

Paddle Talk Outline

Holding the Paddle

1. Do not dig the paddles in the sand or throw them
2. Hold the paddle with the long edge of the paddle blade on the top and the concave side facing the paddler (the ETC sticker will be on the right hand side).
3. Hold paddle so that elbows are at a 90 degree angle when the paddle is balanced on the head
4. Hands are evenly spaced from the paddle blades
5. Hand grip is loose
6. If using feathered paddles, explain rotating the blade with each stroke

Forward Stroke

1. Extend paddle to have blade enter the water at the foot with paddle just below the surface of the water
2. Rotate the torso so the paddle moves through the water until it gets to the seat of the kayak
3. Vertically remove the paddle from the water
4. Extend the paddle and enter it into the water on the other side of the kayak
5. In double and triple kayaks, the person on the front cockpit sets the pace and the other two paddlers follow

Back Stroke

1. The back stroke is used to move backward and also to stop
2. Keep the paddle in the same orientation (do not flip it over so the power face is forward)
3. Enter the blade into the water as far back as possible behind the cockpit
4. Rotate so the paddle moves through the water until it reaches the seat of the kayak
5. Vertically remove the paddle from the water
6. Enter the blade in the same position on the other side of the kayak

Sweep Strokes

1. Sweep strokes are used to make tight turns
2. A forward sweep begins at the feet and extends to the back of the kayak
3. Use a forward sweep on the opposite side of the desired turning direction
4. A back sweep begins as far back as possible behind the cockpit and extends to the feet
5. Use a back sweep on the same side as the desired turn
6. For the most efficient turn, the person in the bow of the kayak will do a forward sweep, and the person in the stern of the kayak will do a back sweep

Tips

- Have participants get in their pairs and sit one in front of the other as they would in a boat
- Have extra Guides rotate around the group to provide pointers and make corrections