

Halton Outdoor Club Pre Launch Shoreline Safety Meeting

PFDs on, Sprayskirts on; Kayaks, equipment on the shore; Ready to go!

Introduce each other. (This is especially important if there are unfamiliar participants.)

Go over the equipment safety requirements for both day trips and multi day trips, which includes Transport Canada requirements (See below)

- A properly fitting PFD or lifejacket must be worn at all times while in your kayak; Inflatable PFDs are not permitted by HOC
- One (1) buoyant heaving line at least 15 m (49'3") long; One (1) bailer OR One manual bilge pump; One (1) pealess whistle; If paddling before sunrise or after sunset or in periods of restricted visibility like fog, one (1) all-round light (A light showing an unbroken light over an arc of the horizon of 360 degrees); For multi day trips, one (1) magnetic compass (handheld or deck); For kayaks over 6m (19'8"): One (1) watertight flashlight with working batteries AND Six (6) flares of Type A (Rocket parachute flare), Type B (Multi Star flare) Type C (Hand flare) Type D (Smoke Signal), however, only two (2) can be Type D
- Inflatable boats are not permitted. A minimum of one spare paddle per 2 participants
- Kayak with sealed fore and aft bulkhead compartments unless the paddle has been specified to permit recreational boats
- A spray skirt is required unless you are in a recreational boat (a boat which lacks either a fore or aft sealed bulkhead) or on a Grade A trip

Ask, "**Does everyone have all the proper equipment?**"

Ask, "**Has everyone done their wet exit practice within the past 12 months?**"

Go over the HOC On the Water Safety Rules and then (See below)

- Rule #1: Wherever you are, you must be within 2 kayak lengths from another paddler to form a pod.
- Rule #2a: Look out for individuals who get separated from other paddlers more than 2 kayak lengths and RESPOND! (Watch out for the orphans!)
- Rule #2b: Either the separated individual has to slow down to join another pod, or a pod has to slow down to join the individual.
- Rule #3: Closest person to a swimmer does the rescue, unless it's a Class A trip, in which case, you are paddling close to the shore and in the event of a capsize, you will swim to shore; or, a leader/participant can perform the rescue.

Ask, "**Does anyone have any questions about the HOC On the Water Safety Rules?**"

As a requirement for Grade B, C, D trips, ask, "**Can each of you perform a rescue as a swimmer within 2 attempts and as a rescuer?**"

Go over whistle signals and demonstrate paddle signals, hand signals (See below)

- Whistle** - 1 blast means something needs immediate attention; 3 blasts for an emergency (like a swimmer who doesn't surface or lightning)
- Paddle Signals** - Help, Come here, Stop and hold your position; Stay to this side of me; Point your paddle to show direction
- Hand Signals** - Pat your head to show you're OK or to tell the person behind you that you heard what was said; Slit your throat motion for 'No' or 'Not OK'

IMPORTANT: Has the trip grade changed from when it was posted on the website based on the present conditions?

If the trip has been upgraded, have the meeting before unloading kayaks. Discuss the present trip grade and the skills required for this trip. (See below)

Grade A Skills Beginner	Grade B Skills Comfortable Beginner	Grade C Skills Intermediate	Grade D Skills Comfortable Intermediate
Forward stroke ability, Reverse stroke ability, Turning stroke ability, Wet exit	Comfortable forward stroke; Comfortable reverse stroke, Comfortable turning strokes, Able to perform assisted rescue as a swimmer within 2 attempts and as a rescuer*	Confident forward stroke, Confident reverse stroke, Confident turning strokes, Comfortable with performing an assisted rescue as a swimmer within 2 attempts and as a rescuer *, Comfortable self rescue *, Able to tow another paddler *	Confident forward stroke, Confident reverse stroke, Confident turning ability, Confident with performing an assisted rescue as a swimmer within 2 attempts and as a rescuer *, Confident self rescue *, Comfortable to tow another paddler *
	*in grade B conditions	*in grade C conditions	*in grade D conditions

First Aid Kit: Show the participants where you keep your first aid kit in your kayak and how to get to it.

Ask, “**Does anyone have any health or medical concerns or recent injuries that might impact your ability to paddle? If so, please talk to me privately after our meeting.**”

Discuss the grades of each condition (7 of them) that one can expect on today’s paddle (See below)

Say, “**Let’s discuss the anticipated conditions and their grades for today’s paddle.**”

Conditions	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D
Wind	Light Up to 10 kms/hour	Light to Moderate 11 to 20 kms/hour Wind noticeably affects movement of the paddler	Moderate 21-30 kms/hour	Strong Over 30 kms/hour
Waves, Breaking Waves, Swells	Under 1 foot waves; No breaking waves (Waves up to the deck seam; water glassy to rippled; no whitecaps)	Waves up to 2 feet; Small breaking waves (Waves up to armpit; light to moderate chop; scattered whitecaps)	Waves up to 3 feet; Breaking waves up to 2 feet (Waves to paddle tops; some whitecaps; waves becoming longer)	Waves over 3 feet; Breaking Waves up to 3 feet (Many whitecaps; some spray)
Current	None or mild	Mild currents Up to 2-3 kms/hour	Moderate Up to 4 kms/hour	Strong Up to 5 kms/hour - Paddlers must sprint to move forward
Open Crossing	No open crossings	Up to 2 kms	Up to 3 kms	More than 3 kms
Landing Type	Easy, gently sloping sandy beach	Pebble, more steep, sand bars	Steeper slope, narrower landing zone; rocky, slippery Docks	Steeper beach, narrow landing zone, dumping waves
Landing Frequency	No more than 1 km between landings	No more than 3 kms between landings	No more than 5 kms between landings	More than 5 kms between landings
Total Distance per day	Up to 10 kms	Up to 15 km	Up to 20 kms	Over 20 kms

Ask, “**Is anyone uncomfortable with the trip conditions?**”

As the trip leader, determine if there is anyone who you deem should not be on the trip. Please take this individual(or individuals) aside and have a private conversation.

As the trip leader, determine if the group should proceed with the trip.