



2024 Renton Rowing Center Member Handbook

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Welcome to the Renton Rowing Center

Created in 2014, RRC is Renton's community boathouse. Whether you prefer to get involved with a new outdoor activity, be a recreational rower, or want to develop your skills to row with a competitive rowing team, we are here for the Renton community! The Renton Rowing Center develops and supports rowing opportunities on South Lake Washington for all levels of ability and for all ages from 12 to 90+. We help remove the barriers to rowing by providing a host of support, including mentoring, transportation, and nutrition. We partner with the George Pocock Rowing Foundation to provide need-based scholarships to youth athletes so that cost is never a barrier for our young athletes and their families. RRC provides a welcoming place to learn, strengthen your fitness, and forge life-long friendships through the beautiful sport of rowing.

Our Mission

Our Mission Statement:

Renton Rowing Center encourages people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds to discover community on and off the water.

We believe that everyone should have access to participate in the great sport of rowing at the level that is most beneficial to them. We strive to offer programs that range in goals and intensity, from the purely recreational athlete to the gold medalist. The information in this handbook is designed to help our adult members and our junior rowers along with their parents/guardians prepare for the very best rowing experience possible.

We strive for every member of our community to develop a love of rowing, lifelong physical activity, and commitment to health. We believe that rowing offers an experience in which people can develop fundamental life skills in teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and self-discipline.

RRC is committed to creating a culture and learning environment in which individuals can pursue and develop excellence in the sport of rowing. As a member of the RRC community, athletes are encouraged and challenged to learn new skills, gain new strengths, and build a strong community.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Anyone who wants to row should be able to do so, regardless of background or economic status. We recognize that rowing is a sport that has historically excluded many marginalized groups, and RRC is committed to creating opportunities in which people of all backgrounds and identities have the opportunity to safely participate fully in all that rowing has to offer. We work with our participants, colleagues, and community partners to continue learning how we can best effect positive change within our boathouse and beyond into the greater Renton area. Partial and full scholarships through the George Pocock Rowing Foundation are available to help cover the cost of registration and regatta fees, swimming instruction, uniform costs, and transportation for our youth athletes.

Code of Conduct

All RRC members are expected to adhere to the RRC Code of Conduct and to properly represent the mission and values of RRC. Failure to comply with these expectations will result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal from RRC. For more information on our Code of Conduct, refer to pages 7 and 14.



Our Leadership

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Athlete Health & Wellness

Rowers are among the fittest athletes on the planet. The sport's energy requirements are broken down into 80% aerobic and 20% anaerobic energy usage during 2,000 meter racing. It is a strength endurance sport, where the athletes perform 30 – 40 repetitions (strokes) per minute of a high-resistance exercise during racing. Training is rigorous, and varied based on the time of year the athletes are training.

Training includes a variety of distances and intensities. Core strength is a key component to our regimen. Proper technique for rowing, as well as all of our exercises is taught and refined on a daily basis. Our ultimate goal is to keep our rowers healthy by training in a safe manner and avoiding injury.

Illness

If you do not feel well and your health and teammates' health will be compromised by your presence at practice, please choose to stay home and pursue treatment.

We want to practice hygiene and self-care. Take care of your teammates by not attending practice if you are ill and contagious. Good time management is key to staying healthy. Choose to keep yourself and your teammates healthy by staying on top of your school work, eating well, washing your hands, treating your blisters, sanitizing your equipment, showering, and wearing clean clothes to practice.

Injury

One of the most important lessons athletes must learn is how to prevent and recover from injury. While minimizing injuries is one of our top coaching priorities, it is a risk inherent in our sport. Athletes must learn the difference between 'hurting' and 'being hurt'.

If you get hurt, or suspect your athlete may have an injury, please see a professional. If you tell us you are injured, or think you might be injured, we will adjust your level of activity as needed. Once you get a diagnosis, there is a protocol to follow before you are allowed back on the water.

Mental and Emotional Health

All coaches and staff at RRC strongly support caring for both mental and emotional health. We recognize the important role that rowing can play in an athlete's well-being, as well as the stress it can cause. We will always take these issues into consideration when working with athletes, just as we do physical injuries or illness. Any athletes experiencing mental health challenges are strongly encouraged to notify their coach and to seek professional help.

Nutrition

Youth rowers are prone to large appetites to fuel both their growth and their training. The long-term experience and success of any athlete is due in large part to how they keep themselves fueled. RRC coaches advise us to eat natural, high-quality food regularly and often.

Some tips include:

- Stay hydrated to help eliminate injury, maximize performance and speed up recovery.
- Eat a healthy, substantial breakfast every day.
- Eat a full lunch, as well as an easily digestible snack before practice.
- Have a post practice snack within 30 minutes of the end of practice with protein and carbs.
- Avoid processed food, if options are limited, pick the healthier option.
- Consume vegetables, lean proteins and whole grains for maximal performance.

Sleep and Recovery

The key component to development is recovery as sleep and nutrition between workouts. When athletes are properly recovered, their training is maximized. Without recovery, athletes will experience a high degree of fatigue, burnout, and stress. Sleeping well and long enough has the highest correlation with athletic success than any other recovery method that has been measured. It also has significant positive impacts on academic success. Sleep is often the first activity to suffer when faced with social, academic, and athletic pressure. It is very important to sleep as much as possible, with a minimum of 6 hours per night. National Team athletes sleep 9+ hours per night.

Blisters

Blisters and calluses are a part of rowing. Blisters are caused by friction between the oar handle and the soft skin of the rowers' unconditioned hands. Here are some tips on how to care for your hands:

1. The blister is still raised and filled with fluid: Use a sterilized needle to pierce the blister and drain the fluid. Press the blister flat and apply some antiseptic cream. Cover with a band-aid that will protect it but allow air to get in.
2. The top layer of skin on your blister has torn or been rubbed away leaving raw skin. Hold your hands in hot soapy water, as hot as you can stand, for as long as you can stand. This will clean the wound and also gently dry out the skin. Cover with a band-aid if necessary.
3. The skin surrounding the blister looks red and inflamed. Treat as above, repeating several times during the day. If it still looks angry after a couple of days, get treatment from a doctor.
4. The raw skin is cracked. Apply antiseptic cream (Vaseline also works) and a band-aid to keep the skin moist and to help it heal.
5. The new skin has formed but the old skin is torn, ragged and hardening around the edge. Trim with sharp scissors or a razor blade until there are no flaps and the surface of your skin is uniformly smooth.
6. The blister is healed but has left a hard and raised callus. Use pumice, a file or sandpaper to reduce the thickness of the skin until the surface of your skin is uniformly smooth; this is easier after a few minutes soaking in hot water.

For Practice: Use a base layer of medical self-adhesive wrap (the kind used after blood donations) with an outer layer of athletic tape. Applying athletic tape to raw skin will further inflame the skin. Use only as much as necessary. Overwrapping can cause blisters to form at the edges or fold points of the tape.



Code of Conduct

Please refer to page 13 for the Code of Conduct policies specific to our youth rowers.

The Renton Rowing Center's reputation depends on Members' ability to do the right thing, even when it isn't easy. This Code of Conduct codifies rules and policy statements intended to assist members of RRC in making decisions about their conduct while using or representing the Center or its programs. The Code applies to all people involved with RRC. You are required to comply with the terms of the Code of Conduct as a condition of your continued Membership at the RRC. Violating the Code of Conduct may subject you to disciplinary action, including termination of membership. The RRC prohibits retaliation of any kind against members or employees who have made good faith reports of Code of Conduct violations. Report violations to any member of the RRC Board of Directors, the RRC Executive Director or staff. The Code of Conduct serves as a reference for decisions in a variety of circumstances involving the RRC, and no rulebook can anticipate every situation.

Members should:

- Participate positively with good sportsmanship and fair play.
- Contribute to creating a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all members and staff.
- Make decisions which will benefit the next generation of rowers.
- Obtain, use, and share confidential information about RRC members and staff only as needed and with their permission.
- Use RRC assets, including phone and email, only for the conduct of RRC business and in a manner that reflects positively on the RRC and its members.
- Respect and care for our equipment and boathouse environment.
- Members and employees shall have no direct or indirect financial interest, except a remote interest, in any contract, purchase of materials, or activity financed from RRC funds. Reimbursements shall be no more than the value indicated on purchase receipt.
- Members shall take no actions that will compromise the RRC and its affiliated organizations and programs.

Athlete Protection Policy

RRC commits to creating a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all community members. Therefore, we will not tolerate the mistreatment of, or aiding the mistreatment of others, including, but not limited to, the language and behaviors of racism, homophobia, anti-semitism, misogyny, sexism, transphobia, xenophobia, and all other forms of discrimination, retaliation, bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, and sexual harassment. All staff, coaches, volunteers, adult participants and youth athletes are required to abide by our Athlete Protection Policies prohibiting misconduct of all types: bullying, harassment, hazing, emotional misconduct, physical misconduct and sexual misconduct, including child abuse.

Harassment can be a single serious incident or a pattern of unwelcome behavior, speech, writing (electronic or otherwise), or any other contact directed at a person because of their race, color, national origin, gender identity, religion or creed, sexual orientation, or any behavior that demeans or stereotypes individuals in a harmful way, and creates, from the perspective of the recipient(s) and a reasonable person, an intimidating, hostile, demeaning or otherwise offensive environment that is sufficiently severe and/or pervasive to have the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's free participation in the RRC community. Unlawful harassment is conduct directed at a person because of their race, color, national origin, gender, religion or creed, or sexual orientation, and includes behaviors such as malicious spreading of gossip (via any means), hazing; ostracizing, ridicule, unwelcome touching of another person, name-calling, bullying, and destruction or damage of personal property.

To view RRC's Athlete Protection Policy in its entirety, please follow the link [here](#).



Making Our Boathouse an Inclusive and Safe Space for All

While rowing historically adheres to a gender binary, we recognize that our community includes trans, gender non-conforming, and non-binary individuals. In our boathouse we use gender-neutral language as often as possible and respect others' identities and their pronouns. We encourage all of our community members to use language that is inclusive of everyone.

When addressing a group use words rather than 'men/boys' or 'women/girls', use words such as:

- Athletes
- Rowers
- People
- Folks
- Team

When addressing a specific boat rather than 'men's/boys' or 'women's/girls', use terms such as:

- Boat name
- Rowers' names
- Bow seat/coxswain name

Infractions and Discipline

The RRC is a membership organization run on the basis of trust and individual responsibility for one's actions. Coaches, RRC staff, elected leadership (including elected Junior team leadership), or parent chaperones are not 'looking' for behavioral problems. However if a member's behavior calls attention to themselves, then supervisory or disciplinary action may be warranted. Failure to follow Safety and other boathouse rules, boat and launch lighting rules, and other policies and rules can be grounds for discipline. Depending on the severity of an infraction, the RRC Executive Director and the BOD have a variety of disciplinary avenues. Each case will be treated individually. In general, we will follow a progressive system ranging from warnings to termination of membership and/or affiliation with RRC.

- RRC Members, coaches, staff members, elected leadership, including elected Junior leadership, or parent chaperones may issue verbal guidance that will not initiate progressive discipline.
- If a coach, staff member, parent chaperone, or elected leader determines that an act is worthy of a higher level of discipline, they will write a report about the behavior and submit it to the RRC Executive Director. If those parties concur, the report will be logged and placed in the Member's file as a Documented Offense, and in the case of a Junior Member, notification of the action to the Member's parents/guardians.
- **A first documented offense** will be a verbal warning, including explanation of the documentation.
- **A second documented offense** or, at the Executive Director's discretion, the first of a material nature, may lead to a suspension of membership privileges for a period of up to two weeks. Suspension may extend to practice and/or regattas.
- **A third documented offense** may be grounds for termination of membership and privileges including coaching privileges and forfeiture of rack space. A suspension or expulsion will not generate any refund of dues or fees paid or suspension of any amount due.
- If a Junior athlete is suspended or expelled while at an away event and directed to return home, such travel will be at the expense and responsibility of the athlete or the athlete's parents.
- The RRC Executive Director will be the primary agent of discipline. A member may appeal the Director of Rowing Operation's decision to the RRC Board of Directors. Decisions of the RRC BOD are final.



Youth Rowing

Team Structure

The RRC Youth program consists of two teams: **Middle School** and **High School**. We do not sort High School athletes into strict 'Novice,' 'JV,' or 'Varsity' squads, as we want all of our athletes to feel empowered to improve their skills regardless of their experience and current skill set. All of our athletes on a given team can expect to row with all of their teammates over the course of a season, regardless of experience or skill.

Practices

Practices are held at the Renton Rowing Center every day unless otherwise specified. Most practices will take place after school on weekdays; weekend practice times may be utilized when needed. Specific practice schedules will vary by season and team. This information will be available on our website as well as in our seasonal information packets distributed to participating athletes and families.

Fall Rowing: Fall rowing is when many are introduced to the sport, and when we start to build the team designed to develop aerobic endurance and improve rowing technique. Course lengths typically range between 4,000 and 6,000 meters. Called "Head Races", these events are raced against the clock, with each boat looking to post their best time over a given course. Crews are started on a stagger, usually about 15 seconds apart, so that boats are not typically racing side-by-side. Times are then sorted and winners determined.

Winter Training: Winter training is designed to continue to push training horizons and begin to prepare for the spring racing season. Strength and endurance training are the main components of these sessions, and rowers often spend more time on the erg and lifting weights during winter than any other season. These sessions are designed for the athlete serious about improving their fitness and performance in spring rowing.

Spring Rowing: The heart of the rowing season takes place in the spring. Rowers race a variety of sprint distances (based on training plans and venue limitations) between 1,000 and 2,000 meters. All spring races are raced "sprint" style, where boats start at one command and race multiple boats across. Athletes race at higher stroke cadences to maximize boat speed. Spring season races typically lead up to the Regional Championships, where crews entered in Varsity events have the opportunity to qualify for Nationals, usually by finishing in the top 3 spots of their event.

Summer Rowing: Summer rowing is a fun season designed to keep the rowers active if they choose. The focus is to try out new boats and line-ups and have some fun in the sport. Summer is our chance to host rowing camps, competitions and open up our boathouse to the community. Summer can also be a critical time for more competitive athletes to keep their fitness up and prepare for fall racing.

Registration

RRC uses the online platform Teamsnap for all team registrations and payments. Information on specific program registration dates will be shared via the newsletter and program details will be included on the registration platform. Parents and athletes can access the Teamsnap registration through the RRC website using the 'Register' button located in the top right-hand corner.

An athlete or parent will need to create a TeamSnap account if they are registering with an RRC program for the first time.



Required Paperwork

All RRC youth program participants are required to have the following paperwork on file:

- RRC Liability Waiver
- Medical Release
- Float Test (required in order to row without assistance of a life jacket)

Transportation: Parking and Pick Up

Athletes must arrange their own transportation to/from practice, local scrimmages and regattas. Local competition is defined as any event taking place within a 2-hour drive from the boathouse. Long distance travel is coordinated by the Renton Rowing Center for all participating athletes. Athletes may transport separately with a parent or guardian for long distance travel, with written permission from the athlete's parent or guardian.

RRC parents may help coordinate carpool arrangements. Transportation assistance may be available through the George Pocock Rowing Foundation for athletes on a GPRF scholarship. Any athletes requiring assistance to and/or from practice should reach out directly to the Executive Director.

Communication

Email - is our main form of communication for the Youth rowing program. Important program information, registration dates, competition updates and announcements, and more will be communicated first and foremost to Youth athletes and parents via email.

Slack - is the app we use to communicate as a team with our High School athletes. This application allows our Youth coaches to communicate with our High School athletes regarding practice and competition updates. Youth athletes should utilize this app to notify their team of any absences or late arrivals whenever possible.

Coach's phone numbers - Are given out at the discretion of each coach. We ask you to not text or call after practice hours. Youth athletes should not communicate privately with staff members or adult volunteers, per SafeSport policy. At least one family member or other staff member should always be included in any direct communications with individual athletes.

Some discussions may require a meeting of the student-athlete, coach and parent to reach a consensus and make sure communication is clear. Coaches will meet with parents to discuss their athlete **with the athlete present**, unless there are significant extenuating circumstances.

Safety

For serious safety concerns, please contact us promptly including all relevant details. Safety is our number one priority and if there is any concern, it will be addressed immediately.

Medical/Health Concerns

For serious medical concerns, please contact us promptly including all relevant details. We are happy to hear from both parents and athletes when athlete health is concerned. We respect our families' right to privacy.

Academics

Academics are the top priority for our student-athletes and RRC will support students' academics. If there are pressing academic concerns that are not being communicated or other extenuating circumstances that might require an intervention, it would be appropriate to reach out to a coach directly. If it is a message that the athlete is able to send, we expect to hear from the athlete.



Parent/Guardian Expectations & Roles

Volunteering

The success of the RRC youth teams has been thanks in large part to the efforts of our parent volunteers. Volunteering not only supports a quality athlete experience but also provides community and connection for parents. Volunteer roles range from regatta food tents to event organization to merchandise orders and many other needs. Our parent group meets regularly to coordinate projects and ideas for the continued development of the RRC youth team experience. Parents volunteering helps lower the cost of rowing for all athletes.

Communication with Coaches

Parents are an integral part of the youth athlete experience, but our goal is to keep the work centered on the athlete. Parents are encouraged to help their athletes communicate directly with coaches. Any concerns regarding an athlete's health and safety should be raised by parents directly with coaches. We ask that parents use email for these communications whenever possible, and be respectful of our coaches' time and energy – many of our coaches work part or full time jobs in addition to their roles here at RRC.

Supporting Athletes

Parents often ask us how they can best support their student-athletes through the ups and downs of rowing. It is important to understand that athletes will experience the full range of emotions throughout any given part of their rowing career. Here are some tips to help support your athlete:

- Give them space to talk about their experiences without judgment of their efforts or outcomes.
- Ask questions about what they have learned and how it could help them in any given situation.
- Encourage athletes to speak to teammates and/or coaches when they need help.
- Let your athlete choose their rowing participation and competition goals.
- Reach out to coaches if you are concerned about your athlete's health and well-being.

College Recruitment

One of our top priorities at Renton is to develop a student-athlete who loves the sport of rowing. We strive to offer support to our Youth athletes at all stages of the research, recruitment, and application process.

Whether it's helping athletes research the different programs available, assisting the athlete in creating and sending video content of their rowing, or establishing a point of connection with a coach, RRC will assist to find the best fit for their goals as both an athlete and student.

Practice Expectations

We understand that conflicts with athlete obligations exist and we are happy to work with you and them on resolutions, including but not limited to:

- Family needs and emergencies
- Extracurricular conflicts (e.g. orchestra rehearsal, debate club, etc)
- Vacations, with a minimum of 48 hours notice
- Absences due to illness, with a minimum 6-hour notice
- Late arrivals, within the first 20 minutes of practice

To maximize our use of practice time, we try to make lineups before practice begins. Knowing ahead of time who will and will not be available will help with that. Please make every effort to get your athlete to practice on time or early – staff are at the boathouse as early as 3:30pm every day to supervise early arrivals.



As long as we know you are coming, we can include your athlete in practice. If the coaches don't feel they can reliably expect an athlete to be at practice on their designated days, they likely will miss opportunities to row.

Scholarships: The George Pocock Rowing Foundation provides need-based youth rowing scholarships at multiple boathouses throughout the Northwest. Scholarship funds are awarded based on financial need AND the participant's ability to meet attendance and participation expectations. If awarded a scholarship, athletes must:

- Attend 75% of their designated practices
- Attend one community event per year
- Re-apply annually to retain their financial aid

Partial and full scholarships are available. The information you provide will be treated confidentially, and will be used only for eligibility determination. Funding is limited and awarded on a case by case basis. Links to apply are available on the RRC and GPRF websites.

Team Gear: Team gear for athletes and families is typically available to order once during the spring. Order forms will be distributed via email or handed out at parent meetings when possible. We typically include items like sweatshirts, sweatpants, hats, and t-shirts available to order.

Uniforms: Uniforms are available to order once in late summer and once in late winter through our 776 BC team store. 776 BC makes custom uniform items for our athletes, and the items typically take about 6-8 weeks to ship after the store closes as the garments are handmade and custom to RRC. Competing athletes are required to have at least one of the following items for official competition:

- Unisuit
- Performance Tank

Program and Travel Fees: Program fees are expected to be paid by the beginning of the first practice for that particular program unless otherwise specified. Installment payments are available upon registration via TeamSnap when paying by card. Regatta invoices need to be paid or arrangements made before the event or participant may not be able to attend.

Selection Process and Protocols: Coaches will select athletes for specific crews for each competition. This process involves direct athlete comparisons based on training data, technical proficiency, attendance history, and coaches' observations of commitment level, positive attitude, teamwork, and so forth. When making lineups, coaches may need to take other factors into account, such as the schedule of events, impacts on team culture, and long term season goals.

Athletes will be notified of their boat selection prior to race day, typically at least one week beforehand. Athletes should be aware that lineups may be subject to change leading up to the date of competition – for example, if a teammate is sick or has not been at practice. Any questions regarding selection decisions or processes should be asked by the athlete to the coach.

Regatta Preparedness for Parents and Athletes Scheduling: Prior to the season, descriptions of the regattas and scrimmages, and any available details will be sent via email. This will include anticipated dates, regatta locations and estimated fees. More specific information, including drop-off location, final fees, and specific race times will be sent in the 1-2 weeks leading up to the regatta.



Before you attend a regatta, be prepared for anything and everything. The weather can change suddenly, and it's not uncommon to need warm rain gear followed by sunscreen later in the day. Plan on being at the race site for a minimum of several hours. Once your rower gets to the designated meeting place in the morning, you may not be finished until late in the afternoon or early evening. Athletes are expected to remain at the regatta site until their equipment is loaded on the trailer, or they are formally dismissed by their coach.

Some things to pack to make your regatta day more comfortable:

- Portable chair
- Binoculars
- Warm clothes (including gloves/caps)
- Rain gear
- Light-weight clothing
- Sunglasses and sunscreen
- Blankets or sleeping bag for you or your rower to stretch out on
- Water and healthy snacks (food tent provided for rowers at most races)

Race-day schedules and results are posted at a central location at the regatta, and often online. Staff will include this information in their emails leading up to the race.

RRC Youth Rowers Code of Conduct:

The Renton Rowing Center is first and foremost a community, and we wish to respect everyone's race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, political views inside and outside of the boathouse. All staff, coaches, volunteers, adult participants and youth athletes are required to abide by our Athlete Protection Policies prohibiting misconduct of all types: bullying, harassment, hazing, emotional misconduct, physical misconduct and sexual misconduct, including child abuse.

1. I will be respectful of coaches, adult volunteers, and other participants, realizing that my behavior affects others and the success of RRC.
2. I agree to accept and carry out instructions of the RRC staff, coaches and chaperones.
3. I agree to attend and take part in all scheduled practices and activities unless excused by a coach.
4. I will discuss any problems that may arise with RRC staff, trip/overnight leaders, or chaperones.
5. At overnight events, I will remain quietly in my own bed at the established bed time.
6. I understand that ANY of the following acts will lead to discipline, suspension or expulsion from RRC-sponsored activities:
 - Commission of a crime.
 - Possession or use of any dangerous weapon or object.
 - Assault, aggressive behavior or intimidation of another person.
 - Improper possession of athletic equipment belonging to the Renton Rowing Center, another member of the RRC or another team, or theft.
 - Destruction or defacing of property.
 - Disrespectful or harmful conduct.
 - Disruptive conduct.
 - Disobedience of reasonable instructions of crew authorities.



7. I understand that use, consumption, possession, buying, selling, or giving away of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or any controlled substance will mean immediate disciplinary action and possible dismissal from the team.
8. I understand that any general misbehavior or disrespect shown to teammates, coaches, staff, or parent chaperones is not allowed. First offense: warning. Second offense: temporary suspension of practice participation and attendance at the next regatta. Third offense: removal from the team. If I am sent home from an event, it will be at mine/my parents' expense.
9. I will be respectful of other peoples' possessions and property and will refrain from activities that cause damage to either.
10. I understand that I am financially responsible for any damage I may cause when disobeying rules.
11. I understand that any individual's failure to abide by these rules can jeopardize the entire group's participation at the time of the failure and in the future.

Adult Rowing

Our goal is to provide a space for all of our adult members to become better rowers at their own pace, and to provide competitive opportunities for those who want to take their rowing to the next level. If you are interested in rowing with a team, we offer several programs that range in skill and experience level from recreational to competitive. If you are an experienced rower and want to row independently in your own rowing shell, we have (limited) rack space available for rent. Membership and Coached Programming fees are required for participation in any and all programs beyond our Learn to Row Course.

Classes

Learn to Row

Adult Learn to Row (LTR) is a class series designed for adults of all ages who have less than three months of rowing experience. In order to join our experienced Adult programs you must have completed at least one LTR class or obtained permission from the RRC Executive Director. This class will focus primarily on the sculling discipline of rowing. Rowers will have the opportunity to learn to occasionally sweep row in our Adult programs after finishing a LTR class.

Intermediate Adult League

This league is a co-ed, recreational team for intermediate adult rowers, ages 19+. This group is tech-focused with a curriculum that is centered around improving comfort on the water and fine tuning each athlete's stroke in a fun and social environment. Athletes who wish to compete will have the opportunity to learn the basics of race preparation and execution in this class. This program is for rowers with at least one full Learn to Row class completed or prior consent from the Executive Director or a coach.

Experienced Adult League

This league is a co-ed, semi-competitive team for experienced adult rowers, ages 19+. The primary focus of the league is on improving fitness and technique in a fun, focused environment with skill-appropriate opportunities to race at local and regional regattas. This league is for rowers with at least 6 months of experience or prior consent from the Executive Director.



Private Lessons

Private lessons are available to RRC members and non-members alike based on coach/staff availability. Private lessons are subject to separate fees due to the increased impact that they have on RRC's operational costs and weekly allocation of coaching hours.

Fee structure for private lessons is as follow:

\$75.00 / 90-minute lesson for current RRC member, up to 4 participants

\$90.00 / 90-minute lesson for non-RRC member, up to 2 participants

No participant, regardless of member status, may exceed more than 4 private lessons per year.

If a private lesson participant wishes to exceed the number of participants or the time limit, they may be subject to additional fees.

For the safety of participants and coaches, all criteria must be met in order to conduct a private lesson:

- Private lesson is conducted by an RRC-certified coach
- Private lesson is conducted whilst another staff member or certified coach is present in the boathouse for the entirety of the lesson
- Relevant fees have been paid prior to the lesson start time
- Private lesson participants have completed all required forms prior to the lesson start time
- Private lesson participants must wear a PFD, regardless of Float Test status
- Weather and water conditions must meet minimum safety standards (WWETT) according to the coaches' assessment prior to an on-water private lesson
- Private lesson participants must adhere to the RRC Code of Conduct during the lesson and whenever at the RRC boathouse, regardless of member status

Participants who knowingly or unknowingly violate these criteria may be subject to disciplinary action, such as suspension or termination of private lesson privileges, access to RRC coached programs, or RRC membership.

2024 Membership Options

Memberships are required for all Adult participants (with the exception of current Learn to Row participants) in order to access the boathouse. Members receive access to indoor workout equipment, discounted use of our stock of kayaks and paddleboards during rentals hours, and private use of club boats and oars upon approval from the Executive Director. Memberships are required in order to store your private rowing shell or other equipment at our facility.

We have two Membership Fee options available to members at RRC:

- **Flexible Membership:** \$55/month, or \$660/annually. Can be paid in 12 monthly installments, or upfront upon registration. This membership can be canceled any time at no additional cost by emailing the Executive Director. Most flexible option for members with variable schedules or new rowers.
- **Discount Annual Membership:** \$45/month, or \$540/annually. Can be paid in 12 monthly installments, or upfront upon registration. This membership is a one-year commitment and cannot be canceled until paid in full. Best value for consistent members or private boat owners.



2024 Coached Programming Fee Options

In addition to a Membership fee, any Adult members who wish to participate in coached programs must purchase a class pass or pay a drop-in fee. These fees help us cover costs such as staff wages, launch fuel and maintenance, boat repairs and upkeep, and other operational costs.

We have several coached programming fee options available for our members:

- **Seasonal Class Pass (Prices Vary):** Provides unlimited access to all coached classes on a seasonal basis. Prices vary based on the level of programming offered.
 - Winter (January & February): \$70/month, or \$140 total.
 - Spring (March - May): \$85/month, or \$255 total.
 - Summer (June - August): \$85/month, or \$255 total.
 - Fall (September - mid December): \$75/month, or \$300 total.
- **Punch Card (\$150):** Provides access to any 10 coached classes with no expiration date from the time of purchase. Cost is \$150 for a 10-class Punch Card. Available for purchase on TeamSnap, then keep your card at the boathouse. Coaches will punch your card after each class and let you know when you've used all your punches.
- **Drop-In Fee (\$15/class):** Members without a Class Pass or Punch Card can drop in to any class for a \$15 fee per class attended with cash, check, or pre-scheduled invoice.

Private Boat Owners

Membership required and rack fee applies for owners of private boats. Must receive written approval from the Executive Director. Subject to rack space availability.

Guests of Adult Members

Members may want to bring a guest to the boathouse to build community among rowers or to introduce our boathouse to a prospective new member. The sponsoring RRC Member must accompany the Guest in all use of RRC facilities and equipment, (i.e. exercise or row with the guest). If not in the presence of a coach, members are responsible to advise their guests of pertinent boathouse, safety and conduct expectations as laid out in this Member Handbook; and Members are ultimately responsible for any related fees or equipment damage.

Guests may attend up to 2 free coached classes per year with their sponsoring Member. After 2 classes, guests must purchase a membership and coached program fee option to continue accessing RRC facilities and programs. Any guest rowing at the RRC must have previous rowing experience.

Guests are required to complete an RRC Liability Waiver and Medical Release form prior to using the workout or rowing equipment in any capacity. If a guest does not have a valid Float Test, they must wear a PFD when rowing. Completed forms can be submitted to the Executive Director in person or via email, or deposited in the mailbox outside the office.

Under no circumstances shall a guest rower have solo access to the facility or equipment – guests must be accompanied by a coach or sponsoring member at all times.

Service Hours

The RRC is run by and for its members, and we strongly encourage all members to commit at least 10 volunteer hours per year towards RRC projects and events.



We offer many ways to contribute to RRC, including:

- Help out at work parties
- Serve on the Board of Directors
- Provide assistance with Learn to Row classes and events
- Volunteer at our Evening on the Docks fundraiser in July
- Volunteer at Mixed Row events
- Help at regattas or scrimmages
- Assist with organizing and promoting fundraisers

We welcome any contributions of time and/or expertise that members are prepared to offer. We will make frequent calls for volunteers in emails and newsletters, but members should feel free to reach out anytime if they would like to get involved.

Independent Rowing

Independent rowing of 1x and 2x club-owned shells is available for approved adult members in good standing. Adult members must meet the following minimum qualifications in order to be approved to row club small boats without supervision of a coach:

- Valid set of completed forms (RRC Liability Waiver, Medical Release, USRowing membership, & Float Test)
- Minimum 1 year of rowing experience or equivalent
- Has passed a flip test or 1x safety clinic
- Has a working knowledge of landmarks, buoys, and traffic pattern on RRC waterways
- Successful completion of RRC Skills Checklist (see below)
- Active membership at RRC in good standing

Rowers who wish to be approved for independent rowing must fulfill all of these requirements and arrange for a time to perform the Skills Checklist by supervision of the Executive Director or Safety Officer. A list of currently approved independent rowers shall be posted at all times in the boathouse next to the logbook.

Skills Checklist

The RRC Skills Checklist is a comprehensive list of skills rowers must demonstrate as an indicator of their ability to handle small boats with precision and safety while on the water without a coach. The Skills Checklist must be performed and successfully completed in a racing single for independent rowing approval. In addition to a flip test, the Skills Checklist includes items such as:

- Perform emergency stop at speed
- Name parts of the rowing shell & demonstrate understanding of basic rowing commands
- Demonstrate proper grip, hand height, posture, and parts of the stroke cycle while in the boat
- Proper boat handling technique
- Perform river turn
- Launch and land from the RRC dock unassisted
- Back shell 100 meters in a straight line
- Check, adjust, and re-rack equipment properly and efficiently

A copy of the Skills Checklist in its entirety is posted in the boathouse next to the logbook.

Independent Rowing Protocols

Once approved for independent rowing, it is important to your own safety and the safety of others to always maintain awareness of your surroundings. For the best possible rowing experience for everyone, independent rowers must follow the listed protocols when rowing any shells out of the RRC boathouse without coach supervision:

- Be approved to take out or row in the boat in question. A current list of approved independent rowers will be posted next to the logbook.
- Make sure the boat and oars you plan to use are club equipment and not a private boat or oars.
- Make sure the boat and oars you plan to use are approved for independent use – check the signs on the whiteboard and labels on oar racks for information on any off-limits equipment.
- Check the boat does not have a “No Row” tag.
- Visually inspect the boat for signs of damage or wear which need repair – don’t take a boat out if it may need repair, and if you find unreported damage, note it to a staff member.
- Sign the boat out/in the Boat Logbook. (Private boats must also log out and in).
- Equip your boat with working boat lights (red/green light for your bow, white light for your stern) if you will be on the water before sunrise or after sunset.
- Follow the 4-oars rule and row a 2x, or another shell if rowing a 1x.
- Check the conditions and do not row if combined water/air temperature is below 90 degrees, wind speeds are over 7 knots, there are visible whitecaps, thunder/lightning, Air Quality Index is 150 or higher, or air temperature is 34 degrees or lower.
- Wear a PFD, regardless of Float Test status. Members can wear personal PFDs or use an RRC-provided belted PFD. If using an RRC-provided belted PFD, this should be noted in the logbook.
- Carry a cell phone or mobile device with you at all times when rowing independently.
- Secure the facility if no other members or staff are present in the boathouse during and after your row, including closing all doors, closing the bay door, clearing boathouse walkways of any slings or other debris, and turning off all lights upstairs and in the boat bays.

Independent Rowing Restrictions

Approved independent rowers shall not row if one or more of the following conditions are met:

- If 4-oars rule is not met while using club equipment
- If combined water/air temperature is below 90 degrees
- If wind speeds exceed 7 knots (approximately 8.5 mph)
- If there are visible whitecaps anywhere in sight from the RRC boathouse
- If there has been visible/audible thunder or lightning within the past 30 minutes
- If the air quality index (AQI) is 150 or higher
- If air temperature is 34 degrees Fahrenheit or lower, even if meeting the 90-degree rule.
- If there are visible whitecaps on the lake, sustained winds exceed 10 knots, or wind gusts exceed 15 knots.
- If fog, mist, or other weather conditions limit visibility severely – rowers should be able to see Gene Coulon Park from the RRC boathouse.
- Under no circumstances shall any member, even approved independent scullers, row a shell larger than a 2x/- without supervision of a coach.
- Under no circumstances shall youth rowers (rowers under the age of 18 and/or currently enrolled in an RRC youth program) row club-owned shells without supervision of a coach.



Communications

Email - is our main form of communication for the Adult rowing program. Important program information, registration dates, competition updates and announcements, and more will be communicated first and foremost to Adult members via email. This may be in the form of newsletters or emails directly from staff.

TeamSnap - is the app we use to communicate as a team with our Adult members. TeamSnap has a chat feature where coaches and Members can share news, practice updates, and coordinate rowing and social events. Any major updates will always be communicated over email first, but we recommend keeping your TeamSnap notifications on!

Coach's phone numbers - Are given out at the discretion of each coach. We ask you to not text or call outside regular business hours.

We welcome any Members to reach out to a coach or staff member via email if you have any questions or concerns at any point in your rowing journey. We also appreciate rowers letting a coach know about any medical concerns or physical limitations you may have prior to attending class so your coach can make the necessary accommodations.

How to RSVP to Classes

Adult members must RSVP via the TeamSnap app for any and all attendance of regular classes. All members are automatically added to the roster upon registration for a membership. Coaches will create lineups for each practice based on TeamSnap RSVPs, and are under no obligation to accommodate any members who attend practice without a prior RSVP.

We ask that members attend at least one hour prior to the start of afternoon/evening practices, and by 8pm the night before for morning practices out of consideration for our coaches' time.

How to RSVP to Regattas

Any Adult member with at least **6 months of consistent rowing experience** (including Learn to Row course experience) are eligible to participate in formal competitions, or regattas, with RRC. Consistent rowing experience is defined as attending an average of at least 3 coached programs per month. Additionally, Adult members who wish to participate in a regatta with RRC must have all completed forms on file, as well as a valid Float Test and be in good standing with their membership and any other applicable fees.

An RSVP form will be sent out prior to the start of each racing season (Fall & Spring) to all eligible participants. RSVP forms will include as much information as is available on each of the regattas on RRC's schedule, including dates, locations, estimated cost per participant, and recommended experience level.

General Safety Guidelines

The first priority of all Members is physical and emotional safety of all people on the water and on land.

The second priority of all Members is the safety and maintenance of all rowing equipment.

The third priority of all Members is the safety and maintenance of the RRC building and its equipment.

All Members, Guests, staff, volunteers, and rental clients will engage in safety training and adhere to safety policies to the staff's satisfaction and the standards of RRC. Infractions of RRC safety policies can be grounds for discipline.



Conditions for Safe Rowing

Upon coaches' assessment, coached programs shall not row on the water if one or more of the following conditions are met:

- If combined water/air temperature is below 80 degrees
- If wind speeds exceed 7 knots (approximately 8.5 mph)
- If there are visible whitecaps anywhere in sight from the RRC boathouse
- If there has been visible/audible thunder or lightning within the past 30 minutes
- If the air quality index (AQI) is 150 or higher
- If air temperature is 34 degrees Fahrenheit or lower, even if meeting the 80-degree rule.
- If there are visible whitecaps on the lake, sustained winds exceed 10 knots, or wind gusts exceed 15 knots.
- If fog, mist, or other weather conditions limit visibility severely – rowers should be able to see Gene Coulon Park from the RRC boathouse.

Safety Training

Rowing safety training is required of all members and students. Safety training shall include:

- Reviewal of the Member Handbook at least once per year
- Viewing the USRowing safety video
- Safety training integrated into rowing instruction
- Passing a float test once every five years. The test is 10 minutes treading water followed by putting on a PFD in the water. This test shall be supervised and signed off on by a certified lifeguard.
- RRC strongly encourages anyone who rows singles, or wants to row a single, to participate in the RRC 1x Safety Clinic. RRC will host this controlled safety training at least twice each year.
- Any members who wish to be approved to row club-owned small boats independently (without supervision of a coach) must receive prior approval from the Executive Director or Safety Officer.

Door Codes

Each Member and staff member shall be assigned a door code according to their level of access when actively engaged at RRC. Members and staff are responsible for saving this door code for their records. Door codes will be changed periodically for security, particular around seasonal changes and staff departures. Youth athletes shall not possess an active door code unless currently employed by RRC. Members and staff are strictly prohibited from sharing door codes with others – sharing door codes compromises the safety of RRC's participants and facilities, and will result in immediate termination of membership and/or employment.

SafeSport Training

Effective Jan 1, 2023, USRowing requires that participants 18 years of age or older are required to take SafeSport training if spending significant time around youth athletes. This applies to all coaches, adults participating in regattas where RRC youth athletes are present, and any adults volunteering with youth team practices or events. The training is free for all members of USRowing. This training is required by law and supported by the USOPC. You can access the training through your USRowing member portal. Members will be notified if they are not in compliance. More information can be found on the USRowing website.

Personal Flotation Devices

Any independent rowers are required to wear a PFD when rowing without a coach, regardless of Float Test status. Anyone who has not submitted a valid Float Test is required to wear a PFD, even in coached programs. RRC has a supply of PFDs that will be readily available for use when needed.

Equipment

The RRC Executive Director, Equipment Manager and coaches are responsible for identifying equipment not in working order and removing it from use until fixed. Rowers and members are responsible for reporting damaged or inoperative equipment to your coach or the RRC Executive Director.

In order to maintain our fleet as high-quality equipment, observe the following rules:

- Obey boat sizes. Boat crew weights are on the boat's label or on the boat's magnet on the white board. Overweighting a boat can cause serious damage to the boat and be dangerous on the water. Coaches are responsible for ensuring that rowers are placed in size-appropriate boats during coached programs.
- Prior to taking a boat from the rack, observe how it is racked so you can return it properly. Some boats are placed bow first, most stern first.
- Do not change rigging of boats or oars. You may adjust foot stretches and oarlock spacers.
- Leave shoes on the dock if possible. Shoes carry dirt into boats, which wears down tracks and wheels.
- Wrap water bottles in a sock or t-shirt so they don't rub against the hull and wear away carbon fiber.
- Report all equipment damage to a staff member. Equipment damage may also be reported with a QR code posted in the boathouse.
- Clean, sanitize, and dry boats after use, sanitize and wipe down oar handles.

A. Start with safety

Positive mental model: Be prepared to rescue yourself.

- "Yes, I know how to get back."
- "Yes, I can correct that mistake."
- "Yes, I know what to do if something goes wrong."
- Wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved Personal Flotation Device with a whistle.

Avoid dangerous situations

- Row within a short surf's distance back to shore; stay near speed buoy line (100m from shore)
- Row with another boat - Follow the "four oars" rule and always have at least 4 oars in your group
- Stay with other rowers

In these conditions, do not launch, or get quickly to shore:

- Wind is above 7 knots (~8.5 mph). Airport windsocks align with the wind at 3 knots/3.5 mph, start to fill at 6 kts/7 mph, fully extend at about 15 kts/17 mph
- Whitecaps. Wavelets start to break/whitecap at 7-10 kts/8-12 mph wind
- Heavy fog. The minimum visual distance is to clearly see Coulon Park from the RRC boathouse
- Approaching storm: monitor forecasts
- Thunder and/or lightning
- Air temperature is below freezing
- Heavy powerboat traffic and wakes are heavy
- Combined air/water temperature is below 90 degrees (if rowing without a coach)

In emergencies, land on the nearest dock or the shore. Take care of the boat as best you can, but rowers are more important than equipment. Get a house address from Rainier Avenue or Lake Washington Boulevard to give the coaches or 911.

B. Should you fall out of your 1x or 2x

1. Stay with your boat: A boat is a flotation device.

- First option: Straddle and paddle your shell to shore.
- Second option: Get back in the boat.
- Third option: Inflate on your PFD and whistle for help.

2. Straddle/paddle skills checklist:

- Hold on to boat and pull yourself around to bow or stern

- If easy, turn oars parallel to boat
- Hold on to stern or bow
- Push torso onto deck with leg kick and arms
- Crawl up deck until torso is out of water
- Using crawl stroke motion, swim the boat to shore or a dock

3. Emergency entry from water skills checklist:

- Relax if you're going into the water to reduce injury and damage
- Close your mouth before you hit the water
- Swim to side of cockpit, next to rigger
- Empty water from boat if you can
- Oar handles in sternmost hand; keep hold of the handles so blades stay on the water
- Other forearm on deck
- Push torso out with leg kick and arms
- Swing near leg over hull
- Straddle hull and lift up on oar handles
- Bring feet into boat
- Place one hand on deck behind you, lift up your body to get into seat
- Tuck oars under arms, between torso and thighs, bail boat
- Take off wet shirts, get to shore and dry off.

4. If you must float until rescued:

- Inflate your PFD
- Keep torso out of water – climb up on boat
- Trust only wooden oars to float; composite oars can fill with water
- Attract attention with whistle or shouts
- If you have your phone handy, call 911

5. Inflate vest skills checklist:

- Do not lose contact with your boat
- Pull inflatable belt around to the front
- Pull inflation cord handle down with a sharp motion to activate compressed air cylinder
- Duck head through collar
- Blow on whistle in sets of three blasts
- Swim toward shore with boat
- Keep vest inflated even after another boat has helped you

C. To rescue another rower with your 1x or 2x

Make sure you are safe to rescue the person. Help yourself before helping others.

Support their 1x recovery

1. Back your boat to the dumped boat
2. Slide your stern under the dumped boat's rigger
3. Provide stability as they recover their boat

Ferry rower to shore

1. Talk to the person in the water. Tell them what you are going to do. Tell them what they are going to do: "You are going to slide the life vest belt around in front of you. Pull the inflation handle down with your left hand. Put your head through the hole. You're going to let go of your boat, grab the end of my boat and I am going to row you to shore."
2. Back your boat to the rower, stern first
3. Allow them to climb up, laying torso down on the stern deck if they don't have a PFD on or hold on to the

bow/stern if they do

4. Row them to safety. Expect to arm row or to back – a person hanging on your boat slows it considerably, and makes your boat less stable. Make sure you are safe.

D. Rescue a rower crabbed out of the boat

Rescue a rower who crabbed out of the boat.

1. “Crab” means the oar blade stuck in the water at the release, pulling the oar out of the rower’s control. “Crab out” means the sweep oar handle, pulled around by the crabbed blade, caught the rower hard enough to throw him or her out of the boat.

2. Procedure:

a. Ejected rower closes mouth before hitting the water. After surfacing, rower waves to show their location.

b. The boat comes to an emergency stop, on command of coxswain or bow in a blind boat (“Way enough and check it down”)

c. Boat backs up to rower in the water. All rowers sit ready, setting the boat. Rower in the water grabs the hull for support.

d. Coaching launch comes to the rower in the water. Coach readies a floatation device for the ejected rower.

e. If uninjured, rower may climb back in the shell. If injured, the rower will get into the coaching launch.

f. The coach will inspect the shell, rigger, oarlock and seat of the ejected rower for damage. If no damage has been done, the shell may continue rowing. If damaged, the coach will remove the oar from the oarlock and the boat will row back to the boathouse.

E. Procedure for a swamped or damaged boat

1. These procedures are specific to 8+, 4+ or 4x, boats which must be accompanied by a launch. In general, however, these procedures would apply to smaller boats, while another small boat ferries the rowers to safety on shore.

a. “Swamped” is when the water level on the inside of the shell approaches the gunwale. Swamping could be caused by waves or wakes, which will enter the cockpit of the boat more rapidly as the boat sinks lower in the water. The boat won’t sink as long as the bow and stern airtight compartments have not been breached. However, keeping a swamped boat loaded with rowers could damage the boat.

b. Damage may make a boat unrowable. Hitting a buoy, piling or another boat can breach the hull of the boat, causing it to flood, or make further damage probable if rowing continues.

2. Procedure

- Cox or bow calls “Way Enough.”
- Rowers and or cox signal the coaching launch by waving arms and shouting for help.
- Decision. The coach needs to decide:
 - A. If the hull of the boat is breached or in danger of breaking, rowers need to evacuate into the water.
 - B. If the boat is merely swamped but still rowable, depending on conditions rowers could be removed from the boat to lighten it and remaining rowers, i.e, bow and stern pair, could row the boat to shore.
 - C. The coach must act decisively and swiftly to get rowers out of the water. Factors in the decision include wind and weather, water and air temperature and proximity to shore. In any case, rowers evacuated from a swamped or damaged boat should be ferried to the nearest point on shore, private or public.

3. Evacuation

- A. Cox orders rowers to untie from shoes. Leave oars in oarlocks until the coach is ready to remove them.
- B. At Cox’s orders, start in the middle of the boat and evacuate by pairs. Rowers still in the boat hold the

boat stable. Leave your oar in the oarlock, perpendicular to the hull to prevent rollover. Rowers slip over the side quickly and gently, holding on to the gunwale and oar handle for stability.

- C. Close your mouth before you hit the water. Cold water causes a gasp reflex and hyperventilation, which could draw water into your lungs.
- D. Stabilize your breathing as you tread water. Stay with the boat, hold the gunwale. You may be in the water for ten minutes or more, so be patient and focus on your breathing.
- E. Rowers buddy up with their pair partner. Face your partner from across the boat and check in with them. Check your pair partner for signs of hypothermia, both on the water and once out of the water.
- F. The coaching launch carefully nears the boat on the downwind side if possible. The coach distributes PFDs to each person. The motor must be turned off to avoid injuring rowers with the propeller, so rowers and the coach will have to fend the launch off the shell. The coach may use the launch tie-down rope to keep the boats close.
- G. The launch picks up as many people as can safely be carried and motors them to the nearest landable point on shore. Remaining rowers stay with the boat and their pair partner until the launch returns or another launch rescues them.
- H. Once rowers are out of the water, coaches will rescue the shell by righting it if necessary and towing it to shore or the dock.
- I. Once on shore, pair partners and the coxswain should check for injuries, hypothermia, get dry and look for assistance in retrieving the shell.

G. Clothes

Wear close-fitting clothes that are moisture wicking. Avoid restrictive materials like denim, and avoid cotton – it will soak up any water you get on you during your row. Wear clothes that move moisture away from your skin to evaporate. Rowers should wear light-colored, highly visible tops to improve visibility. In the cold, wear several layers, including an outer waterproof layer. During warmer months, wear sunscreen and clothes that protect the areas of skin most likely to burn.

H. Hydration

Carry water. Drink your water – rowing is dynamic, demanding exercise. Staying hydrated is even more important when it is cold because cold air is dry air and dry air dehydrates the body quickly.

I. On the Water

Safety acronym WWETT: Wind and Weather, Equipment, Time and Traffic

RRC uses the acronym **WWETT** to cue safety: **W**ind and **W**eather; **E**quipment; **T**ime and **T**raffic.

Before launching, be sure you have checked each.

Wind direction: Where can I row in protected water with the wind in each quarter? Check the airport windsock by the floatplane docks as you walk to the RRC. Keep an eye on the sky: Watch waves, wakes.

Will the wind change while I'm rowing?

Weather: What was the weather like yesterday? Is it a steady pattern or changing?

Check the Renton Airport weather report before you leave home. Watch clouds.

Bad Weather Policy: If going out on the water is unsafe, RRC programs may take place indoors if pandemic restrictions allow. Unsafe conditions may include wind, lightning storms, fog, or similar situations. Because weather patterns which may affect rowing safety are unpredictable and subject to sudden change, the decision to go on the water may not be made until the actual scheduled start time of the session.

Equipment

1. *Check nuts, bolts and moveable parts before launch.* Have a coach fix it before launch, or return it to the rack. Fixed or not, report the boat on the Maintenance Board, above the drinking fountain on the main level between the locker rooms.

2. *Personal Flotation Device (Life vest):*

If you do not have a valid float test on file or if you are an independent rower, a PFD is required. Make sure your

inflatable PFD is on correctly; check the gauge that the inflatable cartridge is full.

3. *Lights*: All RRC boats must have Coast Guard-approved lights when rowing before sunrise and one hour before sunset: red and green bow lights, a bright white light on the stern. The lights should be visible for one nautical mile, 360° around the boat. Lights and the chargers are kept in cubbies by the stairwell.

- If lighting fails, is lost or disabled during a practice, the boat must immediately return to RRC and replace or repair the lighting.

4. *Boats*

- *Bow Balls*: Every boat must have a firmly attached ball at least 4 cm (1.5 inches) diameter on its bow. Boats built so the bow is properly protected or its shape does not represent a hazard don't need bowballs. Check your boat's bow ball before rowing; do not row boats with damaged or missing bowballs and please note the damage with a staff member.
- *Heel Ties*: Heel ties and "quick-release" mechanisms must be in proper and effective working order in all boats equipped with fitted shoes. Restraints restrict heel lift to less than 5cm (2 inches).
- *Buoyancy*: Bow and stern compartments must function as individual buoyancy compartments and will be checked annually to ensure they function as intended. Minimum flotation requires a swamped boat and its crew to sit with seat tops no more than 5cm below the waterline. Check hatch covers and drain plugs before rowing.

Time

1. *Log book*: The RRC log book is kept on the counter to the right of the main phone. What is your start time? Your estimated time of return? Route? Rowers? Equipment? Record it before you launch.

2. *Safety*: Save enough energy to land and take out your boat. When is enough time on the water? When will you be too tired to be safe?

3. *Lights*: Will it be dark when I start or land? If so, I need lights.

Traffic

1. *Traffic Patterns*: Rowers closest to shore keep shoreline parallel to starboard (rower's left hand, paddler's right hand). Rowers going the other direction, with shoreline on port, stay in outside lanes. Stay within 150m of shore. The white speed buoys are about 100m from shore. *See map on page 25.*

- Learn landmarks. Know: Where am I? Where am I going? How far is it?
- Regularly review the traffic diagrams posted in the RRC Boathouse and given during your safety orientation. Know the northbound/southbound traffic patterns of Lake Washington, Coulon Park, and the Cedar River, as well as known hazards or areas to avoid.
- Check over your shoulder periodically: What hazards are ahead of me? Am I following traffic pattern?

2. *Other boats*

- Are there: Oncoming rowers? Skiers? Jet skis? Fishermen? Floatplanes?
- What is their course or destination?
- We follow United States Coast Guard right-of-way rules: Vessels with the least maneuverability (typically the largest) have the right-of-way, but always play it safe and take action to avoid all other types of boats by rowing inside the speed buoys. *See map on page 25.*

3. *Aircraft*

- Use caution when rowing around the Renton Airport, West of the RRC. The FAA considers the airport runway to extend 1/2 mile (800m) into Lake Washington. Cross in front of the runway as quickly as possible.
- 737s typically taxi to the north end of the runway, nearest the lake, turn around, open the throttle of the engines, and do an acceleration and braking test southward. The blast of this acceleration is an extreme danger to rowers and can be felt hundreds of meters from the runway. Typically the plane will then turn around and take off northward over the lake. The process takes 10 minutes or more.
- If you see or hear a 737 on the runway while you are rowing on the west shore, head toward the shore and docks, wait there for takeoff. If you are in the middle of the lake, row with full pressure immediately



to the east (toward Coulon Park) to avoid the jet blast. Do not exit or try to enter the Cedar River until the jet is airborne.

- Float Planes take off in lanes in the middle of the lake Northeast toward Bellevue and Northwest toward Seattle. Be aware and stay out of their landing or take-off zones. Approaching floatplanes are rarely audible until past airborne. Look for them within a mile of the runway, and row inside the white speed buoys on the West shore. Floatplanes have very little control on the water, especially in wind.

4. Row together

- Independent rowers follow the 'Four Oars rule': Singles row with a buddy or row a boat with four oars.
- We **strongly recommend** that all boats not accompanied by a coach launch row with "Buddies" – i.e. another boat of comparable speed. Boats should stay within 100m of their Buddy.
- RRC 4+, 4-, 4x, or 8+ shells must row with a coach launch alongside. Launches shall carry throw ropes, boarding ladders, a first aid kit, and enough solid PFDs to float nine rowers.

5. Boat Handling

- Prior to taking out a boat independently Members must demonstrate a thorough understanding of boat handling rules, rowing skills, and traffic pattern knowledge to a coach or appropriate office staff member via successful completion of the RRC Skills Checklist.

Dock Protocol

- Dock protocol calls for rowers to get on and off the dock as quickly and efficiently as possible. Safety guidelines are outlined above; the following procedures ensure safety and consideration of others.
- To protect people and equipment, all rowers should contribute to moving the boat, and all related equipment, to and from the water.

Launches

- A launch is a motorboat used by rowing coaches or referees. RRC launch drivers must have Washington Boater's License and have been trained by an RRC staff member. Club launches can only be used for RRC programs or private lessons. All launch use outside of regularly scheduled programs must be approved by the Executive Director.

Launching (boat entry and dock departure)

- Take oars to the dock or rack before taking the boat.
- Cox boxes and other electronics should be tested and confirmed to be in good working order.
- Inspect the position of your oars in the riggers to ensure they are properly placed and the oarlocks securely fastened.
- If you discover breakage or missing equipment, take the boat out of the water and put it back on the rack if possible. Report the damage to a staff member as soon as possible.
- Shove off as quickly as possible, and row your boat away from the dock before you stop to tie-in.
- Watch for obstacles to or from the dock: riggers, boat racks, slings, a slick dock, waiting crews, etc.
- Boats returning to the dock have priority over launching boats.

Docking (returning to the dock and disembarking)

- Land slowly. All rowers should get hands on the dock to keep the boat from grinding against it. Ask for help if needed.
- Get off the dock as quickly and safely as you can.
- Inspect the boat for signs of damage or wear needing repair. Note any damage, regardless of the cause, with a staff member.
- Return the boat to its proper rack and position and wipe down with a clean towel.
- Open port covers and plugs to allow interior to dry.
- Report any collisions with either boats or stationary objects to the office. You may need to complete an incident report.
- Put your oars on the proper rack.

FOLLOW TRAFFIC PATTERN & ALWAYS STAY INSIDE BUOYS UNLESS YOU ARE WITH A LAUNCH



Be safe on the water! Before you row, check:

Wind & Weather / Equipment / Time / Traffic

Glossary of Rowing Terms

Rowing can be a daunting sport to learn. This glossary can help increase your knowledge of the technique and equipment used in the sport.

Blade: The end of the oar which is placed in the water.

Boathouse: A building used for storing boats. Often used to refer to the entire facility.

Buoy: A floating marker that is sometimes used to lay out a course.

Bow: The forward section of the boat. The first part of the boat to cross the finish line. The person in the seat closest to the bow, who crosses the finish line first.

Bow coxed boat: A shell in which the coxswain is near the bow instead of the stern. It's hard to see the coxswain in this type of boat, because only their head is visible. Having the coxswain virtually lying down in the bow reduces wind resistance, and the weight distribution is better.

Bowball: A rubber ball that protects the boat against damage in case of a collision.

Button: Or collar. A wide collar on the oar that keeps it from slipping through the oarlock.

Catch: The moment the blade first enters the water, the beginning of the power phase of the stroke.

Check: When the boat changes direction between the recovery and power phase of the stroke.

CLAM: Clip-on Load Adjusting Mechanism (C.L.A.M.) - A device that slides on and off the shaft of an oar to quickly adjust the inboard of an oar or scull. Adding one C.L.A.M. increases the inboard by 1 cm, increasing the load you feel on the oar(s).

Cox Box: A battery powered, small amplifier that allows the coxswain to communicate with the crew and also gives the coxswain stroke rate information.

Coxswain (kök'sUn): Person who steers the shell and is the on-the-water coach and tactician for the crew.

Collar: Or button. A plastic ring that keeps the oar from slipping through the oarlock.

Crab: A stroke that goes bad. The oar blade slices the water at an angle and gets caught under the surface. The blade is not fully feathered before leaving the water. This results in the blade being stuck in the water, severely slowing the boat down and throwing off the balance.

Crew: The term crew is used in American schools and colleges to designate the sport of rowing. When outside of the academic sphere, then the sport is known as rowing. The British and European universities and schools have rowing clubs, not crew clubs.

Deck: The part of the shell at the bow and stern that is covered with fiberglass cloth or a thin plastic.

Drive: The power phase of the rowing cycle when the blade is being pushed through the water.

Double: A shell with two scullers. Shorthand is 2x.



Eight: A shell with eight rowers and a coxswain. Symbol is 8+.

Erg(ometer): Rowers call it an "erg." It's a rowing machine that approximates the actual rowing motion. RRC has Concept II ergometers, which utilize a flywheel and a digital readout so that the rower can measure their "strokes per minute" and the distance covered. Used for training and testing.

Feathering: Turning the oar blade flat during the recovery to lessen wind resistance.

Fin or Skeg: A small flat appendage located along the bottom stern section of the hull which helps stabilize the shell in holding a straight course.

Finish: The oar blade leaving the water at the end of the power phase of the stroke.

FISA: Short for Federation Internationale des Societes d'Aviron. The international governing body for the sport of rowing in the world, established in 1892.

Foot Stretcher: An adjustable plate to which a rower's feet are secured.

Four: A boat with four sweep rowers. Shorthand is 4- or 4+ (without or with coxswain).

Full pressure: the top level of exertion of which a rower is capable.

Gate: The bar across the oarlock that keeps the oar in place.

Bucket rigging: A different way of setting up which side of the boat the oars are on in a sweep boat. Instead of alternating from side to side all the way down, in a German rigged boat, two consecutive rowers have oars on the same side. Also called "tandem" or "German" rigging.

Gunwales: The top edges of the shell. Some riggers are bolted into them.

Keel: The centerline of the shell.

Launch: To put the racing shell into the water OR the boat which the coach uses to follow the crews.

Lightweight: Refers to the rowers, not the boats; typically a limit of 130 for female rowers and 160 - 165 for male rowers. Lightweight categories only exist for Adult rowers under USRowing guidance.

Oar: Used to drive the boat forward. Oars use a fixed lever to drive the shell. Paddles do not have a fixed lever in the boat.

Oarlock: The D- shaped device at the end of the rigger in which the oar rests. There is a locking gate at the top to keep the oar in place.

Outboard: The distance between the tip of the blade-side face of the collar or C.L.A.M.. The greater the outboard, the heavier the oar or scull will feel and the greater the load in the water will be.

Pair: A boat with two sweep rowers. Designated as a 2-.

Port: Left side of the boat, while facing forward, in the direction of the movement.

Port-rigged: A shell rigged so that the stroke oar (#8) is a port oar.

Puddle: The effect in the water caused by the movement of the oar, particularly at the end of the stroke.

Quad: A boat with four scullers. Sometimes designated as 4x.

Racks: Wood or metal structures in the boathouse used to hold the shells.

Recovery: The time between drives, when the blade of the oar is traveling through the air.

Rig: The art/science of setting up a boat for an individual's physiology and biomechanical advantage.

Rigger: The triangular- or wing-shaped metal device that is bolted onto the boat and holds the oars.

Rudder: The moveable fin device used to steer the shell.

Run: The run is the distance the shell moves during one stroke.

Scull: One of the two disciplines of rowing -the one where each rower uses two oars or sculls.

Set: Balancing the boat as it is rowed. A boat is "set" when all the oars and gunnels are equidistant from the water.

Shell: Can be used interchangeably with boat, in rowing.

Single: A one person shell. The symbol is 1x.

Skeg or Fin: A small flat appendage located along the stern of the hull which helps stabilize the shell.

Sky: The effect of lowering the handles too much and causing the blade to be too high from the water at the catch.

Slide: The set of runners for the wheels of each seat in the boat and the metal rails they roll in.

Slings: Collapsible / portable frames with fabric straps upon which a shell can be placed.

Split: The time a crew takes to complete a 500 meter segment of a race or ergometer workout.

Squaring: Term describing the turning of the oar from horizontal (feathered) to vertical (squared) blade position.

Stake-boat: The small, anchored boat that is used to hold the shells in place before the start of a race.

Starboard: Right side of the boat, while facing forward, in the direction of movement.

Stern: The rear of the boat; the direction the rowers are facing.

Straight: Refers to a shell without a coxswain i.e. a straight four (4-) or straight pair (2-).

Stretcher or Foot-stretcher: Where the rower's feet go. The stretcher consists of two inclined footrests that hold the rower's feet. The rower's shoes are bolted into the footrests.

Stroke seat: The #8 rower who sits closest to the stern. The stroke seat sets the rhythm or cadence for the boat; others behind him must follow their cadence.

Speed Coach: A small electronic GPS device that rowers attach in the boat to show the important race information like stroke rate and distance rowed.

Stroke-rate: The number of strokes per minute. In a race, usually between 34 and 38 strokes per minute.

Sweep: One of the two disciplines of rowing where rowers use only one oar. Pairs, fours, and the eights are sweep boats. Pairs and fours may or may not have a coxswain. Eights always have a coxswain.

USRowing: The governing body for the sport of rowing in the U.S.

Wake: Turbulence caused by the motion of the boat through the water.

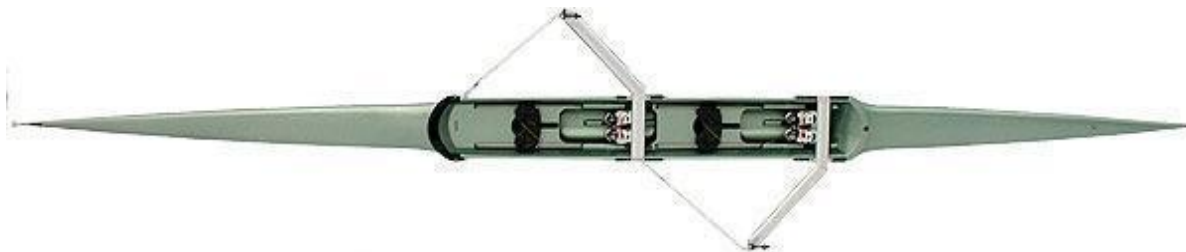
Weigh-Enough: A coxswain command to have all rowers stop rowing or to stop rowers from walking when carrying a boat.

BOAT DESIGNATIONS

Sweep Rowing (*one oar*)

Boat Class	Shorthand Designation	Explanation
Pair	2-	two rowers with no coxswain
Straight Four	4- or IV-	four rowers with no coxswain
Coxed Four	4+ or IV+	four rowers with coxswain
Eight	8+ or VIII+	eight rowers, always with coxswain

Pair (2-)



Four (4- or 4+)



Eight (8+)



Sculling (two oars)

Boat Class	Shorthand Designation	Explanation
Single	1x	one sculler with no coxswain
Double	2x	two scullers with no coxswain
Straight Quad	4x- or 4x	four scullers with no coxswain
Coxed Quad	4x+	four scullers with coxswain

Single (1x)



Double (2x)



Quad (4x, 4x- or 4x+)

