



# CRNZ Coach Development

Skills and Drills

“have a go” “introductory” “development” Paddler Programmes

# 2010

**Introduction:**

A series of fun activities aimed at developing: Balance, Propulsion and Technique

## Sink the Paddle

**Ability Level:** Beginner to Intermediate

**Equipment:** Rec Canoes, Mini / Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's,

**Duration:** 5-10 minutes

**Purpose:** To successfully pass the paddle under the boat from one side to the other.

**What this activity develops**

- Balance
- Righting a capsized boat

**Description**

Participants pass their paddle under their boat and bring it up on the other side without tipping. The paddle is then passed back under the boat to the original side.

Coach can encourage participants to keep track of number of successful passes before capsizing.

**Key Instructions for Paddlers:**

1. Pass your paddle under your boat to the other hand.
2. Think about maintaining your balance by .....
3. Pass the paddle back under your boat to the original hand.

# EYES CLOSED

<b>Ability Level:</b>	Intermediate
<b>Equipment:</b>	Rec Canoes, mini kayaks or slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's,
<b>Duration:</b>	5 – 10 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)
<b>Purpose:</b>	To develop a “feel” for balance and movement by paddling a certain number of strokes with the eyes closed.

## What this activity develops

- Balance
- Awareness of motor movement

## Description

Paddlers close their eyes and attempt to paddle a pre-determined number of strokes.

This can be done on the jetty or in the boats.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. On the jetty, close your eyes and paddle 5 strokes.
2. Once everyone has tried that, pair up into crews of two.
3. The paddler who is not steering will close their eyes and paddle for 5-10 strokes.
4. After you have tried this a few times, come back to the jetty and switch positions so the other paddler can try it too.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

Try it in single boats once the paddler has lined themselves up for a clear run for 5 strokes.

## Safety Notes

Make sure that crews don't hit each other or other obstacles while their eyes are closed.

# HAND PADDLING / SPEAR FISHING

<b>Ability Level:</b>	Beginner to Advanced
<b>Equipment:</b>	Mini kayaks or slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's,
<b>Duration:</b>	5 – 10 minutes
<b>Purpose:</b>	To maintain balance while propelling the boats using hands instead of paddles.

## **What this activity develops**

Balance in kayaks

## **Description**

Participants paddle their boats with their hands instead of their paddles.

## **Key Instructions for Paddlers:**

1. Paddlers spread out facing away from each other.
2. Pretend your paddle is a spear and throw it in front of you as far as you can.
3. Using your hands, move your boat to your paddle and fish it out of the water.

## **Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:**

- Incorporate this activity into a relay race or obstacle course.
- Increase the distance the participants have to paddle.
- Increase the complexity of the course to paddle (i.e. leave paddles on the jetty and hand paddle around obstacles or through buoys).

## **Safety Notes**

Enthusiastic participants may throw their blades carelessly.

Ensure that all paddlers are well spread out when they throw their paddles.

# FOOTBATH

<b>Ability Level:</b>	Beginners to Intermediate
<b>Equipment:</b>	Rec Canoes, mini kayaks or slenders, paddles, PFD's,
<b>Duration:</b>	5 – 10 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)
<b>Purpose:</b>	To experience how a shift of weight affects balance by paddling with feet outside the boat.

## **What this activity develops**

Balance

## **Description**

Paddlers in kayaks paddle with both feet out of the cockpit and in the water – so they are taking a foot bath.

## **Key Instructions for Paddlers:**

1. Kayak paddlers take both feet out of the cockpit and place one foot on either side of the boat so that your feet are in the water – taking a footbath.
2. Paddle to a designated spot and return.

## **Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:**

Divide paddlers into teams of two and have footbath relay races.

## **Safety Notes**

# RIDING THE WAVES or WAVE RODEO

<b>Ability Level:</b>	Intermediate to Advanced
<b>Equipment:</b>	Rec Canoes, mini kayaks or slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's, Motorboat
<b>Duration:</b>	10 – 15 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)
<b>Purpose:</b>	Experience waves by paddling alongside a motorboat wake.

## What this activity develops

- Balance
- Boat control in wave conditions.

## Description

Participants align their boats parallel to motor boat wake and paddle through the waves as they follow the motor boat. Coach starts out directing the group in straight lines and large turns. As group becomes more comfortable with the waves, turns can become tighter and eventually circles. This exercise helps paddlers to think of waves as a source of fun and skill development instead of a source anxiety.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Line paddlers up so that they are on the outskirts of the motorboat wake and at least 15-20 feet behind the motorboat.
2. Play follow the leader with the motor boat as the leader.
3. Paddlers paddle as close to the “big” waves as possible.
4. Think of the waves as something to “ride” as though they were surfing or tubing.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Lead the group into tighter multiple circles, which creates a bigger wake.
- Stage a WAVE RODEO where each paddler rides bigger and bigger waves until they get “thrown” – just like riding a steer or bucking bronco at the rodeo.

## Safety Notes

Make sure that crews are safely positioned away from the motor. Keep your eye on the participants as there may be some tipping as they practice on the waves. When crews tip, make it a fun event so that they stop thinking about tipping as something to be “feared”.

# WAITER

<b>Ability Level:</b>	Beginner to Intermediate
<b>Equipment:</b>	Rec Canoes, Mini / Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's, Cups (Styrofoam coffee cups work well for this), buckets
<b>Duration:</b>	10 – 15 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)
<b>Purpose:</b>	As a team, to fill a bucket with water using only water contained in a cup on each participant's boat's bow.

## What this activity develops

- Balance
- Smooth boat run
- Teamwork

## Description

Each participant has a full cup of water placed on the bow of their boat. They must paddle a pre-determined distance where they will pour the remaining water in their cup into a bucket. Everyone works together to fill the bucket. Try to see how few trips paddlers need to make to fill the bucket (i.e., paddling controlled and keeping their cups as full as possible) versus how fast they can paddle on their way to fill the bucket. Which way fills the bucket fastest?

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Everyone needs to get a cup from the coach and fill it with water.
2. Carefully place the cup on the bow of your boat.
3. The goal is to paddle to the bucket carrying your water on your boat – just like a waiter.
4. Empty the water from your cup into the bucket.
5. Once your cup is empty, come back to start area and fill up your cup again.
6. Keep your cup as full as possible by keeping your boat as even as possible.
7. Rushing may get you to the bucket faster, but your cup may not be full when you get there!

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Divide paddlers into teams and have relay races using the cup of water as a "baton".
- Paddlers must weave through a course of buoys or other obstacles with their cup of water.

## Safety Notes

# JETTY PADDLING – Kayak Forward Stroke

**Ability Level:** Beginner

**Equipment:** Kayak paddles

**Duration:** 10 – 15 minutes

**Purpose:** To learn and practice the forward stroke for kayak

## **What this activity develops**

- Forward stroke skill used to propel boat forward in a generally straight line.
- Basic kayak stroke from which modifications are made to control and steer boat

## **Description**

Everyone spreads out and finds a spot on the jetty with their kayak paddle. Introduce forward stroke to participants by having them experiment and practice the stroke in the air. The concept of “twist” should have been introduced when teaching the correct grip. The hand which actually twists the blade remains in a constant position with respect to the shaft, the shaft rotates within the opposite hand. To ensure this happens, paddlers should not hold the paddle in a “death grip”.

If possible, have athletes, experience both left and right twists. Emphasize comfort and confidence versus perfect technique. Do not spend too much time on the jetty, but make sure that participants are comfortable with the feel of the motion and the twist before moving into boats..

## **Key Instructions for Paddlers:**

1. Sit up tall.
2. Hold your paddle in front of you at approximately eye height.
3. Reach out and “grab” the air/water in front of you by completely burying one of your paddle faces in the air/water. Your top arm should be bent in an angle like an “upside down L”
4. Pull the paddle face towards you so that the “face is looking behind you”.
5. Once your paddle face reaches your hip, take the paddle out of the water.
6. Bring your paddle forward in the air to the starting position, ready to take a stroke on the other side.

## **Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:**

- Move into boats and have them think about pulling the boat forward to the buried paddle instead of pulling the paddle back to the boat.
- As they become more comfortable with the exit, have them concentrate on sitting up tall and moving the paddle in a rhythmic motion.

## **Safety Notes**

**PULL**  
**CATCH**  
**RECOVERY**  
**EXIT**

# JETTY PADDLING – Feathering Stroke

<b>Ability Level:</b>	Beginner
<b>Equipment:</b>	Kayak paddles, jetty
<b>Duration:</b>	10 – 15 minutes
<b>Purpose:</b>	To learn the feathering stroke with a kayak and/or canoe paddle

## What this activity develops

- Feathering skill development
- Working towards balance in the boat.

## Description

Participants space themselves out along the side of the jetty with a paddle to learn and practice the feathering stroke. Have each paddlers practice putting as much weight on the paddle as possible while feathering.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Position your paddle so that the face of the paddle (the scoop face on the kayak paddlers) is facing upwards and back edge of the paddle is flat on the water.
2. Move the paddle back and forth along the surface of the water as though you are spreading peanut butter or icing a cake.
3. Make sure that the paddle always stays above the water: don't let the edge of the blade slide in.
4. Turn around and practice on the other side.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Move into boats and see how high each paddler can count before falling in.

## Safety Notes

Once moved into boats, make sure that water depth is appropriate for tipping over and easily righting the boat.

Make sure that paddlers aren't too close to the jetty when they are in boats to ensure that paddles, boats and heads don't connect with the jetty when they tip.

# JETTY PADDLING – Draw Stroke

**Ability Level:** Beginner

**Equipment:** kayak paddles, jetty

**Duration:** 10 – 15 minutes

**Purpose:** To move the boat sideways in the water.

## **What this activity develops**

- Steering skills

## **Description**

Participants space themselves out along the side of the jetty with a paddle to learn and practice the draw stroke. Participants will extend the flat side of the blade parallel to the side of the jetty and bury their blade in the water. The paddler will then pull (or draw) the water towards the jetty. On the water this stroke will move the boat towards the side the paddler is paddling on.

## **Key Instructions for Paddlers:**

1. Draw stroke is used to move boats sideways - for jettying, rafting up, or for moving sideways in the water.
2. Paddler reaches out beside their boat with the paddle's face looking at the side of the boat.
3. Paddler draws the paddle back to the side of the boat – or paddler pulls the boat to the paddle.

## **Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:**

- Move into boats and experiment by moving the boat towards and away from the jetty.

## **Safety Notes**

# JETTY PADDLING – Backwater Stroke / Check

<b>Ability Level:</b>	Beginner
<b>Equipment:</b>	kayak paddles, jetty
<b>Duration:</b>	10 – 15 minutes
<b>Purpose:</b>	To move the boat backwards in the water and/or to stop the boat.

## What this activity develops

- Steering skills

## Description

Participants space themselves out along the side of the jetty with a paddle to learn and practice the backwater stroke. To go backwards, the paddler reaches to grab the water behind them and pulls the boat back to meet the paddle. The face of their paddle is looking forward. To stop or slow the boat the paddler buries the paddle face in the water just past their knee and presses against the water.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. The paddler places the paddle in the water behind their hip and in a pushing action of the bottom arm, moves the water towards the front of the boat.
2. The paddle face is then skimmed back over the surface of the water towards the stern to begin again.
3. Remember to keep the edge of the paddle blade above the water.
4. The check stroke is used for to slow or stop the boat.
5. The paddler buries the paddle face in the water (with the face looking forward) just past their kneeling knee and applies pressure against the water.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Move into boats and experiment by moving the boat towards and away from the jetty.

## Safety Notes

# TARGET BALL

**Ability Level:** Beginner to Intermediate

**Equipment:** Rec Canoes, Mini / Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's, enough Balls of various sizes for each paddler (volleyballs, beachballs, soccerballs, tennis balls, etc.)

**Duration:** 10 – 15 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)

**Purpose:** To paddle to an object and touch it with the nose of the boat

## What this activity develops

- Balance
- Steering

## Description

Each participant has a ball the size of a soccer ball. The crew throws the ball as far ahead of them as possible. They then line up their boat and try to hit the "Target Ball" with the nose of their boat. Repeat as many times as desired.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Everyone needs a ball with them in their boat.
2. Once on the water, throw your ball as far ahead of you as possible.
3. Line up your boat with the ball and paddle towards it.
4. Try to hit the ball with the nose of your boat before you pick it up out of the water.
5. Once you have retrieved your ball, throw it again!

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Decrease the size of the ball – tennis balls.
- Turn the exercise into a race with the coach throwing the balls.
- Using a volleyball sized ball, place the ball in the water beside the boat. The crew must work together to push the ball to a target marker and back without the boat losing contact with the ball – requires lots of prying, drawing and communication.

## Safety Notes

Try to avoid having the paddlers throw the balls at each other. Make sure that nobody tries to retrieve a ball that has drifted into an unsafe area of water.

# TREASURE HUNT

**Ability Level:** Intermediate

**Equipment:** Rec Canoes, Mini / Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's, "treasures",

**Duration:** 10 – 15 minutes

**Purpose:** To be the first team to solve the clues and collect the all treasure.

## What this activity develops

- Boat launching, jettying, basic strokes, turns
- Paddling in different wind conditions.
- Team work

## Description

The coach hides a series of small treasures in strategic places that will cause the students to paddle and find them. Treasures shouldn't be placed more than 250m away from the jetty. There should be enough treasures for each team. Coach forms teams by assigning four paddlers to each canoe . Clues are given out on the jetty by the coach as each team completes a leg of the treasure search. To encourage jettying and launching skills, the coach may want to stand back from the edge of the jetty forcing a member of each team to get out of the boat to come and get the clues.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Each team has their own set of treasure that they have to find.
2. Coach has a series of clues to help each team find their treasure.
3. Every time a treasure is found, teams come back to the jetty for the next clue.
4. Work together as a team to solve the clue and then paddle to find the hidden treasure.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Increase the distance from the jetty that treasures are hidden.
- Work in teams of two instead of four.
- Make the clues more challenging.

## Safety Notes

The thrill of competition may cause teams to come into the jetty too quickly and / or rush their launches.

# LEAP FROG

<b>Ability Level:</b>	Intermediate to Advanced
<b>Equipment:</b>	Rec Canoes, Mini / Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's,
<b>Duration:</b>	10 – 30 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)
<b>Purpose:</b>	To complete a longer paddle as team by taking turns setting the pace and leading the group.

## What this activity develops

- Aerobic conditioning
- Steering.
- Boat control

## Description

Participants form a paddling chain by aligning their boats bow to stern in a straight line. The last boat in the chain must pass the other boats and assume the lead. As soon as one paddler reaches the front of the group, the next paddler must begin their journey to the front of the group.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Everyone form a chain by lining up one behind the other.
2. Your bow should be aligned with the stern of the boat in front of you.
3. The group is going to paddle a set distance or time by working together as team.
4. The paddler who is at the back of the chain must paddle to the front of the group to become the new leader.
5. As soon as a paddler reaches the front of the group, the paddler who is now at the back must paddle to the front to become the new leader.
6. Everyone will take a turn at leading the group. Work as team to encourage each other during your paddle to the front of the group.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Have paddlers weave through the boats on their journey to the front of the group
- Form two chains and have them compete against each other in a fun race.

## Safety Notes

Keep an eye on paddlers to make sure they don't get too competitive and overtire themselves too quickly.

If weather conditions change, or paddlers tire more quickly than anticipated, you may have to adjust your original time/distance goal.

# RELAY RACES

**Ability Level:** Beginner to Advanced

**Equipment:** Rec Canoes, Mini / Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's, Batons (you can use balloons, beach balls, cups, paddles, etc. Be creative!)

**Duration:** 10 – 15 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)

**Purpose:** As a team, complete a relay race using various implements as creative batons.

## What this activity develops

- Teamwork
- Propulsion
- Steering

## Description

Coach divides paddlers into teams of 3-5 evenly matched boats. Race distances can vary from 50m to 500m. Paddlers pass objects such as balloons, or balls to each other until everyone has had a turn. The course doesn't have to be in a straight line but can include turns, jettying and other skills the coach wishes to emphasize.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Within your team, split yourselves into two groups – Group A and Group B.
2. Group A is going to paddle to the other end of the course.
3. Group B is going to select a starter.
4. Each starter will be given a ball to put in their boat. Paddle to your teammates in Group A.
5. Once you are within a paddle's length of your teammates' boats, pass the ball to the next paddler. This paddler will paddle back and pass the ball their next teammate.
6. Once everyone on your team has paddled one length of the course with the ball you're finished.
7. Practise paddling in a straight line to your teammates. Use your draw and check strokes to help you get in position to pass the ball.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Have the paddlers pass paddles, cups of liquid, or balls pushed by the boat's bow.
- Have only one boat per team and use the boat as the baton. Paddlers can practise efficient jettying and launching as they take their turns paddling.
- Have paddlers weave through a course of buoys.

## Safety Notes

# OBSTACLE COURSES

- Ability Level:** Beginner to Advanced
- Equipment:** Rec Canoes, Mini / Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's, obstacles such as buoys, buckets, balls, etc.
- Duration:** 10 – 15 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)
- Purpose:** As a team, complete an obstacle course that incorporates as many paddling skills as possible.

## What this activity develops

- Teamwork
- Propulsion
- Steering

## Description

Coach divides paddlers into teams of 3-5 evenly matched boats. Paddlers must complete a course of obstacles as a team. Obstacles can include jettying, launching, drawing/prying the boat to a certain target, paddling a set distance through buoys, passing paddles under the boat, pushing a ball with the boat, switching boats etc. The coach can divide the teams so that only one member of each team does a particular skill or set it up like a relay race where each team member must overcome all obstacles.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Coach explains the obstacle course.
2. Each team assigns a team member to a particular obstacle.
3. When the coach shouts "go" the paddlers at the first obstacle will do their challenge.
4. The next challenge can't be started until the previous one is completed.
5. Complete all the obstacles to finish the course.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Increase the challenge of the obstacles.
- Have the paddlers do the course as relay race where every paddler must complete every obstacle.

## Safety Notes

If including skills such as jettying/launching be sure that the participants don't harm themselves or their equipment in their haste to finish the task. You may not wish to include carrying boats in the course as haste may cause participants to stumble and drop equipment.

# MINI TRIATHLON

<b>Ability Level:</b>	Intermediate to Advanced
<b>Equipment:</b>	Rec Canoes, Mini / Slender kayaks, soccer ball, hills (or other venue for running)
<b>Duration:</b>	30 minutes – 1.5 hours (pending desired length of each event)
<b>Purpose:</b>	As a large group, complete the three events of the triathlon: paddle, soccer game, hill running.

## What this activity develops

- Teamwork
- Propulsion
- Steering
- Aerobic fitness

## Description

Coach divides paddlers into 2 evenly matched teams. Each team is then subdivided into crews of 2 or 4 to paddle in evenly matched boats (canoes and/or kayaks) for the first leg of the triathlon: paddle a 250 metres course that begins and ends near the jetty. Once everyone has completed the paddle, the two teams play a short game of mini - soccer (or other team sport game). After the soccer game, the teams complete the third event, which is to run up and down a hill once.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Coach explains the triathlon concept.
2. The object is not to go full-out, but to pace themselves throughout the events.
3. Once divided into their teams and crews, the paddlers will launch their boats and proceed to the start line.
4. When the coach shouts “go” the paddlers may begin the first event.
5. The coach will coordinate the start of each new event, the paddlers must wait for the coach before going to the next event.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Increase the length of the events: e.g. a 500 m paddle, a 20 minute soccer game and 2 sets of hills.
- Coach can assign a victory to a particular team by assigning points for finishing in first, second, etc. places in each event and tabulating all points at the end.
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## Safety Notes

Hydration may be a concern, so be sure that all participants have the opportunity to drink water in between events and after the triathlon.

# SKILLS AND THRILLS DUATHALON

**Ability Level:** Beginner to Advanced

**Equipment:** Rec Canoes, Mini, Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's, a hill or other course for running.

**Duration:** 20 – 45 minutes (pending length of events and ability of participants)

**Purpose:** Complete a course of paddling and running.

## What this activity develops

- Propulsion
- Steering
- Aerobic fitness

## Description

In teams or as individuals, the participants will complete a multi-event activity that consists of paddling 100m, jettying properly, run a hill (or other course) x2, then launching their boats again and paddling another 100m. Younger athletes will benefit from completing this event as a team of 3-4 paddling in recreational canoes.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Coach explains the event and the course for the paddling and running components.
2. Paddlers are divided into crews (teams) if competing as teams.
3. Participants begin the event already in their boats and should paddle to the start line.
4. When the coach shouts go, the paddlers will paddle to the jetty, jetty properly, do the running the course, come back to jetty, launch their boats and paddle the 100 metres loop again.
5. Paddlers are finished when they have properly docked their boat after the second paddle.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Increase the length of the paddle and running portion.
- Paddling portions include having to weave through buoys.

## Safety Notes

Make sure the participants don't harm themselves or their equipment in their haste to dock and launch boats.

Hydration may be a concern after this event, especially on a hot day.

# FOX AND RABBIT

**Ability Level:** Beginner to Advanced

**Equipment:** Rec Canoes, Mini, Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's, a whistle

**Duration:** 15 - 20 minutes (pending desired distance for paddle)

**Purpose:** To chase and catch a 'rabbit' paddler on the coach's whistle command.

## What this activity develops

- Balance
- Propulsion
- Steering

## Description

A paddler (the fox) leaves the start area and paddles towards a designated spot. After a short time (10-20 seconds) the next paddler (the rabbit) paddles after the fox. When the coach blows the whistle, both paddlers turn around and the fox chases the rabbit back to the start and passes them if possible. You may wish to alter the game by having multiple foxes and rabbits at the same time.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Every paddler will have the opportunity to be the rabbit and the fox.
2. The coach says go, the fox starts paddling towards a designated spot.
3. The coach will tell the rabbit when to start paddling after the fox.
4. When the coach blows the whistle, both participants turn around and the fox chases the rabbit back to the coach and other paddlers.
5. If the fox passes the rabbit, the rabbit is caught
6. If the rabbit makes it back to the rabbit hutch (the rest of the paddlers), the rabbit is safe.
7. Play until everyone has had a turn to be a rabbit and a fox.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Increase the distance between the fox and rabbit at the beginning.
- Increase the paddling time before blowing the whistle.

## Safety Notes

Make sure rabbits and foxes don't ram the other rabbits in the rabbit hutch by accident!

# KEEP AWAY / MONKEY IN THE MIDDLE

**Ability Level:** Intermediate to Advanced

**Equipment:** Rec Canoes, Mini or Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's, a waterproof ball

**Duration:** 10 - 15 minutes

**Purpose:** To keep the ball away from a designated paddler (monkey) by tossing it back and forth with paddles.

## What this activity develops

- Balance
- Steering

## Description

Paddlers form a circle with one paddler in the middle (the monkey). The paddlers toss a waterproof ball such as a polo ball back and forth across the circle with their paddles. The designated 'monkey' tries to steal the ball. Paddlers will have to focus on keeping their balance as they toss the ball back and forth and also on steering skills to maneuver their boats to catch the ball.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Once paddlers are on the water, the Coach will pick the first monkey.
2. Paddlers form a large circle with the monkey in the middle of the circle.
3. Using paddles, toss the ball back and forth across the circle, trying to keep it away from the monkey.
4. Paddlers must toss the ball as soon as they have caught it.
5. Paddlers can not pass the ball to the paddlers on either side of them – the ball must always be tossed across the circle.
6. The monkey will try to steal the ball by scooping it out the air with their paddle, or retrieving a dropped ball before a paddler in the circle.
7. Once the monkey has stolen the ball, they will join the circle and the last paddler to have touched the ball before the monkey will be the new monkey.
8. Play until everyone has had a turn to be the monkey.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Instead of playing keep-away, pair paddlers up and have them paddle a designated distance while passing the ball back and forth with their paddles.

## Safety Notes

Watch for "cannon" balls.

Don't let the participants gang up on a particular monkey – you may have to intervene to keep the game fun and make sure everyone has a turn at being the monkey.

# STOPS AND STARTS

**Ability Level:** Intermediate to Advanced

**Equipment:** Rec Canoes, Mini or Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's, whistle

**Duration:** 10 - 15 minutes

**Purpose:** To paddle to a designated marker and back in a designated time frame.

## **What this activity develops**

- Propulsion
- Check stroke

## **Description**

On the single whistle command all paddlers will paddle towards a designated marker.

On the double whistle command, all paddlers must stop paddling and apply a check stroke. Paddlers can only paddle forward after the coach has given the whistle command. Coach continues to blow whistle commands and paddlers keep starting and stopping until they have reached the designated marker.

## **Key Instructions for Paddlers:**

1. Paddlers will paddle towards the designated marker everytime the coach blows the whistle once.
2. Paddlers must stop paddling and apply a check stroke everytime the coach blows the whistle twice.
3. Paddlers will try to get to the marker before the coach while obeying the stop and start commands.

## **Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:**

- Introduce a three-whistle blow, which means the paddlers have to turn around and paddle in the opposite direction.

## **Safety Notes**

# PAUSE PADDLE

**Ability Level:** Advanced

**Equipment:** Rec Canoes, Mini or Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's

**Duration:** 10 - 15 minutes

**Purpose:** Paddle a designated distance while pausing 3-5 seconds to hold the paddle in the air between each stroke.

## **What this activity develops**

- Balance

## **Description**

Paddlers take a stroke and hold their paddle in the air for three to five seconds before taking the next stroke. This is a good exercise for team boats as it lays the foundation for teaching paddlers to stay in stroke.

## **Key Instructions for Paddlers:**

1. Paddlers will paddle towards the designated marker and back.
2. After every stroke, hold your paddle in the air and count to three one-thousands (one one-thousand, two one-thousand, three one-thousand).
3. When your paddle is in the air, try to hold it still in the ready position – ready to take the next stroke.

## **Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:**

- Increase the pause time.

## **Safety Notes**

# WIDE GRIP

**Ability Level:** Advanced

**Equipment:** Rec Canoes, Mini or Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD's

**Duration:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Purpose:** Paddle while holding the paddle in as wide a grip as possible.

## What this activity develops

- Balance

## Description

Paddlers place their hands on their paddle as far apart as possible. Keeping arms perfectly straight, paddlers paddle to a designated spot. Arms should never bend.

This motion will cause paddlers to center their balance. It may also give paddlers a feel for natural rotation during the stroke. It is important to not give your paddlers too much think about by talking about rotation at this stage of their learning curve.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Paddlers will place their hands on their paddle as far apart as possible.
2. Keeping your arms perfectly straight, take 10 – 20 strokes.
3. After the 10-20 strokes, move your hands in slightly so that there is a tiny bit of bend in your arms.
4. Keep repeating until your arms are back to the correct position.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Increase the number of strokes taken when in the wide grip.
- Keeping moving hands and see how narrow paddlers can make their grip.

## Safety Notes

# **SIMON SAYS**

**Ability Level:** ANY

**Equipment:** Kayaks / canoes, dragon boat, pleasure canoe, PFDs

**Duration:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Purpose:** Develop balance, technical skills.

## **What this activity develops**

- Balance
- Propulsion
- Steering

## **Description**

This game is played the same way it is played on land. Lead the students to mimic skills, which you choose to demonstrate on the jetty. Any boat can be used in this exercise.

## **Key Instructions for Paddlers:**

1. Keep good posture
2. Keep head up.

## **Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:**

Make skills or activities increasingly difficult.

## **Safety Notes**

# Canoe – Kayak Ballet

**Ability Level:** ANY

**Equipment:** Kayaks, pleasure canoe, PFDs

**Duration:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Purpose:** Develop propulsion, steering skills.

## **What this activity develops**

- Balance
- Propulsion
- Steering

## **Description**

Set up 3 or more markers or buoys. Paddlers must try to paddle from buoy to buoy different ways: forwards, backwards, side ways, etc. Have fun with it and put it to music, and give marks for artistic impression! At the very end, paddlers can do a dismount (i.e. jump out of their boat).

## **Key Instructions for Paddlers:**

1. Keep good posture
2. Keep head up.

## **Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:**

- Make movements more difficult.

## **Safety Notes**

Ensure life jackets are used

Ensure a safety boat is present

# CANOE TAG

- Ability Level:** Intermediate to Advanced Canoe Kids
- Equipment:** Rec Canoes, paddles, PFD's, a soft ball (beach ball or partially deflated volleyball)
- Duration:** 10 – 15 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)
- Purpose:** To avoid being tagged by the ball and becoming "it".

## What this activity develops

- Propulsion
- Steering
- Teamwork

## Description

Paddlers are divided into teams of three paddlers. Each team is assigned one boat.

The bow and stern paddlers are responsible for directing the boat and the middle paddler is the ball controller when that team is "it". One team is declared "it" (coach can pick a number and team who guesses closest to the number can be "it"). The "it" team attempts to tag another crew by tagging another boat or crew member with the ball. When another crew is "tagged" they must retrieve the ball and take their turn being "it".

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Three paddlers per team. Bow and stern paddlers are responsible for directing the boat. Middle paddler is the ball controller when your team is "it".
2. "It" team is going to try and pass off the "it duty" by tagging another team with the ball.
3. If the ball hits another boat or crew member, that team is now "it" and they must retrieve ball to keep playing the game.
4. There are set boundaries and all canoes must stay in bounds. Canoes who go out of bounds will automatically become "it".

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Limit the distance that "it" is allowed to throw the ball. For example, the boats must be within 15 feet of each other before the ball can be thrown.
- Make the playing area smaller and make a "no throwing" rule.
- Use other objects: Rubber Chicken

## Safety Notes

Make sure that boundaries are set up prior to the game and all canoes obey them.

Make it clear to paddlers that this is not an opportunity to "bean" the other team with the ball.

# Tip-Tow-Turn

**Ability Level:** Beginner to Intermediate

**Equipment:** Kayaks, PDFs, paddles

**Duration:** 10 – 15 minutes

**Purpose:** To practice good safety practices with tipping, and emptying kayaks

## What this activity develops

- Propulsion
- Steering

## Description

Paddlers are divided into teams. Each team is assigned one boat. The first paddler starts from the jetty / beach and paddles out to a specific point and tips their kayak, and tows it in. Once back at the beach or jetty, the team empties the boat and the next team mate takes their turn.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Completely stop the canoe or kayak when they get to the point and turn around.
2. Make sure after the paddler tips that he / she immediately turns the boat over to an upright position.
3. Avoid the boat touching the jetty when emptying, or using the jetty as leverage.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- Have the paddlers stop their boat, turn it around, and then tip.

## Safety Notes

Make sure that the “towing distance” is reasonable.  
Have a safety boat ready in case of emergency.

# Kayak / Canoe Ultimate

**Ability Level:** Intermediate to advanced

**Equipment:** Kayaks, ball, football, Frisbee, rubber chicken

**Duration:** 10 – 15 minutes

**Purpose:** Score as many points as possible by passing an object into the endzone.

## What this activity develops

- Propulsion
- Steering
- Balance

## Description

Paddlers are divided into 2 teams. One team starts with the ball or object and must pass the ball to other teammates and try to complete a pass into the “endzone”. The endzone may be just beyond a buoy or marker in the water.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

1. Paddlers can not take more than 3 strokes before they must pass the ball, or rubber chicken.
2. Paddlers may not use their paddles to steal the ball.
3. Avoid collisions by taking away “scrambles” for the ball.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

- When a pass is missed, immediate turnover for the other team

## Safety Notes

Life jackets.

Have a safety boat

# Kayak / Canoe Polo or Basketball

<b>Ability Level:</b>	Intermediate to advanced
<b>Equipment:</b>	Kayaks, ball, rubber chicken, football
<b>Duration:</b>	10 – 15 minutes
<b>Purpose:</b>	Score as many points as possible as a team either in a basketball hoop or other net.

## What this activity develops

- Propulsion
- Steering
- Balance

## Description

Paddlers are divided into 2 teams. One team starts with the ball or object and must pass the ball to other teammates and try to score on a net, or shoot a basket.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

- Paddlers can not take more than 3 strokes before they must pass the ball, or rubber chicken
- Paddlers may not use their paddles to steal the ball.
- Avoid collisions by taking away “scrambles” for the ball.

## Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

Paddlers must catch the ball, or it will be a turnover.

## Safety Notes

Life jackets.

Have a motor boat ready for safety just in case

# Scatterball / Pick-Up

**Ability Level:** Intermediate to advanced

**Equipment:** Kayaks, balls, rubber chickens, football

**Duration:** 10 – 15 minutes

**Purpose:** Collect as many floating objects in the water as possible

## What this activity develops

- Propulsion
- Steering
- Balance

## Description

Paddlers are divided into 2 teams. Throw all the balls into the water, making sure they are well scattered in random directions and spread out enough so paddlers have room to maneuver and paddle. The object of the game is to have the paddlers or teams collect as many objects as possible either after a certain time, or after all of them have been collected.

## Key Instructions for Paddlers:

- Spread out and keep their heads up.
- Paddlers must pick the balls or objects with their hands.
- Avoid collisions.

## Safety Notes

Life jackets.

Have a motor boat ready for safety just in case