



Pool / Flatwater Lesson Levels

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
Each Lesson	Be friendly, upbeat, respectful, confident. Waiver/Media Release signed? Group Introductions. Explain overview of expectations/limitations. Who is in charge + site (YMCA or other) safety requirements. Warm-up and stretching. Personal responsibility (fitness, equipment, etc). Always engage and ask for feedback. Do not over-teach – keep lessons simple, short and memorable. If 1 st lesson of session, spend 5 minutes review of last lesson student finished before teaching next level.
1	Introduction: Fit helmet, PFD, skirt. Explain purpose and fit of each. Warm-up/stretching to reduce injury. WATER COMFORT TEST. Kayak types, materials, flotation, parts/outfitting. Boat rocker and shape to water when flat and when on edge. Entering boat. Fit boat. Wet-Exit: Tuck, Tug (grab loop), Tumble, feet-up. DEMO. Student does dry exit on land first. Instructor demos in water. Student demo (offer 1st to do without skirt). Tip: Ask student to hold breath while instructor demonstrates.
2	Hand-Paddling (students must earn their paddle!): Placement of hands ahead of hips, close to boat (less spin) versus hands passing hips, sweeping wide (spin). Explain torso rotation. Have student spin boat using torso rotation then reverse. Student paddles forward some distance then turns. Backward hand-paddling. Edging: Slight J-lean and how effects turning.
3	Paddles/Strokes: Parts, length, blade offset, hand positions. Shoulder injury risk, elbow positions. Types of strokes - vertical / horizontal. Catch-Power-Release. Forward stroke - placement of paddle, vertical stroke, Catch-Power-Release. Demo. Student practice. Turning: Full-sweep w/ torso rotate. Reverse-sweep w/torso rotation. DEMO. Student practice. Strength training tip: biner stern of student boat (with webbing) to a pool-side pole or bracket – paddle hard.
4	Bow-Rescue: Explain purpose. Pool/Flat water ONLY. Contract with buddy to rescue (Spot me?). Tuck, Tap on hull 3x, hand-motion and position to reduce injury, feeling for buddy's boat, hand position, breathe, hip-snap, head-down. Demonstrate. Have student hold onto side of pool, practice lowering boat and raising using only hips. Very little hand support. Student practice.
5	Bracing: Horizontal paddle stroke. J-Lean and hip-snap. Low-brace, elbows in, paddle horizontal, flat side of blade making contact with water. Wrist flick to release paddle. Demonstrate skulling and support that blade provides. DEMO. Student practice. Use side of pool for support to learn hip-snaps.
6	Side-Draws: Explain when used to move sideways. Show torso rotation, paddle catch-power-release (with wrist twist to raise paddle). Skulling-Side-Draw – sort of like bracing but using a vertical stroke. Have student practice by moving 90 degrees and then shifting angle of catch to 45 degrees to demonstrate move at slight angles.
7	Bow and Stern Draws: Bow-Draw, explain paddle position for catch-power-release. Stern-Draw, explain paddle position to stern with torso rotation (protect shoulder). Short kick of blade to stern with wrist-flick to raise paddle. Demonstrate that stern draw is useful as a correcting stroke when paddling forward and to not lose momentum.

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8	<p>Edging/J-lean: Spine is J-like, knee lifted, weight shifted to opposite butt cheek. Explain shape of boat to water changes when boat is on edge. DEMO how edging works with turning. Student practice by paddling forward to gain speed then combine sweep with edge boat to carve turn. Explain that edging is used to make whitewater moves into and out of eddys.</p>
9	<p>Circle paddling: Edging used for making tight and wide turns. DEMO edging with tight turn by paddling around student then change strokes and edge for wide turns. Have student practice. Setup two anchor paddlers (like rocks) 30 feet apart and paddle figure 8's. Have anchor paddlers move closer together and students do figure 8's.</p>
10	<p>Basic Rolling: <u>Attempts at learning to roll can be where students give-up and become frustrated because others make it look easy. Some will not come back if they feel failure at this! Assure students in the beginning that it takes time and rolling in class I or II water is not important. Ne ready to fall back to another topic if you sense burn-out.</u> Review boat fit – firm contact at key points for maximum transfer of energy between body and boat. Consider paddlers disability and flexibility. Rolling may not be an option but allow them to be part of that decision after attempting. Assure that student can perform bow-rescue with minimal effort, keeping head low and not relying on arm-power.</p> <p>Hip-Snaps: Explain and demo hip-snaps on side of pool. Work on this until paddler is able to hip-snap while keeping head partially in the water and using only fingers for support. Watch student. If arms are used to power-up, back-up instruction.</p> <p>Dry-practice: Stand out of water with paddler and explain that a roll is done in three parts: 1) Setup position with paddle high out of water and head/body well out to the side. 2) Paddle sweep during hip-snap and keeping head low and eyes following blade. 3) Complete by looking down at blade. Add imaginary (gentle) hip-snap during dry practice.</p> <p>Pool-practice Method 1: Stand next to paddler. Ask paddler permission to touch their shoulder. Paddler goes into setup position and falls toward you. You catch their shoulder and allow their head to be out of the water. Have paddler perform sweep/hip-snap and complete while supporting their shoulder and talking them through it. It is important to support the paddler not the blade, so that they do not have to put too much pressure on paddle. They should eventually be able to perform this motion and come up while you support them. Gradually, repeat this with paddler lower in the water each time.</p> <p>Pool-practice Method 2: Stand next to paddler. Inform that you will catch their paddle blade after they go completely over but not to immediately sweep/snap. Agree that after you tap on the hull, you will guide their blade through the motion while they hip snap.</p> <p>Tips: If available, ask an assistant to work with you to help right paddler during practice. If paddler progresses but is still weak, try standing at stern of boat to give paddler an extra spin while coaching. Be aware that learning fatigue will set in so offer breaks every 20 minutes. Try using hand floats for paddler to practice hip-snapping. Alternate sides.</p> <p>Stay patient, attentive, flexible, and positive!</p>