



gscb

Small Craft Facilitator

Skills and Programming Guide

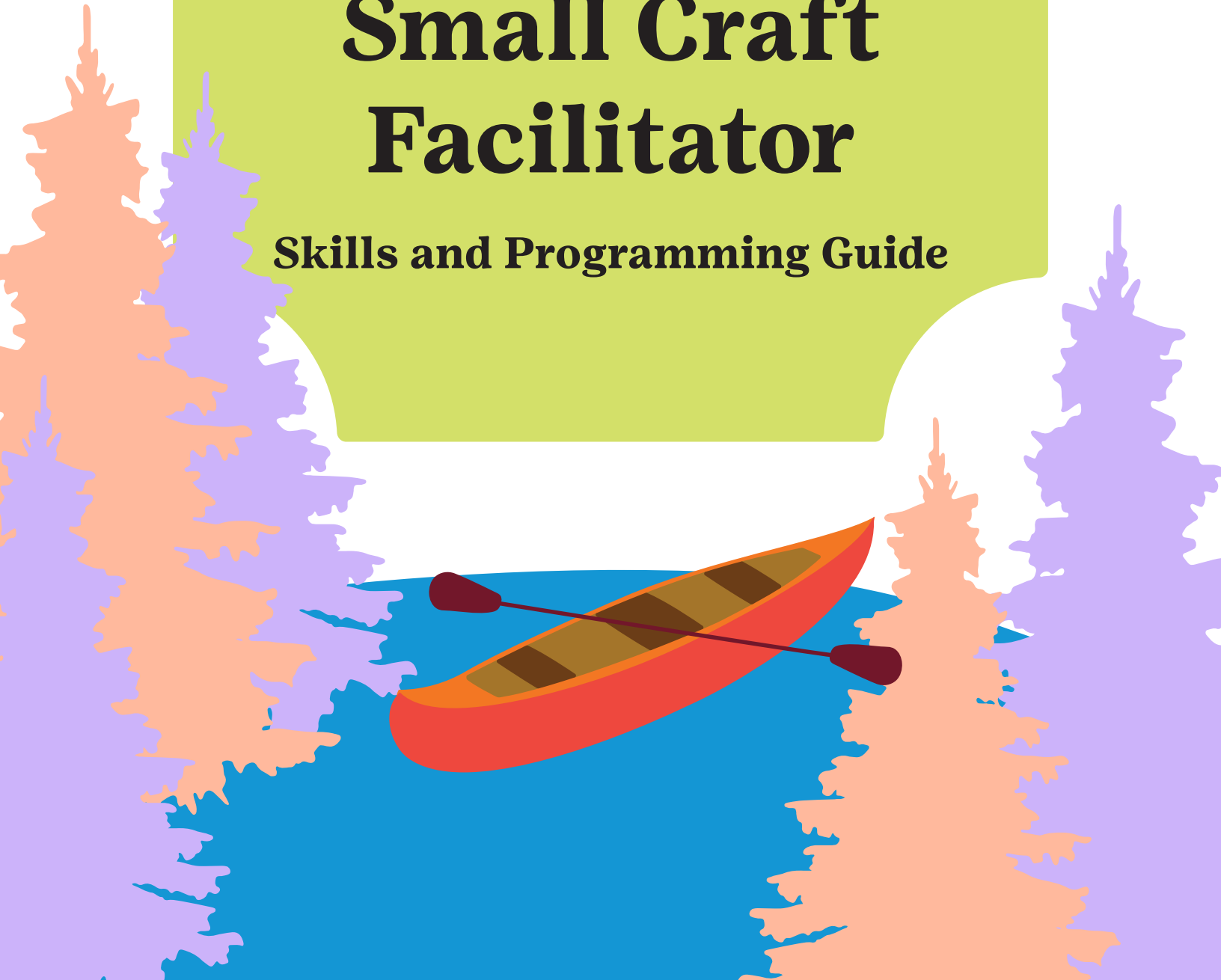


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Planning a Small Craft Activity

Weather

Is there rain in forecast? Will it be too windy? Girls can't hear your instruction over gale winds. Is it going to be hot? Do you need to remind girls to bring water and sunscreen? Are you familiar with the GSCB Weather Emergency Procedures.

Water

What is the water temperature? Is the bacteria level safe? When is high tide? Is the water known for certain conditions? Know your destination! Use the links below to explore all the watery adventure-lands that await.

- [Delmarva Trails and Waterways](#)
- [Delaware State Parks](#)
- [Maryland Water Access](#) | [Camp Todd Water Safety](#)

Equipment

Know what is where before you get there! Are there enough crafts, paddles and oars for your group? Will you need to break into smaller groups or have everyone in different crafts?

For campers with disabilities, an adaptive kayak is available thanks to a Gold Award Girl Scout. [View the instructions](#) or watch the instructional video by scanning the QR code to the right.



Clothing

You are never fully dressed without a flotation device! You also need to wear breathable shoes that aren't too bulky, light breathable fabric clothing, hat and/or sunglasses if it will be sunny. Because the sun can burn our skin through our clothing, you should have sunscreen on underneath, on the tips of your ears, back of your neck and scalp if you're not wearing a hat. Loose items should be secured in a dry bag, or left safely on shore.

Participants

Who will be in your group? Do they have paddling experience? Do you have the right number of facilitators and qualified assistants to support the activity? This is where you will need to check the [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#). Whether you are facilitating for your own troop or for another, this is a crucial step to make sure that you know what the day has in store.

Programming

If you are familiar with your destination, can you point out species and their habitats? How will you engage girls and incorporate observation breaks to break up your paddling time? Is your group skilled enough to incorporate trash clean up and protect wildlife? Is it cloudy enough that you can spend some time safely looking up and talking about clouds, birds, weather and planes? There are some badge ideas within this guide that you can incorporate for various levels. Consider making this girl-led and lean on your junior facilitator to support the programming component. Or, if your girls are older, encourage them to take turns teaching the group safety, skills and techniques for paddling. You can also discuss environmental impacts as you see them, and how your group can tackle making the world a better place and water a safer environment for plants and wildlife.

Safety Activity Checkpoints

In your planning stage, be sure to reference Safety Activity Checkpoints to ensure your activity is appropriate for your age groups and that you are prepared with the correct number of adults to youth. It is important to consider the experience your paddlers have and if you have enough adults. Any activity can be fun until you are outnumbered by girls, and they all need something from you. When in doubt, have more adults participating in your activity.



As an example, say you are canoeing with 8 daisies. You are the facilitator, and you have a qualified assistant. That is two daisies per canoe. They can rotate paddling responsibilities with riding in the middle as a passenger. Their little arms will need the opportunity to take a break and enjoy the ride. You need one adult in every canoe to support the paddling and be able to assist the girls. Even if they have tandem kayak experience with their caregivers. Can you imagine having multiple crafts of girls needing helping from just you and one other person? No. Neither can we! Lighten your load, prevent unnecessary stress, and recruit some of your Troop Volunteers or Junior Facilitators to get on the water with you!

In the case of Brownies kayaking for the first time, practice on shore to get them comfortable with the technique and keep your trip short! They might have the energy to stay out longer but don't underestimate the effects of the sun and how quickly they might run out of steam! Try to keep them in tandem kayaks to support each other minimize the number of girls and crafts you are monitoring.

You can reference the chart below, but for any specific questions or needs, scan the QR code for Safety Activity Checkpoints.

Small Craft Type	Ratio	Levels Permitted
Canoe - flat water	6:1	● ● ● ● ● ●
Canoe - flat water with QA	12:1	● ● ● ● ● ●
Kayak - flat water	5:1	● ● ● ● ●
Kayak - flat water with QA	10:1	● ● ● ● ●
Stand-up Paddleboarding - flat water	5:1	● ● ● ● ●
Stand-up Paddleboarding - flat water with QA	10:1	● ● ● ● ●

Qualified Assistant (QA) is either a junior facilitator OR a registered member, at least 18 years of age who is background checked, able to take direction from the facilitator and supports the activity by putting on lifejackets, prepping the equipment and serves as an anchor in the procession of boats, managing the rear of the group.

Filing a Float Plan

Before embarking on the water, you must complete the [GSCB Small Craft Facilitation Float Plan](#). This enables your Emergency Contact to monitor your safety and for GSCB to document your hours of facilitation as well as collect reports on equipment.

When you complete this form, a copy is sent to:

- Your Emergency Contact's email, to monitor your safety
- GSCB's Member Care team, to document your excursion, hours of facilitation and any issues with equipment that you report

Scan the code to the right to be taken right to the Float Plan submission form. Do this at the time of your departure - we recommend completing this while girls get ready so that you do not forget once you begin instruction. Complete it again when you arrive back on the shore to "check out".



Filing a Incident Report

In the unfortunate event of an incident, it must be reported to GSCB using the [GSCB Incident Report Form](#).

If a craft is lost or submerged, GSCB will need to use this report to complete a report. We must notify the US Coast Guard if the craft is lost on a public waterway such as the Grove Point waterfront on the Sassafra River.

Scan the code to the right to access the Incident Report Form. All incidents must be reported to GSCB within 48 hours.



Emergency Procedures

In the case of an emergency, suspected injury or loss of property at a Girl Scout function, please follow the procedures outlined below.

1. Address the immediate needs of the situation (provide aid to injured persons, contact emergency personnel, etc.)
2. Notify parents/caregivers immediately.
3. Complete an Incident Report and any other necessary paperwork within 24 hours of incident.
4. Contact GSCB as soon as possible at (800) 341-4007 for guidance on any further action steps.

In the case of a severe medical emergency (threatens loss of life, limb, eyes or permanent injury), follow the instructions below.

1. Call 911. Address the immediate needs of the situation (provide aid to injured persons, contact emergency personnel, etc.)
2. Contact GSCB at **(800) 341-4007**. If incident occurs outside of regular business hours, use **Emergency Hotline: (302) 451-9300**.
3. Be prepared to provide pertinent information: who, what, when and how. Provide a telephone number where you can be reached so a GSCB representative can follow up with you.

Do not make statements to the press.

A GSCB spokesperson will call parents/caregivers and make all official statements. Remain courteous and cooperative with the press and public. If you are approached, **DON'T** say "No comment.", **DO** say "All of your questions will be answered by the official spokesperson."

Personal Flotation Device Fit Guide

According to the Safety Activity Checkpoints, **all participants must wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket**. Type III life jackets are recommended and should fit according to weight and height specifications. Inspect life jackets to ensure they are in good condition and contain no tears.

A properly fitted PFD will not ride higher than the ears or mouth of the wearer. It should fit snugly, while also still comfortable to wear. If you can't get it snug by tightening the straps or it rides up higher than your mouth or ears, your PFD is likely too big.

Test it out - With your PFD on, wade into shallow water, then sit and bring your knees to your chest so that you are floating. If the PFD supports your weight and has stayed around your chest, then you have a good fit.

Paddling Progression

Progression allows girls to learn the skills they need to become competent in small craft activities, including how to plan and organize their activities. Acknowledge a girl's paddling mastery and invite her to challenge herself by taking that next step!

Canoe Out

Start with canoes! They're more stable, less prone to tipping and include a buddy (or two)!

Keep trips short - about a quarter of a mile and close to shore.

Tandem Out

When girls get comfortable with canoes, have them move on to tandem kayaks with an adult for paddling support until they get familiar with balancing a kayak.

Make your trip a little longer.

Tandem Out Again

After being supported by an adult, girls should be familiar enough with paddling that they can tackle a tandem canoe or kayak without an adult in their craft. Feeling uneasy about that? Be their passenger in a canoe.

Keep this trip to about a half mile.

Single Out

When girls are stable in tandem kayaks and able to paddle themselves for the duration of an adventure, they can graduate to operating their own craft!

Camp Todd is the best place for this due to the still nature of Lake Williston.

Tour Out

With the confidence of traveling solo in their small crafts, girls are now able to explore new territory with their group!

Travel up Sprite Creek or venture out to Grove Point on tour out into new territory, led by someone who knows the way!

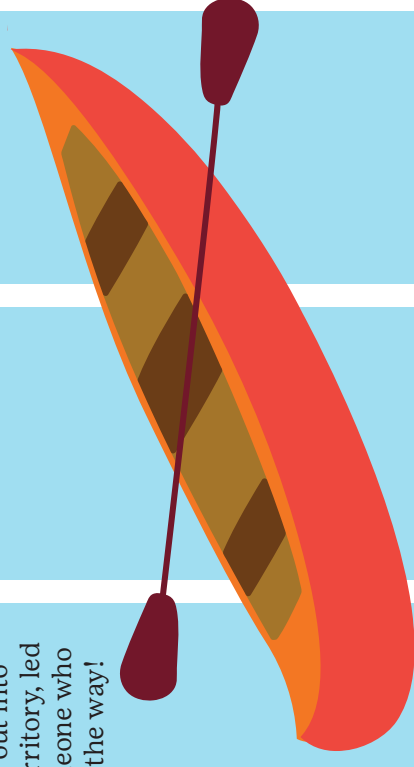
Explore Out

Masters of the camp property waters can start seeking opportunities to explore.

Head out to a new place! A state park, nearby pond or lake, or another Girl Scout property of our neighbor councils!

Adventure Out

Paddling aficionados with adventurous spirits can seek opportunities to do white water rafting tours or longer trips.



Stand-Up Paddling Progression

Progression allows girls to learn the skills they need to become competent in small craft activities, including how to plan and organize their activities. Acknowledge a girl's paddling mastery and invite her to challenge herself by taking that next step!

Sit Out

Start on your bum! Balancing a SUP can be a challenge. Get familiar with the board at your lowest altitude.

This is a good start for girls who have tandem kayaked.

Kneel Out

With a foundation on how to operate the craft established, try getting a little higher up and challenging your balance!

Buddy Out

Take a friend and make your trip a little longer! With little muscles built up and ready to paddle, girls can partner up and paddle out further on their SUPs.

Single Out

When girls are stable on their crafts and able to paddle themselves for the duration of an adventure, they can graduate to operating their own craft! At this point, they may want to start standing.

Stand Out

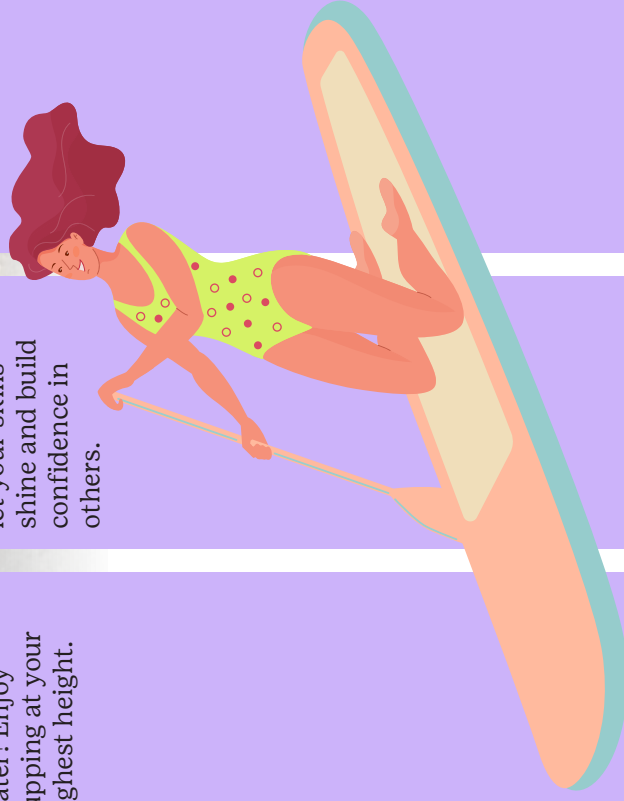
Now you've got the paddling skills and core stability, get on your feet and on the open water! Enjoy supping at your highest height.

Teach Out





When you've mastered the skills of paddling, teach a friend or coach someone younger. At this stage, you can let your skills shine and build confidence in others.





Tour Out

Paddling aficionados with adventurous spirits can travel up Sprite Creek to tour out into new territory, led by someone who knows the way.



Badge Resource

Level	Badge	Description
Daisy	 <p style="text-align: center;">Eco Learner</p>	<p>Nature gives us many gifts. Learn some ways to give back by protecting nature.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be prepared to protect nature before you go outdoors. 2. Keep living things safe when you walk in nature. 3. Learn how to protect nature from trash. <p>When you've earned this badge, you will have learned three ways to protect the environment when you go outdoors.</p>
Brownie	 <p style="text-align: center;">Eco Friend</p>	<p>Find out how to treat outdoor spaces with kindness and teach others how they can, too.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Think of ways to help the outdoors. 2. Observe outdoor spaces. 3. Build a safe campfire. 4. Take care of wildlife. 5. Practice being kind. <p>When you have earned this badge, you will have found new ways to protect our natural world and the living things in it.</p>
Junior	 <p style="text-align: center;">Animal Habitats</p>	<p>Find out more about where animals live, how they play, and how humans can help them.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Find out about wild animals. 2. Investigate an animal habitat. 3. Create an animal house. 4. Explore endangered habitats. 5. Help protect animal habitats. <p>When you have earned this badge, you will know more about wild animals and how to protect their homes.</p>
Cadette	 <p style="text-align: center;">Trees</p>	<p>Find out all about trees: from the shade to the science, the fruit to the forest, and the legends to the lumber.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Try some tree fun. 2. Dig into the amazing science of trees. 3. Make a creative project starring trees. 4. Explore the connection between people and trees. 5. Help trees thrive. <p>When you have earned this badge, you will have gone to the root of what trees are all about and branched out as a naturalist.</p>

<p>Senior</p>	 <p>Adventurer</p>	<p>Go on a multi-day high-adventure challenge: rock climbing, spelunking, ice caving, skiing, canoeing, kayaking, biking, rafting - or a combination!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance your adventure. 2. Get in the team spirit and refine your teamwork. 3. Know your gear. 4. Plan your service to the great outdoors. 5. Capture the adventure. <p>When you've earned this badge, you will know how to go on a multi-day outdoor adventure trip with friends and Girl Scout sisters.</p>
<p>Senior becoming Junior Facilitator</p>	 <p>Paddling</p>	<p>Choose one of three paddling activities - canoeing, kayaking, or stand-up paddleboarding (SUP) - and gain the knowledge and skills you need to have an unforgettable experience.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore the three paddling sports. 2. Learn paddling safety. 3. Practice paddling techniques. 4. Go on a short paddling adventure. 5. Take your paddling skills to the next level. <p>When you have earned this badge, you will have paddling skills and know how to be safe and have fun on the water.</p>
<p>Ambassador</p>	 <p>Water</p>	<p>Find out more about water and reflect on the role water plays in your life and our world.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have fun reflecting on your relationship with water. 2. Celebrate water art and create your own. 3. Find out about water issues. 4. Explore water solutions. 5. Educate and inspire. <p>When you've earned this badge, you will have dived deep into water from it's scientific origins to the joy of splashing around.</p>
<p>Ambassador becoming Junior Facilitator</p>	 <p>Coaching</p>	<p>Understand the key role coaches have in athletics and share your love of a sport.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin to outline your coaching strategy. 2. Conduct a first assessment. 3. Design your coaching plan. 4. Put your plan into action and revise it, if necessary. 5. Attend the big event, and make a final assessment. <p>When you've earned this badge, you will know what it takes for a coach to be successful.</p>

Group Discussion

Supplement your instruction with some important discussion topics. Reviewing these components will help the girls take the activity seriously, understand the risks and the amount of planning you put into the activity.

1. Agenda for your time together

Now that you are ready to begin instruction, let participants know how much time you have and how you will spend it.

2. Expectations

Review general rules for the day and the code of conduct that you expect:

- Listen to the instructor(s) (you and your Qualified Assistant(s))
- Be safe (see No: 5)
- Small crafts are not bumper cars. Paddles and oars are not weapons or extra hands.
- Keep lifejackets on at all times.

3. Equipment

Do a quick review of your equipment and supplies.

- Crafts and paddles are ready and lifejackets are on.
 - If canoeing, do you have a situpon for your passenger?
- If it is hot and/or sunny, do we have hats, sunscreen, sunglasses, water?
- Personal items in a dry bag, safely fastened or secured?
- Are our bodies warmed up? See page 12 for warm up stretches.

4. Technique

Paddling efficiently prevents fatigue and accidents. See page 14 for information on paddling techniques.

5. Safety

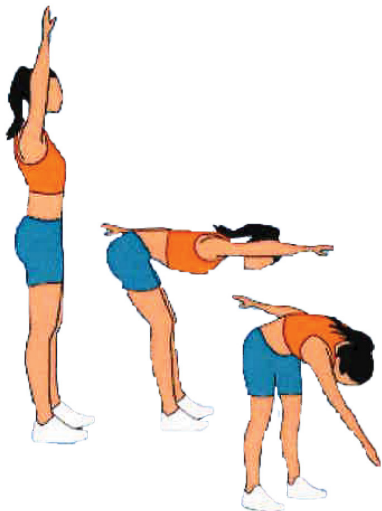
Save the best for last! Ensure girls keep these rules top of mind.

- Do not blow your whistle unless you are having an emergency.
- Oars and paddles are not weapons (say it twice because you mean it!)
- Hand signals are used when needed.
- Do not rock your craft for fun.
- If you feel tired or dizzy, notify facilitator immediately.



Stretches

Help prevent injuries and soreness by warming up and cooling down with stretches before and after you paddle. For all the stretches below, push only until you feel the stretch - stretching should never be painful.



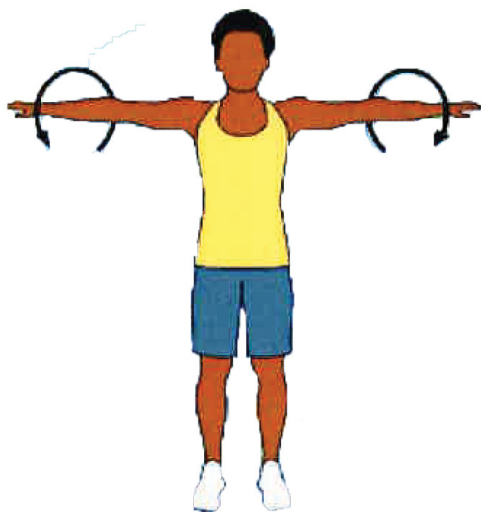
BACK

Stand straight with your legs shoulder-width apart.
Stretch your right arm above your head.
Bend low at your waist so you feel the stretch in your back.
Stretch right arm to left side.
Repeat with left arm. 10 repetitions.



TORSO

Stand up straight.
Bend your elbows and tuck your arms at your sides.
Twist your torso, keeping your chest and shoulders straight.
Alternate from side to side for 20 repetitions.



ARMS

Stand up straight.
Lift both arms out straight at shoulder height, like an airplane's wings.
With open hands, make circles about the size of a dinner plate.
Reverse direction. Repeat 10 times in each direction.



HAMSTRINGS

Sit down on the floor or ground.
Straighten your right leg out in front of your body.
Bend your left leg.
Place the bottom of your left foot against your inner right thigh.
Lean forward over your right leg, keeping your back straight.
Hold for 30 seconds, then switch legs.

Hand Signals

Review hand signals with your group so they know how to communicate, especially if your group is large and you may not be able to hear those at the back. Prioritize “Help”, “Stop” and “I am OK” signals. As your group becomes more proficient, teach them signs regarding skills and behavior.

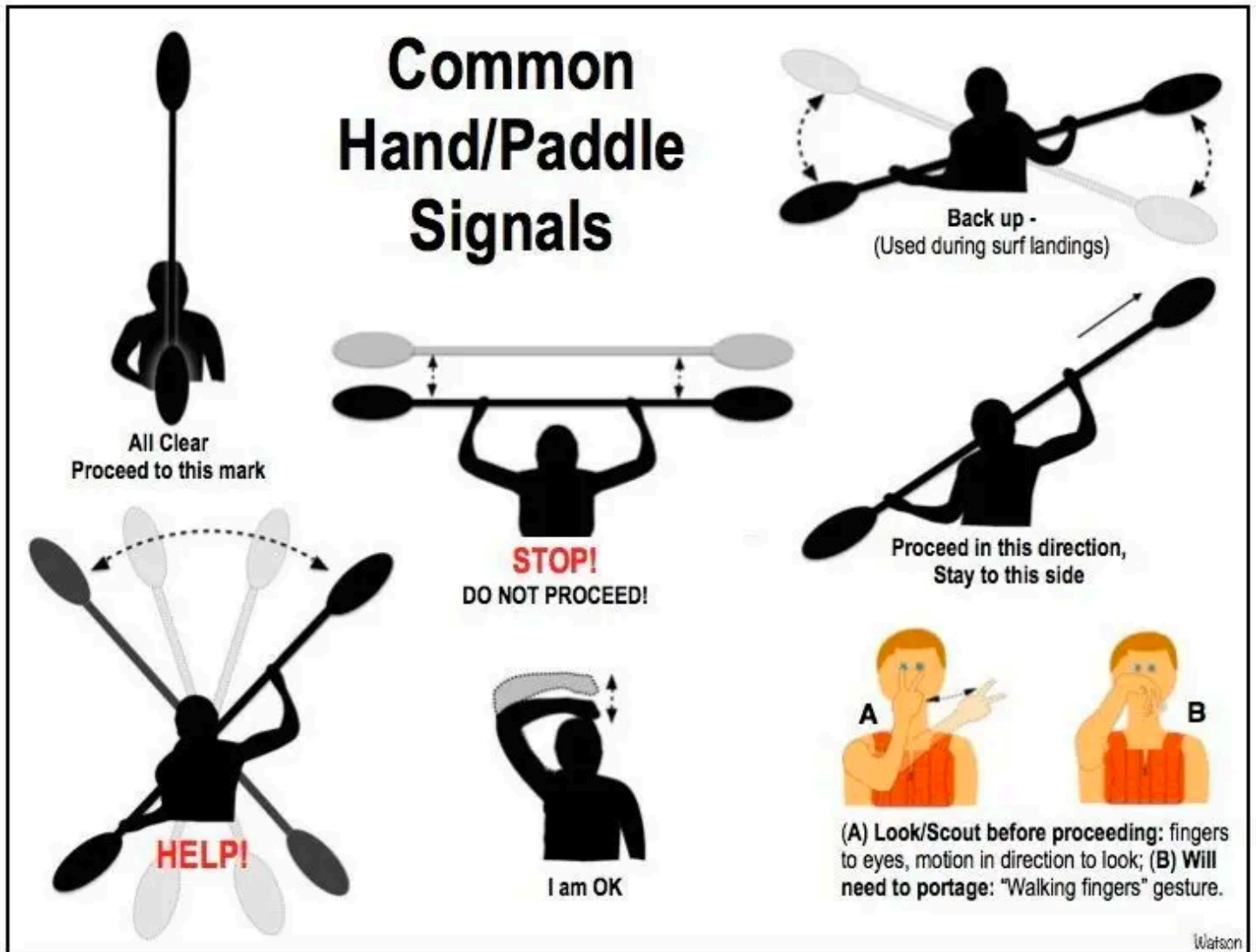


Image courtesy of Paddling.com

Paddling Grip and Techniques

Paddling Grip

1. Orient your paddle blades by checking:
 - Large knuckles pointed up and blades perpendicular to the surface of the ground
 - Shorter side of each blade on the bottom (disregard if blades are symmetrical)
 - Concave side of each blade facing you (disregard if blades are symmetrical)
2. Adjust your hands' position on the shaft by:
 - Rest the paddle's shaft center point on your head and readjust your grip along the shaft so that your elbows are at a 90 degree angle.
 - Bring the paddle down in front of you, creating the "Paddler's Box". Maintaining the Paddler's Box as you stroke helps you rotate your torso correctly.
3. Relax your hands. Make an "O" around the paddle with your thumb and index finger, then rest your remaining fingers on the paddle.

Paddling Strokes



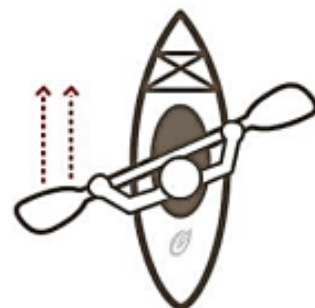
Forward Stroke

The forward stroke is the most fundamental of three main paddling techniques you'll want to master to become proficient. To perform a proper forward stroke, put the paddle blade in the water near your toes and pull it along the side of the craft, removing it when it reaches your hips. Then, repeat on the other side with the other blade. The closer your blades are to the side of your craft, the straighter your craft will travel through the water.



Sweep Stroke

Because going straight depends on keeping your blade close to the side of the craft, it makes sense that turning requires the opposite. Use the sweep stroke to turn. Start by putting your paddle blade in at your toes and then draw a large "C" in the water until your paddle reaches the stern (back) of the craft. When performing the sweep stroke, keep the arm on the stroke side as straight as possible. The farther away your blade is from your boat, the sharper the turn.



Backward Stroke

The back or reverse stroke is the opposite of the forward stroke. It's performed by putting the blade in at your hips and pushing it towards your toes. The back stroke is the least common of the three paddling techniques, but it is helpful for exploring an inlet that's too small to turn around in.

Pre-Small Craft Activity Checklist

Equipment Inspection

- Canoes
 - Haul in good repair
 - No leaks
 - Bow rope attached
- Kayaks
 - Haul in good repair
 - Grab handles in good repair
 - No leaks
 - If included: Seat back attached
- Stand-up Paddleboards (SUPs)
 - Grab handle in good repair
 - Air valve is sealed
 - Fin is straight and whole
 - If included: Leash attached and in good repair
- Paddles/Oars
 - No breaks or cracks in the plastic
 - No breaks or cracks in the wood
- Lifejackets
 - No tears in the foam
 - No tears in the strapping
 - Whistle attached
- First Aid Kit
 - At the waterfront

Facilitator Items

- Rescue rope
- Emergency air horn
- Bilge pump, if canoeing or kayaking

Participant Self-Inspection

- Lifejacket is snug but not immobilizing or uncomfortable
- Sunscreen is on
- Shoes are securely fastened
- Oar/paddle selected is the right size

Post-Small Craft Activity Checklist

- ❑ Instruct participants where to put their equipment. Share with them how to put it away, and why we put things away the way we do.
- ❑ Seek feedback. Ask the group:
 - What did you like?
 - What didn't you like?
 - How did you feel about the activity before? After?
 - What small crafting activities they anticipate in their future?
- ❑ If age appropriate, share information about becoming a Junior Facilitator. Refer adults to Small Craft training, if interested in becoming a facilitator.
- ❑ Encourage group to complete our [GSCB Outdoor Facilitator Survey](#) by having them scan the code to the right.
- ❑ Complete any incident reports, if necessary.

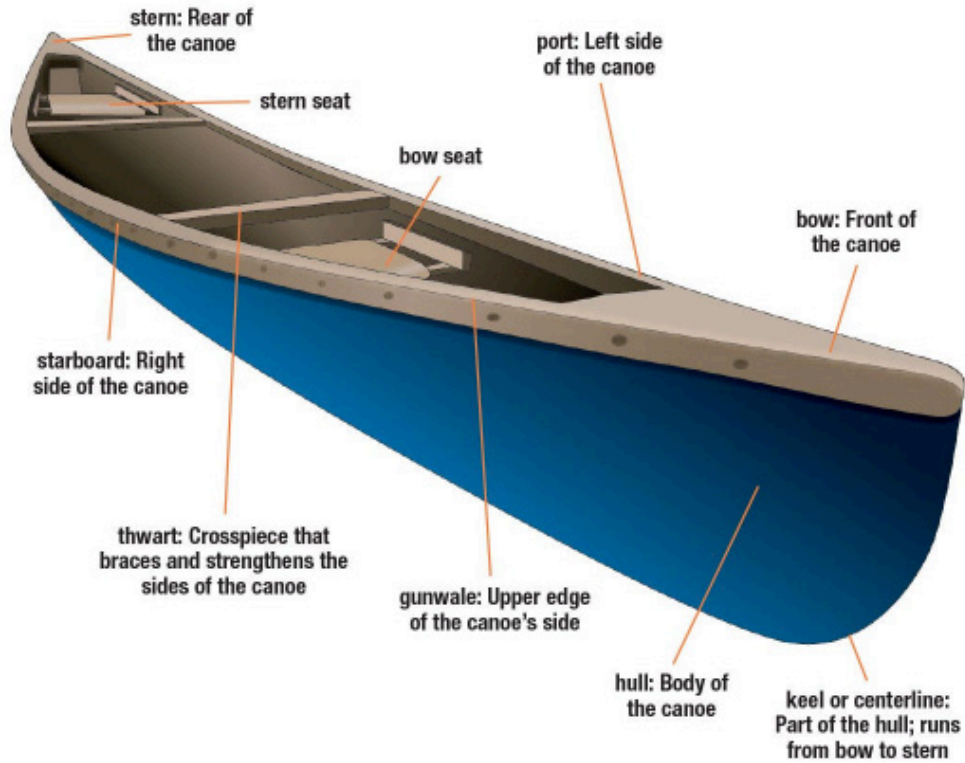


Facilitator Levels of Support

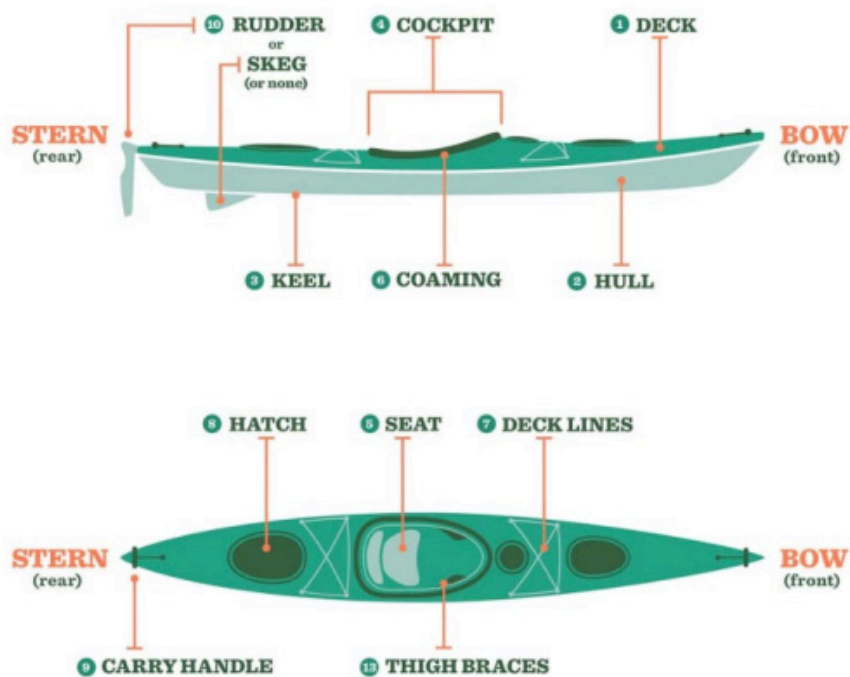
Qualified Assistant	Junior Facilitator	Facilitator	Instructor
<p>Age 18+</p> <p>Registered adult member of GSCB</p> <p>Background Check complete and on file</p>	<p>Age 14+</p> <p>Registered member of GSCB</p> <p>Completes Small Craft Training</p>	<p>Age 18+</p> <p>Registered adult member of GSCB</p> <p>Background Check complete and on file</p> <p>Completes Small Craft Training</p>	<p>Age 18+</p> <p>Registered adult member of GSCB</p> <p>Background Check complete and on file</p> <p>Completes Small Craft Training</p> <p>Faciliates for a current Instructor</p> <p>Previous GSCB Boating Facilitator with 2 years or 12 hours experience</p>

Small Craft Diagrams

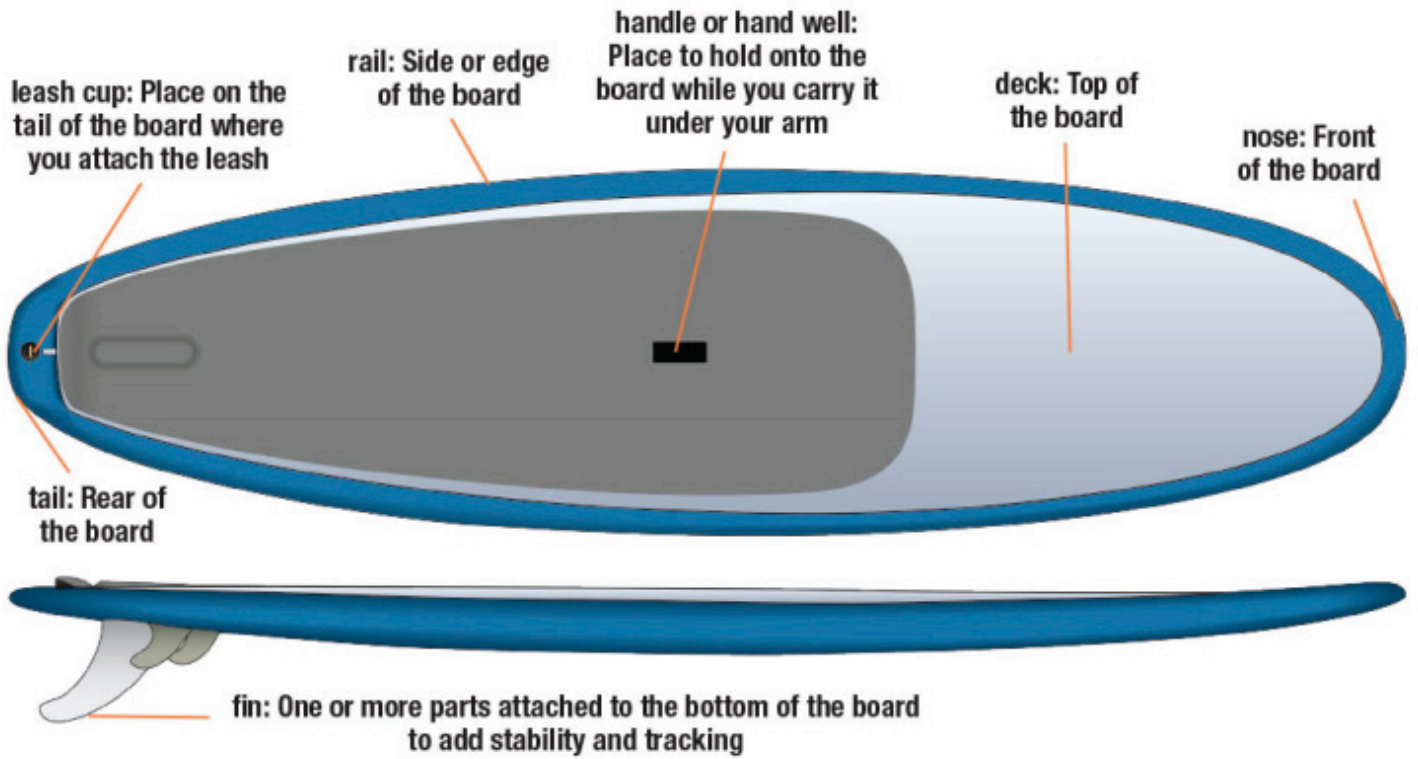
Canoe



Kayak



Stand-up Paddleboard (SUP)



References

<p><u>GSCB Incident Report Form</u></p>	
<p><u>GSCB Outdoor Facilitator Survey</u></p>	
<p><u>GSCB Small Craft Facilitation Float Plan</u></p>	
<p><u>Safety Activity Checkpoints</u></p>	
<p>Other Links</p>	<p><u>Kayaking Kids</u> <u>Delmarva Trails and Waterways</u> <u>Delaware State Parks</u> <u>Maryland Water Access</u> <u>Camp Todd Water Safety</u></p>