



**Session 1**

**Module 2**

**Duration** – 60 min

## New Skills

Introduction to Safety & Equipment

Basic Positions & Movements

## Prep

Consult master checklist. Have experienced rowers available to assist with boat stability. Have ergs available. For OTW session have boat and oars ready on water secured at the slip and ready to go. The reason for this is that we want this session to get the rowers hooked on the sport before they learn the full works. They will cover carrying and launching in Module 3. Basic safety briefing will be covered. It is challenging to coach large groups from a launch. Consider having coaches in the crew, as cox or steerer.

## Alternative Plan

This session can be conducted on erg in its entirety. Change can be made from boat to erg if needed due to weather conditions at any time.



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## Session

### Crew Brief

- Explain the goal of the session is to learn posture, grip and the basic movements of the rowing stroke (arms, body, legs) in the boat – (a knowledge transfer from what they learned on the erg in Module 1)
- Show them the boat they will be rowing in this session and make them aware that there is both sculling and sweep rowing, using pictures or pointing to passing crews.
- If going OTW isn't feasible explain why, stressing the safety reasons.
- Check that each rower is alert and ready for this physical challenge, and give them any basic safety info they need for this session (paying attention, and waiting for instructions).

### Skill 2 - Getting into the Boat

For this session the boat should already be on the water with the oars in the gates and ready to go. Getting the boat on and off the water will be covered in Module 3. Ensure the boat will be adequately stable for beginners by having experienced rowers in the boat, at least 1 sculler, or 1 sweep rower on each side. We want to have the boat well balanced so that rowers can feel safe, and learn to move with the blades squared before they learn the skills of feathering.

- Explain the importance of making sure someone experienced is holding the boat before any rower gets in.
- Explain and then demonstrate how to hold the boat with one hand over, one hand under the rigger, near the gate, and being secure on your feet on the slip.
- Have an experienced rower demonstrate how to get into the boat as you commentate

Stepping in, putting feet between slides, far foot first, facing the back

Hands on each side of boat, 2nd foot in

Sit on seat, without moving hands

Put far oar out with spoon flat on water

Pull handle into body and lean over it as feet go in shoes/straps

- Show how the oar fits into the gate – flat sides of sleeve fit with flat sides of gate at square for rowing and flat for not rowing (for safety/balance).



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**Explain the safe position (legs down straight, hands & handle close to body, oars flat on the water.) Make sure the rower understands that whenever they are not rowing this should be their default position, even when the boat is moving.**

- Demonstrate bringing the oar across the boat and the same sequence in reverse for getting out of the boat.
- One at a time have each rower get into the boat, with coach making corrections and giving encouragement as needed. Non swimmers should not enter the boat. As each rower gets in have them;

Make sure foot stretcher is adjusted correctly.

Demonstrate grip, posture and safety position

Put blade to square and then to flat/feather so they feel the difference

Find the natural depth of the oar in the water by setting the blade in square and taking pressure off of the oar handle

### **Skill 3 – Grip**

Explain and demonstrate the correct grip for sweep or sculling. As we will not be feathering in this module you should only focus on holding the handle correctly.

### **Sculling**

- Loose grip, with oar handle in the fingers, not the palm
- Wrist flat
- Thumb over end of handle to apply pressure outward against the gate
- Crossover – right hand leads in, left hand leads out. (Left hand always further away from body)





## Session 1

### Module 2

Duration – 60 min

#### Sweep

- Loose grip with oar handle in the fingers, not the palm, thumbs underneath for grip.
- Wrists flat
- Little finger on outside hand over, or at end, of oar handle
- Hands comfortably apart (1-2 fists apart)
- Outside hand is a 'hook' to draw the oar
- Inside hand will turn the oar flat & square (later)



At this point check conditions and if unsuitable to proceed then get crew off the water and change to ergs and reinforce sequence as Module 1. (Secure boats and recover later)

#### Skill 4 – Arms

Once they are all comfortable and ready have them number off and push away from slip with all crew in safe position. Tell them that they shouldn't do anything in the boat until the cox or coach tells them to.

- When clear of the slip have them carry out a simple balance drill. Each person should raise and lower their hands keeping the blade flat on the water, to see the control they have on the boat and the importance of keeping the hands at the same height. (Have 1 oar on each side of the boat in experienced hands).
- While the rest of the crew sits the boat level, start rowing arms only in 1 or 2's, reminding them of the sequence exercise you've done on the erg.

Start with blades squared and buried, body at 11 o'clock.



Push hands down to the legs to extract the blade, push hands towards knees, lift hands to drop blade in the water, draw through water covering only spoon of the blade.

If sculling, left over right with left slightly further away than right, no separation.





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Draw oar handle towards the body in a straight line. The blade should stay just buried in the water.

Encourage them to take their time, keeping movements slow and relaxed. Correct any poor posture or grip.

When satisfied they have the movement mastered return them to safe position.

Rotate through the rowers/2's until all have had a chance to row.

#### **Skill 5 – Arms & Body**

Introduce arms and body, moving through rowers in 1 or 2's

Swinging from hips to a 1 o'clock position (once arms are straight).

Keeping shoulders relaxed (and low).

Swing from the hips should be controlled, core is engaged.

When drawing the oars, arms remain straight until body is at 11 o'clock, then draw through with arms to meet the body. Check posture.

Ensure they feel the difference now they have added the body movement.

Rotate through rowers and return to safe position.

Check on rowers fatigue level, both physically and mentally. If you notice a loss of concentration it is time to end the session. Allow plenty of time to get back to the slip and away.

#### **Skill 6 – Arms, Body & Legs**

Introduce arms, body and legs, reminding them of the sequence and movements introduced on the erg at the beginning of the session. Moving through rowers in 1 or 2's

Starting arms and body, then introduce knees up a little once body is at 1 o'clock position but before oar is in the water.



Slowly have them lengthen the slide until shins are vertical

Stress the need to maintain control on the slide and to complete all movement in the proper sequence.

Rotate rowers and return to safe position.



After you've worked through the crew, making corrections as necessary, return to slipway. Use the experienced rowers to turn the boat, having the rowers pay attention to how it is done and how to balance the boat. Letting them know they will learn turning soon.

If time and skill levels allow, you can bring more of the crew rowing together at once on the way back to the slip. If technique starts to break down return to fewer rowers rowing.

Once back at the slip talk the rowers through getting out of the boat safely.

**Note on sequence** – Coaches should consider whether starting the sequence at frontstops and keeping arms straight would work to reduce the bad habits of shoulder lifting and bent arm catches. The body and arm phases could be added in this sequence. If this is done then the sequence may be applied in following modules also.

**Crew Debrief** – Whether the session was conducted on the ergs or in the boat the rowers had a lot of information and new skills to absorb in this session. Thank them for their time, effort and attention. Encourage them to share their thoughts on the session, dig for information from them. Make sure they leave/are collected promptly and they know when the next session is scheduled and any special instructions.

**Conclusion:**

At the end of the session the rowers should be able to:

- Properly get in and out of the boat.
- Explain and demonstrate the basic sequence of the rowing stroke – arm/body/legs.
- Leave the session smiling; the introduction to these skills should be an enjoyable one.