredictable changes in flow
- A “reverse current” may form downstream of a vertical-faced weir. This flow can draw small vessels toward the weir and swamp them. While potentially deadly, such weirs are becoming rare.

- Barbed wire is a serious obstruction that can be found on the top of some weirs as well as stretched along shoreline pastures to control the wandering of cattle in low water conditions.

## Strainers and Sweepers

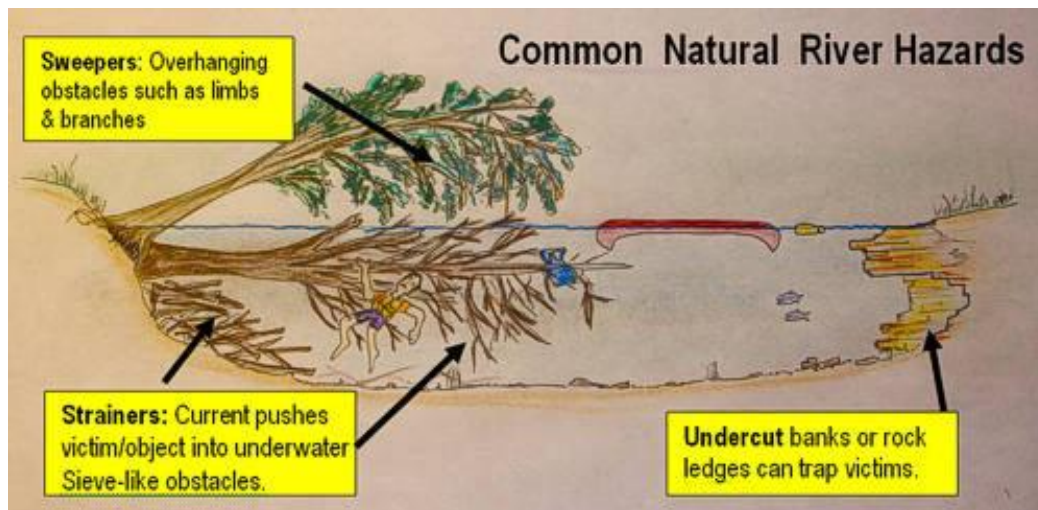


Figure 8- Strainer & Sweeper examples!

A strainer is created by a manmade or natural obstruction such as a tree, root system, etc. On some of our trips we have encountered these. A sweeper is a fallen tree that is partially or completely blocking passage down the river<sup>7</sup>. When we encounter these hazards, it is best to avoid them, but if unavoidable, it is especially important to know our strokes.

- An obstruction allows water to pass through but stops and holds objects such as canoes and people
- Bouncing twigs or logs may indicate a partially submerged strainer

## Boulders, Rocks and Ledges

Rocks can create a wide array of challenges that disrupt the smooth passage of water. They can be large boulders that pop up in front of us or smaller rocks that are clustered together to form a series of riffles (a continuous set of waves). Rocks can turn the current into a churning cascade of water that makes reading the river a valuable tool in navigating through these rocks.

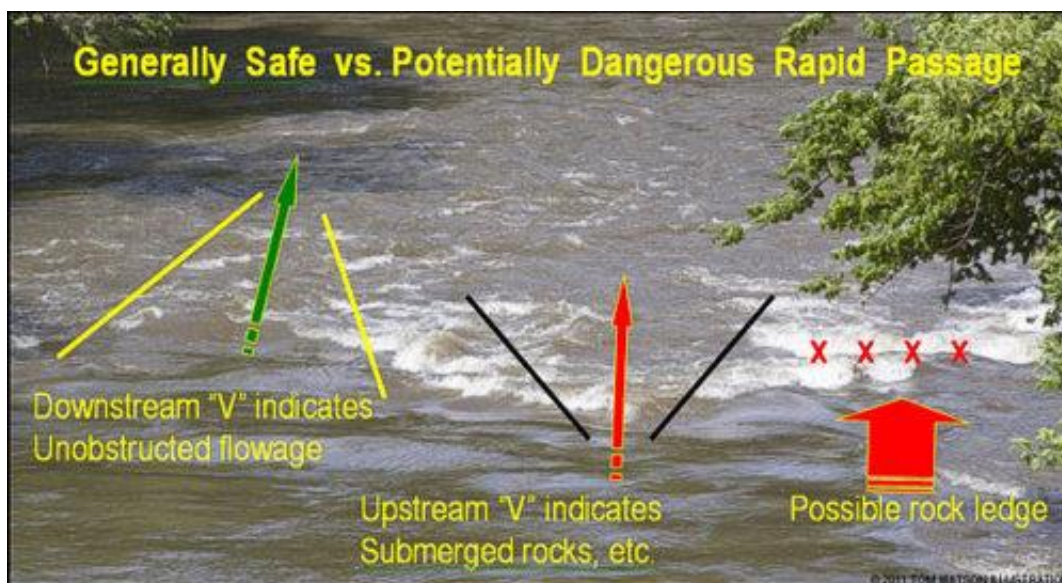


Figure 9 -Illustration of rocks and rock ledge on the river

- Downstream pointing "V" indicates clear channel through the rocks



- Upstream pointing “V” indicates that rocks are lying just under the surface

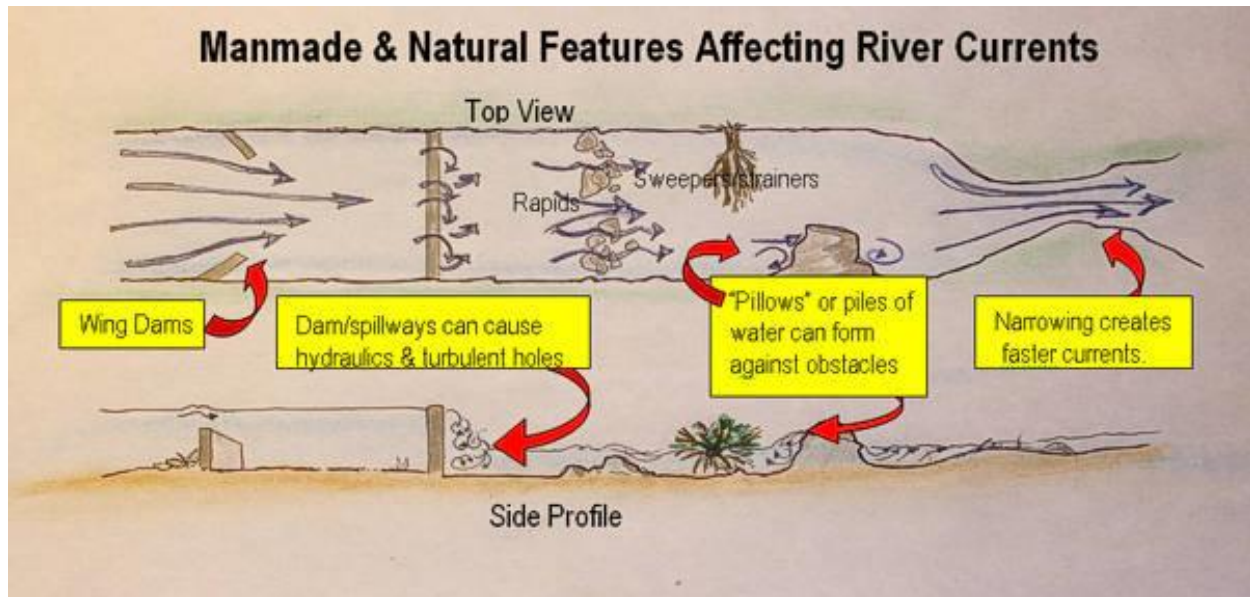


Figure 10 – Features that can affect the river current

The above are examples of potential river hazards you may encounter on our rivers. The best way to deal with a river hazard is to avoid it altogether, but if you can't, make sure you take our Club training to acquire the skills you need, practice your strokes and maneuvers, and communicate with your partner!

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

**Disclaimer:** The Club does not give certificate courses in lifesaving or first aid. The following advice is offered simply as useful information.

### Emergency Contact Cards

All members of the Club are required to carry a completed “Emergency Contact Card” and keep it in either your drybag or on your person.

### Overturn

An upset is a fairly common occurrence for all canoeists. In quiet water where help is available, an overturn is rarely serious for people wearing PFDs, but in swift water, the situation can be tricky.<sup>8</sup> To reduce the possibility of injury or fatality, consider the following:

- In almost all cases, stay with the canoe, which even though swamped, will support people in the water
- An exception to the above would be the case where a swamped canoe is heading for a dangerous place i.e. waterfall, and is uncontrollable
- If a rescuing vessel approaches, do not attempt to climb aboard until asked; otherwise, you could cause a second upset
- In most cases, the easiest way to reach safety is to be towed ashore holding the stern rope of the rescuing boat
- In rapids, hold onto the canoe on the UPSTREAM side
- In a swift current, do not try to stand until you reach shallow water (below the knee)

- To empty a swamped canoe when brought ashore, raise it gradually on its side, letting the water run out by degrees
- Methods of emptying and re-entering an upset canoe far from shore are best learned at a Club practice session

### **Hypothermia**

Life threatening loss of body heat from exposure to cold water or air can occur rapidly unless counteracted by proper measures. Key indicators are increased shivering, teeth chattering and reduced dexterity and balance. If possible soaked paddlers, in cool or cold weather should go ashore and change into dry clothes.

Club members can learn more about this condition and its prevention by contacting authorized agencies such as the Red Cross or St. John's Ambulance. This Club schedules its activities in seasons and in locations where hypothermia would not be an acute hazard. Here are some tips for when a trip planned early in the season:

- **Do not wear cotton.**
- Layers help trap heat and fend off water
- Dry clothing in a waterproof bag ("dry pack") should always be carried on a canoe trip
- Members who have wetsuits are encouraged to wear them on cold water trips
- Neoprene socks are good to wear to keep feet warm early in the season, even when they get wet

### **Drowning**

Since the Club insists on safe procedures and Club outings are group events, there should be little risk of drowning. All the same, some present members have taken training in CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation) and First Aid and could render proper response in drowning accidents

- Although this Club is not qualified to give training in CPR or other life saving techniques, we encourage interested members to take this training
- Periodically, if enough members are in
- All members on Club canoe trips must abide by mandatory boating regulations and Club rules

### **Bodily Injury**

Some of the Club's activities could result in accidental injury (cuts, bruises, sprains, etc.). We carry a first aid kit on all outings and our members will render help to the injured on a "Good Samaritan" basis. Members with special needs (administration of medicine) may only be treated if they give prior instructions to the Trip Leader.

- Tell the Trip Leader if you have a condition that could require medical intervention, and give relevant instructions
- If another member is injured, be prepared to help. You are not legally liable for the results of any aid rendered in an emergency
- The cardinal rules of first aid are:
  1. Control serious bleeding
  2. Restore respiration
  3. Maintain heartbeat
  4. Keep the patient warm.
  5. Avoid unnecessary movement in cases of possible fracture
  6. Treat for shock

The Club carries a wireless communication device (e.g. cell phone) on canoe trips. Learn how to use it.

## **Inclement Weather**

**In the event of thunder/lightning, leave the water immediately and find a safe location on shore. Remain on shore for 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder.**

## **CONCLUSION**

It is impossible to cover all situations in this brief manual. The resources mentioned below can provide authoritative information for dealing with emergencies. Members should attend Club training sessions for paddling skills and water safety until they are proficient. There is also an excellent membership resource section on the [OSSCC Blog](#) that has links to additional information and videos. And finally, the Old Salts Seniors Canoe Club has many experienced members who are excellent resources themselves.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

Bill Mason, *The Path of the Paddle*. 1984, Key Porter Books  
Gary and Joanie McGuffin, *Paddle Your Own Canoe*. The Boston Mills Press, 2005  
Cliff Jacobson, *Canoeing and Camping: Beyond the Basics. A Falcon Guide*, 2007  
St. John's Ambulance

## **ENDNOTES (AND THINGS THAT ARE GOOD TO KNOW!)**

- <sup>1</sup> The original version was written by Herbert Johnson in 2000. The 2020 version was revised by Carol Marion with safety input and expertise provided by Larry Martin
- <sup>2</sup> The Fox 40 is the "gold standard" and it is without a pea in the sound chamber. Whistles with peas tend to jam in dirty, weedy water just when you need them to work.
- <sup>3</sup> A cell phone is an excellent communication device on the water but can fail if wet. Cell phones should be in a waterproof case (limited depth) or a good Ziplock bag and must be easily accessible.
- <sup>4</sup> When on the water, paddlers should wear shoes that have soles designed for walking on irregular river and lake bottoms. If the water is cold, sandals are not a suitable choice unless they can accommodate neoprene socks. There is a range of choices available from sneakers with water-designed soles to knee-high neoprene mukluks. If uncertain visit an outfitter's store that has experienced sales personal.
- <sup>5</sup> Ultimately people should be making their own decision on whether or not they are "fair weather paddlers" (don't like to paddle in the rain)
- <sup>6</sup> The proper loading of a canoe depends on the size of the canoe, the load to be carried and the weather and water conditions. Freeboard safety is determined by the measured distance between the top of the gunwale at its lowest point and the hull waterline on the loaded canoe in the water. The greater the freeboard on a loaded canoe the safer will be the canoe as weather and water conditions deteriorate. Paddlers and trip leaders have the responsibility to ensure that freeboard is adequate for all condition anticipated on a trip.
- <sup>7</sup> Distinguish between an emergency stop (illness, injury, canoe damage, or extreme weather) and a non-emergency stop (need to pee or retrieve something from a closed dry bag) in pre-trip discussion.
- <sup>8</sup> A sweeper can still be standing and leaning out over the water but not in the water. It can remove your glasses or poke out your eye but not likely drown you unless, immediately downstream there is a strainer that capsizes your canoe and you are entangled in the underwater branches and limbs and the pressure of the flow is holding you underwater. If you

get caught in a strong current that is heading to sweepers and strainers the only stroke that can effectively help you is the back ferry and both bow and stern paddlers must know how to execute it

<sup>9</sup> We are a Club of seniors so a capsize could become a challenge because of declining physical stamina related to the aging process. We want members to use care in judging their skill level and fitness in choosing trips. We also encourage them to take the refresher course, from time to time to maintain and update skill levels. The advice of the professional instructor is a wonderful resource for any member uncertain about additional training.

# PART 6: VOLUNTEERISM

The Old Salts Seniors Canoe Club was established and run by member volunteers since its inception and owes its success and longevity to them. We can't operate without our volunteers which is why we ask that all our members help out in some capacity and volunteer for something on their membership registration forms. Members of OSSCC bring with them many skills and much knowledge when they join the Club and whatever time, expertise or energy you can give us is much appreciated and will contribute to the continued success and viability of the Old Salts Seniors Canoe Club. The following are brief job descriptions for the Board of Directors of the Club.

## OSSCC Executive

### Past President

- Honorary position.
- Provides continuity and advice.

### President

- Presides over meetings, including board, general and special meetings.
- Makes decisions when an emergency situation occurs and there is no time to consult with members of the Board.
- At the end of the term of office, the President automatically assumes the title of "Past President".

### Vice President

- To fill in for the President when the President is not available.
- To give advice and assistance to the President when necessary.
- Provide leadership for Club interests where required.

### Secretary

- To deal with all correspondence on Club matters (incoming and outgoing). The Secretary should be given a copy of all correspondence generated by other Board members.
- To record the minutes of all General meetings and Board meetings held by the Club. If it is not possible to attend a meeting, the Secretary will ask one of the other members to do this.
- To prepare an agenda, in consultation with the President, for each meeting, and inform members of the time and date for that meeting.

### Treasurer

- To collect and deposit all money received by the Club.
- To pay out any money necessary for the operation of the Club:
- To keep an accurate and up-to-date accounting of Club income and expenses
- To prepare monthly reports for Executive Meetings
- To prepare for Year End Reporting and AGM (Annual General Meeting)
- To provide financial statements to City of Waterloo as per contractual agreement

## OSSCC Committee Chairs

### Training Co-Ordinator

- Work with Trip Co-ordinating Committee to set up training schedule dates for dry land, pool, and pond training as well as for the Refresher Course and Basic and Intermediate Level Training.
- Organize and oversee canoe training for the Club
- Co-ordinate sign-up for training for new and returning members at Annual Spring Membership Meeting
- Keep an up-to-date attendance list of all new and returning members taking training and provide to Trip-Co-Ordinator as required

### Trip Co-Ordinator/Scheduler

- Lead Trip Co-ordinating Committee in creating an annual "Training & Trip Schedule" to be posted on the Blog. Differentiate between "easy" and "regular" trips.



- Update trip schedule throughout the season as needed.
- *Ensure there are Trip Leaders/Towers for trips on the schedule*

#### Membership Co-Ordinator

- Managing Membership – maintain membership list via excel spreadsheet
- Membership Communications (Blog, Web site and email)
- Membership Liaison – club contact when people reach out to us via web site/email
- Membership Resources maintenance

#### Social Committee Chair

- Act as Lead for social committee
- Work with the committee to organize and facilitate Club social events

#### Equipment Chair

- Maintain a complete and up to date list of all Club equipment and property.
- Manage Club equipment and property and ensure everything is maintained, repaired, or replaced for use during the canoe season.
- To control all keys for locks securing equipment and property and keep a record of those persons to whom keys are issued.
- Organize year-end cleanup of canoes and equipment.

**\*\*The fiscal year is from January 1 to December 31. The Canoe Season is from April 1 – March 31<sup>st</sup>.**

A more detailed job description can be obtained from the Secretary.

## **Other Ways to Volunteer**

1. Trip Leader
  - Members who have been with the Club a while, who have taken training and are familiar with the trip route
  - Members are encouraged to team up with another member to share responsibilities
  - Members can volunteer to lead either Tuesday or Thursday (Easy Breezy) Trips
  - Workshop will be available to orientate volunteers.
2. Tower
  - Members who have a vehicle with a hitch capable of towing our canoe trailers are encouraged to sign up to tow our canoes to and from our canoe excursions.
  - If enough people sign up for a particular canoe trip, the canoes are towed
  - Volunteers are paid mileage as determined by the Board of Directors (normally the current government suggested rate)
  - Workshop will be available to orientate volunteers
  - Regular towers will be given keys to both the shed and the lock for the trailers.
3. Committee members
4. Help out with year-end canoe cleanup
5. Lead hikes and other activities in the off season
6. Think about joining the Board of Directors/Executive
7. Share any talents that might help the Club!

# PART 7: OSSCC BY-LAWS & CONSTITUTION

## By-Laws

(REVISED October 17, 2024)

### 1. HEADQUARTERS

The Headquarters of the Club shall be:  
Old Salts Seniors Canoe Club  
55 Northfield Dr. East, Suite 242  
Waterloo, ON N2K 3T6

### 2. MEMBERSHIP

- i. Eligibility as defined by the Constitution.
- ii. Fees: Annual membership is \$55.00 per person and is payable at the start of the financial year.
- iii. Upon joining, new Club members will be charged \$10.00 each for a name tag.
- iv. These fees may be revised if considered necessary.
- v. When a member uses Club equipment for sanctioned Club activities, the member must be in good standing.
- vi. Guests: A member may bring one or two guests to any Club function. A guest may attend as many as 2 functions per year.

### 3. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- i. The OSSCC shall be governed by no less than three (3) people and no more than ten (10) and consist of four (4) Executive officers and 5 (5) Directors (Chairs, Committees). For the purpose of this By-law, the term "Executive" will refer to: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.
- ii. From its members, the following positions will be elected or appointed. These positions can be amended at the discretion of the Board of Directors as per Club requirements. Membership will be informed of any changes and/or appointments of directors

*President*

*Vice-President*

*Secretary*

*Treasurer*

*Equipment Chair*

*Trip Co-Ordinator*

*Training Co-Ordinator*

*Social Co-Ordinator*

*Membership Co-Ordinator*

- iii. The Board of Directors may strike other committees as required.
- iv. Directors must act honestly and in good faith with a view to the best interests of the club and exercise reasonable care, diligence, and skill.

- v. Directors will not be legally responsible if they acted with care, diligence, and skill in which a reasonably careful person would have acted in a similar situation.

## **MEETING**

- i. Club outings originate at Wing 404 on Tuesdays and Thursdays at times to be decided.
- ii. Board Meetings will be held monthly, unless otherwise agreed.
- iii. Members will be notified of meetings and events by email and on the club BLOG.

## **4. AMMENDMENTS**

The by-laws and constitution can be amended by a two-third (2/3) vote of Board members present at any meeting, provided a quorum is present and provided a copy of the proposed amendments(s) are provided to each Board member at least one week prior to said meeting.

## **5. VOTING**

- i. The Board of Directors has the option to decide when a two-thirds majority vote is necessary in order to pass certain resolutions.
- ii. Any question of Parliamentary procedures not covered in these by-laws will be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.

## **6. RULES OF CONDUCT**

- i. It is incumbent upon each member to conduct himself/herself in a manner that will not cause offence or injury to others or to the Club.
- ii. Such behavior will result in the expulsion from the Club with no membership refund.
- iii. Conflict should be disclosed and recorded in meeting minutes.
- iv. The conflict will be subject to investigation, discipline, and possible removal of membership as per Robert's Rules of Order.

## **OSSCC Constitution**

**(REVISED October 17, 2024)**

## **NAME**

The name of the organization shall be: Old Salts Seniors Canoe Club, herein referred to as "The Club", OSSCC for short.

## **1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Club shall be:

- i. To provide opportunities to its members for canoeing and related outdoor experiences.

- ii. To provide training to its members in the proper use of canoes, in water safety, in first aid, and in other such skills as may be deemed appropriate.
- iii. To perform public or community service in areas where the Club deems appropriate.
- iv. To undertake demonstrations or presentations for the public in order to promote the aims of the Club.

## **2. HEADQUARTERS**

The headquarters of the Club shall be an address located in the Kitchener-Waterloo area, as designated by the Board of Directors, and as specified in By-law #1

## **3. MEMBERSHIPS**

- i. Membership shall be open to all residents of Kitchener, Waterloo, and surrounding areas.
- ii. The Board may set age limits in compliance with the mandates of sponsoring (e.g. municipal) agencies and may restrict the number of members below a specified age in compliance with the requirements for granting or supporting agencies where applicable.
- iii. An eligible member is one who has signed and submitted the required membership registration form and waiver and paid the necessary membership fee.
- iv. The Board of Directors may set membership fees.
- v. Membership fees are stated in By-law #2

## **4. GOVERNING BODY**

- i. The Governing Body of the Club shall be the Board of Directors elected by the members of the Club at the annual general meeting (AGM) with a simple majority.
- ii. A member of the Board of Directors shall normally hold office for a period of not less than one year and not more than two years, unless a shorter or longer period is approved by a majority vote of the general membership.
- iii. The Board must appoint a nominating committee at least sixty days prior to the AGM consisting of at least two members, one of whom must be a Board member, to present a slate of candidates for election at the next AGM
- iv. The head of all committees shall report to the Board of Directors.
- v. Further details of the Club's board and committees are contained in By-law #3

## **5. TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS**

- i. The Board of Directors is empowered to transact all business in the name of the Club, including, but not restricted to the execution of documents, the holding of money, the purchase and sale of property and equipment, the investing in and the redemption of securities, and every day operational expenditures in the running of the Club.
- ii. All money of the Club shall be kept in a bank or trust company located within the cities of Kitchener-Waterloo.

- iii. There shall be three signing officers (normally the President, the Treasurer and one other member) two of whom shall be required to sign all cheques over \$1000.

## **6. BOOKS AND RECORDS**

- i. Minutes of the Club meetings and records of financial transactions shall be maintained on forms prescribed by the Board of Directors and shall be open for inspection by any Club member. Document requests of any kinds must be made in writing to the Board with a valid explanation for the request.
- ii. An account of the financial affairs of the Club shall be provided in writing to all Club members annually upon request and current statements of the Club's financial position shall be read at each meeting of the Club.
- iii. The Club's financial year shall begin on the first day of January.

## **7. ANNUAL, GENERAL AND SPECIAL MEETINGS**

- i. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Club shall be held at the end of the canoeing season.
- ii. All annual and general meetings of the Club shall be held at times and places determined by the Board of Directors.
- iii. Notice of annual and general meetings shall be given to the members twenty-one days in advance of such meetings and shall be deemed sufficient notice of such meetings.
- iv. Financial statements must be provided to the membership no less than 21 days before the AGM.
- v. Directors will be elected at the AGM.

## **8. QUORUM**

- i. A quorum for any meeting of the Board, Committee or General Membership shall consist of 50 percent or more of the eligible members of such bodies, except that at an Annual General Meeting, 30 percent shall be quorum.

## **9. VOTING**

- i. Each eligible member of the Club, or its Board or other committees is entitled to one vote on any resolution properly brought before such a body.
- ii. Voting may be a show of hands unless a secret ballot is requested by two or more members.
- iii. Election of board members may be by secret ballot when requested.
- iv. Passage of any resolution duly presented shall be carried by a simple majority vote of eligible members present.

## **10. RULES AND REGULATIONS**

- i. The Board is empowered to make appropriate rules and regulations governing the activities of Club members and the use of Club property and equipment.
- ii. Every member shall be bound to conform to the Rules and Regulations as a condition of membership. The Rules and Regulations are available in the Club Handbook and Rules.

## **11. FINANCIAL REVIEW**

- i. The Board shall appoint one or more internal reviewers annually to review the books and financial statements of the Club and to issue report of the financial affairs of the Club to be presented at the AGM.

## **12. REMUNERATION**

- i. No member of the Club, its board or committees shall receive payment or profit, directly or indirectly, for serving the Club in any capacity, except that a member may be paid reasonable expenses arising out of the performance of duties authorized by the Club's board.

## **13. DISSOLUTION**

In the event of dissolution or winding up of the Club, all the assets remaining after the paying of liabilities shall be donated to a charity or charities registered under the laws of Canada or one of its provinces and recognized under the Income Tax Act of Canada, as the board may decide.

# PART 8: MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

## All About the Blog

Since the “**Blog**” was first introduced to the Club several years ago, it has evolved into an efficient communication and resource hub. Let’s use it! Check out the Resources. Make comments and give us your feedback. Give us suggestions. Check out the Trip Schedule, plan which trip to go on, and check back often in case there are changes. Please note that the **Blog** is a separate entity from the [web site](#)—the major difference being that the **Blog is a portal that is only available to our members** and the [web site](#) is **visible to the public** to let them know we exist.

## How Does It Work?

### Email Notifications

These notifications are to let members know that there is new information posted on the Blog. It is **not** the Blog post itself. Videos, photos, links, etc. will not work in these emails, **so you have to read the Blog post**. To read the entire post, click on the “**post title**” or the “**continue reading on the OSSCC Blog**” button to access the announcement on the Blog. (You will either go directly to the **post (if you are logged in)** or to the **login page (if you aren’t logged in)** page. You might find it more convenient to click on the “Remember me” box to stay logged in. Please take the time to read these Blog posts carefully!! Also note that there may be corrections to blog posts after they are posted. Notifications **do not** go out when these corrections are made, so check the Blog regularly for any updates.

- [Blog Issues](#)

For anyone who has issues signing into the Blog, password problems, or is wondering how to navigate the Blog, there is a great “**how to**” that can be found [here](#). If you forget your password, there are also instructions on how to reset it. Please choose something simple that you will remember!

- [Notification Issues](#)

If you feel you aren’t getting email notifications of Blog posts, check your spam, junk and promotions folders.

There have also been improvements made to the Blog to make it a better resource for our members. Whether you are viewing from your tablet, phone or desktop, take the time to explore our content and see what’s new!

## Top Menu

Welcome to Our Communication Hub! ▾	WHAT’S HAPPENING!	RESOURCES ▾	TRIP SCHEDULE	<b>TRIP ORGANIZING ▾</b>	LOGIN
-------------------------------------	-------------------	-------------	---------------	--------------------------	-------

### Welcome to Our Communication Hub!

This is the landing page which links to everywhere else on the Blog. It can be viewed by anyone and is the first place you get to when you land on the Blog. This is where you log in if you are not already logged in. Only members can get into any of the links if they are logged in. The *Privacy policy* as well as the *Conditions of Membership* is available to view in the drop down area “V”.

### What’s Happening!

This page is where all Blog posts are available to registered members with the most recent listed first.

### Resources (drop down area “V”)

- [Training](#) (drop down area “V”)
- [Club Handbook & Rules](#)
- [Membership list](#)
- [Printable Materials](#)

- [Canoe Terminology](#)
- [Link to OSSCC Website \(available to the public\)](#)
- [Trip Videos](#)

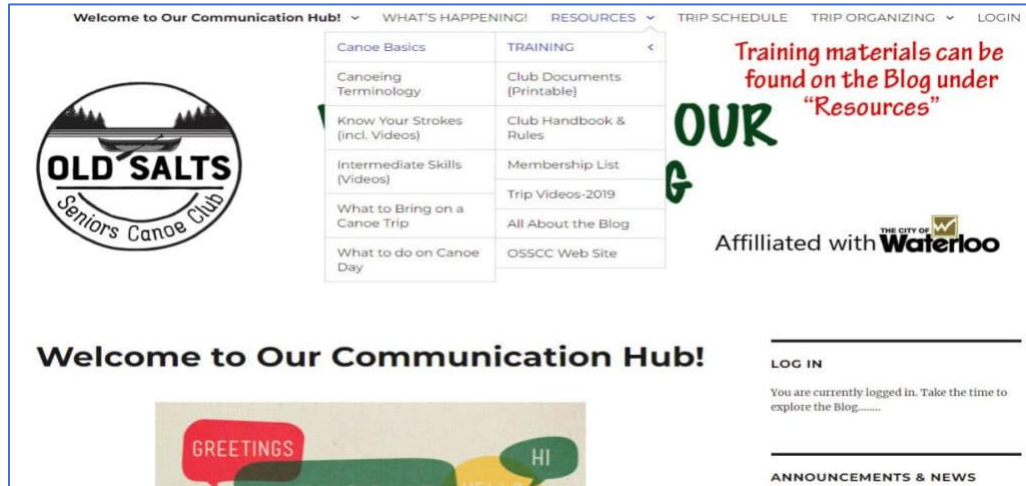


Diagram A – Training has a sub-menu

## Trip Schedule

This is where you will find the schedule outlining our trip dates. It is printable when you click on "PDF". You will need to save it to your device before you can print it.

**Tip:** Depending on your printer, you can print the schedule in either portrait or landscape mode. Use the "scale" setting for your printer to make the print larger or smaller.

## Trip Organizing (drop down area "V")

This section has trip information for anyone who wants to know what is involved in being a Trip Leader/Organizer and the processes that have been put in place. Please consider volunteering because we have everything you need here:

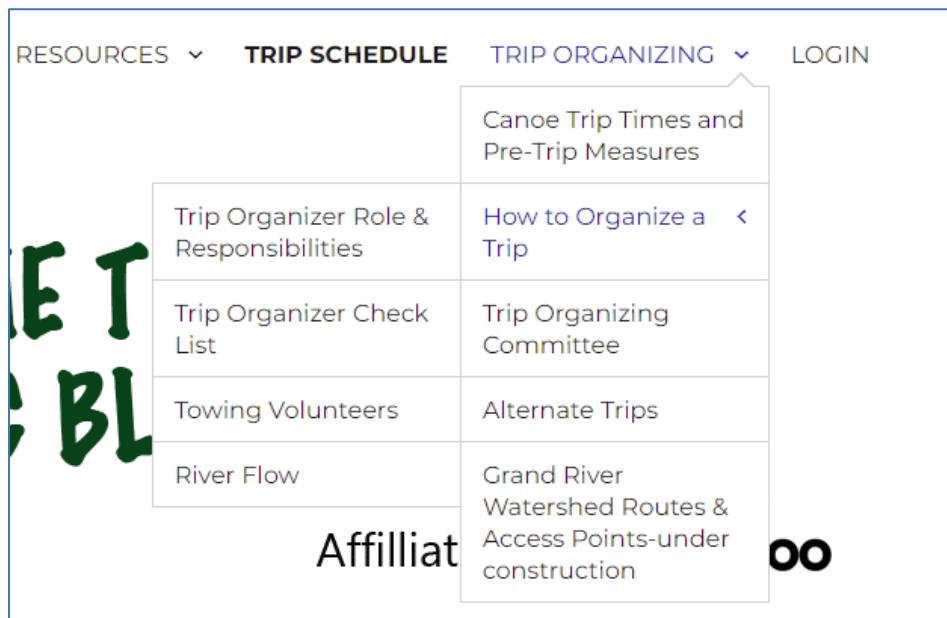


Diagram 2 – Everything you need to know to organize a trip!

- Canoe Trip Times & Pre-Trip Measures



- How to Organize a Trip
- Maps & Directions
- Alternate trip

Also on the Blog, you will find photo slideshows of our trips, as well as instruction videos to help reinforce skills taught in our training sessions. We are slowly posting more resources with the idea that the Blog will continue being the information repository for our Club.

## **Printable Materials**

These items are available on the Blog.

### ***Forms:***

- Membership – for renewals
- Towing and mileage expenses
- Trip sheets
- Expense reimbursement

### ***Trip Schedule***

### ***Waiver for non-members***

### ***Contact Card***

### ***OSSCC Handbook & Rules***

## **Canoe Terminology**

The following is a collection of canoeing terms collected over the last couple of years. If you see any that are missing, have a better definition, or see one that needs correction, please email: [info@oldsaltsClub.com](mailto:info@oldsaltsClub.com)

**Air Brace** – In ineffectual brace employed by novice paddlers in which the paddle blade is wagged about above the water until the boat capsizes. Often performed one-handed with the opposite hand clenched white-knuckled on the gunwale.

**Back Ferry** – Paddling the canoe backward at an angle to the current facing downstream when crossing a stream laterally.

**Back/Reverse Stroke** – Used to move the canoe backwards in a straight direction. It is done by using the back face of the blade; the bottom hand pushes down and forward while the upper arm pulls up and back.

**Backpaddle** - Paddling backward to slow or reverse the forward motion of a canoe.

**Blade** – The wide, flat end of the paddle.

**Bony** – AKA scratchy. Shallow water that scrapes up your boat. The blue and green coating on the barely submerged rocks isn't algae, it's vinyl. In the days before plastic boats a fleet of Grumman could be heard bashing down a bony run for miles.

**Booties** – Neoprene socks or boots used to keep your feet warm in cold weather. Also, the things that make your car trunk smell like something died in there.

**Bow** – The pointy part of the boat up front. Showed up late for the basic paddling class, eh?

**Bow Paddler, Bowman, Bow Person** - The person who paddles in the bow. In canoe racing, this person is typically the larger, heavier, and/or stronger of the paddling team.

**Brace** – A paddling stroke using a downward and sweeping motion with the blade to keep the boat from capsizing. If you are unfamiliar with this stroke, see “carnage” and “yard sale”.

**Broach** – What happens when someone hits a rock and turns sideways. It is important that other paddlers yell “Don’t lean upstream” in unison when a novice gets sideways on a rock. Leaning downstream and bracing may allow the boat to slide off. Leaning upstream may result in a capsize, carnage and yard sale.

**Bulkhead** – An in-hull wall that seals off a compartment in a decked boat, used for flotation or for dry storage accessible through a hatch.

**Capsize** – What happens when you lean upstream in a broach. See also cap size; what you’ll need to know to replace your hat when it floats away with the rest of your gear.

**Carnage** – A jovial term to describe what happens after you lean upstream in a broach.

**Chine** – The angle where the sides of the boat meet the bottom

**Chute** – A narrow tongue of water where the flow is constricted.

**Class I – VI** – International scale of river difficulty: Class I (Novice). Class II (Practiced Novice). Class III through IV (Don’t even think about it until you’ve had some experience and taken a safety course). Class V (Make that much more experience) Class VI (Check your life insurance policy first).

**Creeking** – Paddling (or simply bouncing down) small, high gradient streams. Also known as steep creeking.

**Curler** – The crest of a large wave that spills back upstream.

**Draw stroke** – A stroke performed by placing the paddle out in the water parallel to the boat and pulling the blade towards the hull.

**D-ring** – A steel ring attached inside a boat used as a tie-down point.

**Dog Leg** – a sharp bend in the river.

**Dry bag** – A waterproof bag designed to keep your gear dry. Having a change of clothes in a dry bag is essential if your bowman can’t execute a draw stroke or if the stern person leans the wrong way

**Dry Suit** – An over-garment designed for cold weather paddling with neck, wrist and ankle gaskets or booties to keep water out.

**Duct Tape** – The paddler’s friend. Can be used in almost any emergency from broken skin to broken boats.

**Eddy** – A place in the river, often behind an obstruction or inside a sharp turn, where the water reverses and flows upstream. Eddies are a good place to pause, rest, or boat scout. They are also the place where your gear is likely to collect after your bowman misses the draw stroke, your boat broaches and you forget to lean downstream. See yard sale.

**Eddy Hopping** – Using eddies to maneuver upstream or downstream

**Eddy Line** – The line between the eddy and the main current.

**Entrapment** – Getting trapped or stuck in some fashion. Pulled into an undercut, trapped between a water-filled boat and a rock, washed into a strainer or pinned in a folded boat – the best outcome is you don’t get crushed, don’t drown and live to learn a lesson (the first rule of paddling – “Don’t die”).

**Feather** – To turn the paddle so that the blade is parallel to the current or wind and the resistance is reduced.

**Ferry** – Angling the boat to move sideways or upstream against a current, a properly executed ferry uses the current to help move the boat sideways.

**Flare** – The cross-section shape of a hull that increases in width from the waterline to the gunwales.

**Flatwater** – Water that is flat.

**Float Bag** – An inflated air bag used in boats to displace water. Float bags will make a swamped boat float higher, be less likely to pin or hang up and easier to recover

**Float Plan** – Communicating your trip plans, including what, when and where, orally or in writing to someone who cares.

**Forward/ Front Ferry** – When facing upstream in a forward ferry, the stern paddler is responsible for maintaining the angle of the canoe to the current, while the bow paddler primarily paddles to maintain boat speed and helps with the lean if ferrying toward their paddling side.

**Forward Stroke** – Used to move canoe forward in a straight direction. It is the foundation or basic stroke. This stroke is made close to the canoe moving from the front of the canoe towards the back.

**Forward Sweep Stroke** – Forward Sweep is a wide sweep of the paddle using the power face of the blade. It is used to maneuver among obstacles in a lake or river

**Foot Entrapment** – What happens when you attempt to stand up in fast moving water, your foot becomes wedged between the rocks and the current pulls you under. If you live see the first rule of paddling. Also see your ankles bent in a whole new direction.

**Freeboard** – The amount of distance between the waterline and the gunwales.

**Gauge Height** – On-line or stick gauges for determining the height of the water at a specific point along the river. Some painted gauges may also denote a “canoe zero” level. If you attempt to paddle a river below canoe zero have a nice walk.

**Gradient** – The amount of drop or steepness of a river, usually given per mile. Although a seemingly easy flatwater river may have a single digit gradient because it is utterly flat...except for that that one waterfall you didn't know about.

**Grip** – The end of a canoe paddle opposite the blade; fits in a paddler's hand.

**Guidebook** – A resource book for finding out about that waterfall before you suddenly plunge over the edge. A good guidebook will include maps, trip descriptions, gauges, gradient, class, distance between access points and shuttle directions. See anything by Ed Gertler or Roger Corbett.

**Gunwales/Gunnel** – The wood, aluminum or vinyl pieces running from bow to stern along the top of the hull. Also, what novices typically grab if they don't know how to brace.

**Hole** – Envision a whirlpool on its side, where the water flows over an obstacle, plunges toward the bottom and recurves upstream back towards the obstacle. Also known as a hydraulic. Or, more ominously, a keeper. Not a good place to be if you don't know what you are doing. A hole can also be the void that suddenly appears in the bottom of your boat after you slam into a piece of barely submerged rebar. See duct tape.

**Horizon line** – What appears to be a straight waterline stretching across the river. If you had read the guide book you would have noticed mention of a falls or very steep drop in this very place. Better hope there's an eddy before you get there.

**J-Stroke** – Used to keep the canoe on a straight course. When solo paddling, it is used continuously. With tandem paddling, the stern person uses it when required. The J-stroke is required because the basic forward stroke moves the canoe slightly off-course, i.e., in the direction opposite the side the paddler is on. To perform a J-stroke, the paddler gradually turns the power face of the blade outward during a basic forward stroke. This is done by flexing both wrists and rotating the thumb holding the paddle grip away from the body or downward.

**Keel** – A raised ridge that runs along the bottom of a boat from end to end to help tracking and add rigidity. When the boat goes sideways and this raised ridge catches a rock you will soon understand the origin of “keeled over”. See capsize, carnage and yard sale.

**Kneeling Thwart** – A low-slung thwart back of amidships upon which a kneeling canoeist rests his hindquarters until the realization sinks in that here are less painful ways to paddle a canoe. See Saddle.

**Lead Boat** – The first boat down the river in a trip. Hopefully this is someone who knows the river. In whitewater situations this boat is known as the probe and should be someone whose insurance premiums are up to date.

**Left Bank** – The left side of the river when facing downstream.

**Lily dipper** – A dawdling, slow moving paddler. Also, the moniker of a dawdling, slow moving Adirondack paddler of some repute.

**Limbo Log** – A fallen log spanning the river with enough room to scrunch down in the boat and limbo beneath.

**Live Bait** – Strong swimmer rescue.

**Low Head Dam** – Envision a horizon line with a river wide keeper at the base. These dams are often small in size and appear runnable. They are not. You will die. Don't even think about it, portage these killers.

**Minicell** – Closed-cell foam favored by paddlers for a variety of outfitting needs in canoes and kayaks, including padding and flotation. Pricey, but fun and easy to cut, shape and install.

**OC1/OC2** – Open Canoe One/Open Canoe Two. Solo and tandem canoes. What skilled paddlers utilize when they have graduated from kayaks and brightly colored pool toys.

**Oil canning** – This surprisingly has nothing to do with having torn the oil pan off a buddy's car on a dirt access road. It describes when the floor of a poorly constructed or flat-bottomed OC1 or OC2 bounces up and down in turbulent waters.

**Old school** – Paddlers who started their waterborne adventures with the voyageurs! If two old schoolers are present one will claim to have started in a wood and canvas Chestnut. If three old schoolers are present one will harken back to birch bark. Four gets you back to a hand-hewn dugout. A collection of more than four old schoolers indicates that the bus from the Wing 404 made a wrong turn on the way to bingo.

**Outfitting** – All the things you need to do to a canoe after you buy it. Adding minicell paddling, bungee cords, floatation bags and lacing, D-rings, etc. If cars were sold the way boats are, you would get an engine, wheels and a chassis – the rest would be up to you.

**Paddles** – Wood or composite sticks with a blade at one or both ends, used to propel and maneuver the boat. Not to be confused with “oars”, which are used with row boats.

**Paddling** – What we do with our canoes.

**Painters** – Line attached to the bow and stern of canoes, used for tying the boat ashore or lining the boat down through rapids. These should not be stored loose and should have no knots that can catch and hang up the canoe. Painters are also useful to grab hold of after a capsize, aiding in boat rescue and recovery, so that you can go paddling again next week.

**Park & Play** – Parking close to a river feature and paddling a short distance to “play” a wave, hole or other river feature with no shuttle required.

**PFD** – Personal Floatation Device. AKA life vest or life jacket. NO PFD = NO CANOEING!

**Pillow** – A gentle bulge on the surface of the water caused by an underwater obstruction. All such pillows have hard centers.

**Pin** – The final result when your bowman misses a critical draw stroke and your boat broaches against an immovable object. Watch as the force of the water folds your boat up like a cheap tortilla shell. Hopefully you are not in it at the time. See Z-drag.

**Pitch** – A sudden drop in, or steeper section of, a set of rapids.

**Pivot** – To turn sharply, or to pivot the craft around a point.

**Pogies** – Mittens that attach to the paddle shaft for cold weather paddling.

**Portage** – An opportunity to labor up a trail wearing a really large hat that weighs sixty pounds. Unless you own a Kevlar boat, in which case this is an opportunity stroll merrily up a trail wearing a thirty-pound hat while your fellow paddlers shoot you nasty looks.

**Primary Stability** – Also known as initial stability. What big ole flat-bottomed canoes have gobs of, so that they are hard to capsize. Up to a point. In calm conditions. But lean the canoe past that point of primary stability, or take on some quartering waves, and a flat bottomed boat will roll over faster than a Ford Explorer with Firestone tires.

**Pry Stroke** – A stroke performed by placing the paddle near the gunwale with the blade parallel to the hull and prying the shaft outward off the gunwale. Not good for the paddle shaft. Or, after a while, for the gunwale.

**Put-in** – The place where you start a trip by putting your boat in the water. Unless you are paddling in a circle, poling upriver or are simply out for some park-&-play the put in is almost always upstream of the take out. See Take Out. See Shuttle.

**Ramp** – The place where the river pools up before dropping through a chute. Also a boat launch shared with motorized vessels

**Rapid** – See the current speed up and the water cascade around rocks, over ledges and down drops. See whitewater. See carnage if a novice trip.

**Rapid Floss** – Throw rope

**Recovery Stroke** – Not really a stroke but getting ready for the next stroke.

**Reverse Sweep Stroke** – Reverse Sweep is a wide sweep of the paddle using the back face of the blade.

**Ribs** – Structural material, often wood, that form the frame of a canoe on the inside. Also pairs of curved bones that are less likely to break when you slam into a rock during a swim if you are wearing your PFD. Broken canoe ribs are easier to repair.

**Right Bank** – The right side of the river when facing downstream.

**River Left** – The left-hand side of the river when looking downstream. When downstream looking upstream it is on your right.

**River Right** – The right-hand side of the river when facing downstream. When downstream looking upstream it is on your left.

**Rocker** – Longitudinal curvature in the bow and stern of a boat along the bottom of the hull. A heavily rockered boat will turn easily and track straight only with practice and good technique

**Rockagator** – A sullen rock hiding in the rapids which the bow paddler failed to detect until after it reached up and smacked the canoe, sometimes hard enough to cause a capsize or hangup.

**Rockopotamus** – A huge, sleepy rock over which water flows in a gentle pillow so unobtrusively that no one recognizes it until the canoe slides to a stop atop it.

**Scouting** – To disembark and look over a section of river before running it.

**Sculling Stroke** – A figure-eight stroke with the paddle in the water at all times; used for fine adjustments, or when necessary to keep the paddle in a ready position when running a tricky set of rapids.

**Secondary Stability** – Also known as Final Stability.

**Shaft** – The handle of the canoe paddle between the grip and the blade.

**Shuttle** – The shuttle is the thing besides paddling that needs to happen between the put in and take out. This usually involves vehicles, but can sometimes involve hitchhiking and arguing about who left the keys back at the put in. The shuttle is a strangely unfathomable concept for some people. These are usually the same people who propose harebrained variations to an established shuttle routine, resulting in all the drivers arriving at the put in but none of the boats, or whose inability to count higher than ten without removing their shoes and socks forces twelve passengers to cram into a single Corolla at the take out.

**Skid Plate** – AKA bang plates or grunch pads. Additional materials, usually Kevlar, fiberglass or vinyl, added to the stems of canoes to protect against damage from scratches and sharp impacts.

**Stems** – The pointy ends of a canoe hull. What you remove along with the sticks and seeds.

**Stern** – See bow. The stern is the part you don't see, provided you are sitting in the boat facing the right direction.

**Stern Paddler, Stern man, Stern Person** – The person who paddles from the rear of a two-man canoe

**Strainer** – Woody peril. Strainers are trees that have fallen over into the river, sometimes including other trees and debris that have washed up against the original tree. Consider these hazardous to your health. Called a strainer because the water will go thorough, but large particulate matter like you and your boat will not. Ponder the consequences.

**Sweeper** – Trees or branches that overhand the river, or sometimes just barricade the river with their branches. Before those overhanging branches knock you out of the boat you'll have a face full of spiders, hornet nests, assorted rusty fish hooks and something brown and disgusting and you really don't want to know what that was, do you? Don't worry about it, you are taking a bath in a second anyway.

**Sweep boat** – The last boat in a group. This is a good position for an experienced paddler, who can ride herd and bring up the rear.

**Sweep Stroke** – Stroke used to turn the boat to the side opposite the paddle by reaching out and forward and pulling the blade in an arc from bow to stern.

**Take-out** – The ending point of a paddling trip where you take your boat out of the water and put it back on the canoe trailer.

**Tandem** – A two-person canoe.

**Throw Rope** – AKA Throw Bag. Floating rope in a throwable bag used for rescue. Since it is difficult to throw a rope to yourself you better hope your friends carry one too. For that reason, they make ideal Christmas gifts.

**Thwart** – The crosspiece between the gunwales that braces the sides of the canoe. See Yoke.

**Tie-Downs** – Ropes or lines used to secure a boat to the car top/canoe trailer. Boats should have belly lines (often tied off of the rack) and bow and stern lines tied off to the car.

**Trim** – The angle of the boat in the water along the keel line. Heading downwind the boat may perform better bow light. Into the wind, bow heavy or neutral may be advantageous. Trim can be altered by shifting gear, moving a sliding seat or knocking your bowman out of the boat with a convenient low-slung tree limb.

**Trip leader/coordinator** – A god-like creature who has volunteered shoulder the burden of responsibility, make arrangements, coordinate meeting times and organize the shuttle, not to mention leading who-knows-what down the river of his or her choice.

**Tumblehome** – The cross-section shape of a hull that decreases in width from the waterline to the gunwales. Not to be confused with stumble home, which is what you do after the post-paddling libations have been consumed.

**Undercut** – A shelf, rock or ledge with a cavity or recess below water. Avoid at all costs, even if this means flipping over from the proscribed feet-first position and swimming for your life. Better battered and bruised than stuffed back in an undercut trying to hold your breath for several days.

**Volume** – The total overall capacity of a hull. The knob you don't touch in my truck if you are a shuttle passenger.

**Wake** – The temporary trail in the water behind the canoe; also called the "wash." Beginning canoeists should peek occasionally at their wake to see if it is a straight line, which indicates good directional control.

**Wet Suit** – A form-fitting neoprene suit that helps prevent hypothermia by trapping a thin layer of water between the neoprene and your skin. Or a thin layer of urine. Combine a colorful wet suit with a matching spray skirt and you too can live out a secret fantasy life as an incontinent transvestite superhero.

**Yard Sale** – The appearance of the downstream eddies when your gear floats away after a capsize. See a good reason to write your name on your gear?

**Yoke** – A scalloped amidships thwart that rests on your shoulders when portaging a canoe. After several hundred yards you will begin to appreciate the wonder that is lightweight Kevlar construction.

**Z-drag** – No, it's nothing to do with inhaling a hand rolled Zig Zag. It's a rescue rope technique using pulleys or carabineers for mechanical advantage to free a pinned boat. The river runner's version of Archimedes' big enough lever.

---