

Safety Plan

Safety is the responsibility of everyone in the canoe, all of the time. It is not just the steersperson or coach's job. Please closely review all of the guidelines below.

Safety Equipment in the Canoe

1. Each paddler must have a properly fitted personal flotation device on them or under their seat (see conditions for required wearing of PFDs).
2. All paddlers must have on their person a loud, easily accessible whistle.
3. Steersperson will ensure at least one operable cell phone in a waterproof container is secured in the canoe.
4. It is recommended the steersperson have an air horn easily accessible to them while paddling.
5. At least two bailers, one 5 gallon and one small, must be secured in the canoe.
6. Huli straps or other aids to re-entering the canoe from the water must be in the canoe.
7. In times of low light, running lights with operable batteries must be mounted in the canoe.
8. Steersperson will ensure at least one handheld flashlight, preferably waterproof and floatable, is easily accessible to them during times of low light.
9. Paddlers and steersperson will check the canoe every time it goes out to ensure rigging ropes, rigging straps, and draining plugs are secure.

Huli Prevention and Recovery

1. All paddlers will watch the huli prevention and recovery videos on the POCC website at least once a year, and will sign off on a provided checklist that they have done so.
2. In-water huli recovery drills will be held by the club on an annual basis, weather and conditions permitting. All paddlers must successfully participate in righting the canoe, climbing back into it from the water, and safely bailing water out.
3. At the beginning of each practice, Steersperson will review with paddlers their roles in preventing and recovering from a huli.
4. While entering, walking through, and exiting canoes at the dock, paddlers will keep their weight leaning towards the ama side of the canoe.
5. Until everyone is seated or has exited the canoe, paddlers already seated will lean towards the ama.
6. All paddlers will keep their bodies centered while paddling in the canoe – no leaning towards the right (non-ama) side at any time.
7. Caller will initiate switches when conditions are safe: e.g., holding the count when navigating a steep wake.
8. If the ama starts to lift from the water, paddlers can shift their hip left and/or lean left to counter balance. Additionally, a paddle brace on the left can also be done (a technique to practice).
9. Paddlers will wet the rigging lines in dry weather.
10. If picking up garbage or other items from the water, the steersperson will bring up the canoe so the item is close to the left side.
11. If wind and/or waves pick up during practice, steersperson will consider paddling close to shore for calmer conditions and to have the shoreline easily accessible in the event of a huli. Care must be taken to avoid pilings and other obstacles close to the shoreline.
12. At any time the steersperson may ask seat 5 or all seats to remain paddling on the left until further instruction.

13. If thunder and lightening occur during practice, the canoe will make a hasty return to the dock.
14. When the canoe is at rest, paddlers in seats 2 and 4 will lean their arms out on the iakus for canoe stability, particularly if there is wind or waves.

Other Safety Measures

1. Paddlers will wear clothing appropriate for weather conditions and paddling. Synthetic or lightweight wool clothing is recommended for all conditions, particularly cold, wet weather. Neoprene or similar articles can also be worn in cold conditions. Cotton is okay when weather conditions are very warm and dry. Heavy boots or puffy coats/vests are not recommended.
2. It is recommended that paddlers have dry clothing and/or towels in a dry bag or stored in their car.
3. Inform your steersperson of any medical conditions that may affect your performance or personal risk while in the canoe.
4. If a paddler experiences a medical emergency in the canoe, call 911. Potential sites to meet an ambulance include Fred's Marina, Cathedral Park, Kelly Point Park, and the Sauvie Island boat launch on the Multnomah Channel next to the houseboats.
5. A first aid kit is located in the boat locker. Additionally, at least 6 space blankets will be located there too for emergency use.
6. Seats one and two should watch for debris and other obstacles while paddling and inform the steersperson if it appears the steersperson cannot see them. Those paddlers sitting in the middle of the canoe should pass along any warnings since it can be difficult for seat six to hear the front of the canoe.
7. You can enhance your own personal safety and the safety of others by being physically fit. Don't rely on paddling practice for your sole exercise routine. Strive for strength training and general aerobic conditioning via physical activities such as: other sports, gym work, or home exercise videos (some team members recommend the videos produced by "Team Body Project").

Personal Floatation Devices

1. PFDs from the club locker will be loaned to guest paddlers and persons trying out the club.
2. Paddlers who have joined the club shall obtain their own paddling-appropriate, Coast Guard approved PFD.
3. All paddlers will ensure their PFD is properly fitted to them.
4. PFDs must be worn when wind and/or waves appear hazardous, per instruction from the steersperson.
5. PFDs must be worn when air temperature is less than 50 degrees.
6. PFDs must be worn when water temperature is less than 50.
7. All paddlers who have insufficient swimming skills must wear their inherently buoyant (non inflatable belt or hybrid type) PFD whenever in the canoe.
8. All paddlers using an inflatable style PFD must understand the instructions for their emergency use.