

Find out about using a canoe. Read the selection below. Then read each question and choose the best answer. Use the provided answer sheet at the end of the workbook to record your answers.

Paddling a Canoe

First, you need to be able to identify the parts of the canoe:

The front of a canoe is called the bow, and the back is called the stern. You can tell the front from the back by looking at the seats. The seat with the most legroom between it and the tip of the canoe is in the bow.

You also need to know basic safety precautions:

Always make sure both you and your partner have a life jacket or personal flotation device (PFD). Wear some kind of footwear. Even an old pair of sneakers will give you traction when getting into and out of the canoe. An overwhelming number of paddling injuries are the result of canoeing in bare feet. You must choose a body of water that is beginner-friendly. A shallow lake or pond is ideal.

Steps

1. The first step is to learn to get into and out of the canoe without capsizing it. About 90 percent of all canoeing accidents occur as people are trying to get into the canoe. In order to board a canoe safely, first push the canoe into the water, keeping the craft parallel to the shore. While holding on to the top sides of the canoe, step quickly into the center and kneel. Stay in a low position and move to the bow or the stern. Your partner should then follow the same procedure.

2. Next, practice holding your paddle correctly. If you are paddling on the right side, hold your right hand on the shaft of the paddle, near the top of the blade. Place your left hand on the paddle's grip. Your hands should be about a shoulder width apart, and your arms should remain straight most of the time you are paddling. Your partner should paddle on the opposite side of the canoe.

3. Begin to move the paddle. The basic stroke for the person in the bow is the forward stroke. Reach out as far as you can over the water with your paddle without straining. Keep your top hand about shoulder height. Place the blade of the paddle in the water and pull it straight back, keeping the paddle parallel to the canoe. When the paddle reaches your hips, swivel the blade out of the water. Repeat the stroke to move forward. To make a left turn, reach forward on the right side with the paddle, place it in the water, and trace a C in the water with a sweeping motion.

4. If the canoe starts to go off course, you or your partner in the stern must use the J stroke to correct it. Reaching forward, place the paddle in the water and pull back. At the end of the stroke, twist the paddle outward, in the form of a J. You must use the J stroke for every third or fourth stroke to keep the canoe on course.

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1. What is the *main* purpose of this selection?
 - A to show how to place a canoe in water
 - B to prepare readers for white-water canoeing
 - C to tell readers the basic steps in canoeing
 - D to stress the importance of water safety

2. Why does the author begin the selection by explaining the parts of the canoe?
 - A to show that the author has researched good sources of information
 - B because not all readers may be familiar with canoes
 - C to refresh the memories of former canoeists
 - D because the author wants to show off his or her knowledge

3. Based on the context of the second paragraph, what does the word *precautions* mean?
 - A actions you take to be safe
 - B ideas
 - C injuries
 - D life jackets

4. How does step 4 logically follow step 3?
 - A In order to paddle, you must know how to hold the paddle correctly.
 - B After learning to paddle, you learn how to steer by paddling.
 - C After the paddle is pulled back, it should be twisted outward, in the form of a J.
 - D If you capsize your canoe, you will not need to know how to paddle.

Padding a Canoe

5. What can you infer from this selection?
- A Most boating accidents happen in canoes.
 - B Canoes require some practice before you can guide them correctly.
 - C Canoes are fun to play in.
 - D Canoes are the most dangerous kind of boat.
6. Which of these statements about canoeing is an opinion?
- A About 90 percent of all canoeing accidents occur as people are trying to get into the canoe.
 - B The seat with the most legroom between it and the tip of the canoe is in the bow.
 - C The back of a boat is called the stern.
 - D A shallow lake is the best place to learn how to canoe.