

# PADDLE CRAFT

ELECTIVE ADVENTURE



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## SNAPSHOT OF ADVENTURE



Using a paddle craft is one of the oldest forms of transportation. The Pesse Canoe is the oldest known boat. It was constructed sometime between 8040 B.C.E. and 7510 B.C.E., making it about 10,000 years old. And it still floats! This proves that if you take care of your equipment, it can last a long time.

In this Adventure, you will choose between a canoe, kayak, and stand-up paddleboard to complete the requirements.

### REQUIREMENTS

Approved by

1. Before attempting requirements 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 for this Adventure, you must pass the BSA swimmer test. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Pick a paddle craft you'll use to complete all requirements: canoe, kayak, or stand-up paddleboard. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Review Safety Afloat. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Demonstrate how to identify and properly wear a life jacket that is the correct size. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Jump feet first into water over your head while wearing a life jacket. Then swim 25 feet wearing the life jacket. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Discuss how to enter and exit a canoe, kayak, or stand-up paddleboard safely. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Discuss what to do if your canoe or kayak tips over or you fall off your stand-up paddleboard. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Learn two paddle strokes: power stroke and sweep. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Have 30 minutes or more of canoe, kayak, or stand-up paddleboard paddle time. \_\_\_\_\_

## REQUIREMENT 1

**Before attempting requirements 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 for this Adventure, you must pass the BSA swimmer test.**

Before entering the water and paddling along, you must pass the BSA swimmer test.

To learn more about the BSA swimmer test, follow this QR code.



## REQUIREMENT 2

**Pick a paddle craft you'll use to complete all requirements: canoe, kayak, or stand-up paddleboard.**

### CANOE

A canoe is a narrow and usually lightweight boat that is pointed on both ends (the bow and stern) and is open. Canoes can be made out of wood, fiberglass, or aluminum. The most common type of canoe is aluminum since it's durable and easy to care for.

Like all boats, the front of a canoe is called the bow. It is identified by the distance the seat is positioned from the front of the boat, allowing for leg room. The back of the canoe is called the stern. The seat is positioned closer to the back of the boat since your legs will be toward the middle of the canoe.



**250 Arrow of Light**

The sides of the canoe are called the gunwales (pronounced "gun-l"), the middle of the canoe is called the centerline, and the braces across the top of the canoe are called the thwarts.

Canoes are designed for flat water like a lake or calm river.

### **KAYAK**

A kayak is also a narrow and lightweight boat that is pointed on both ends. A kayak may be open (commonly called a "sit on top"), or it may be closed with a cockpit. Kayaks can be made from wood, fiberglass, or plastic. The most common kayak is plastic since it's durable and easy to care for, but they tend to be heavier.



Kayaks may be designed for a single paddler or for two paddlers (tandem). Kayaks come in many different shapes and sizes based on how they are to be used. Fishing kayaks tend to be open, are wide, and have attachments for fishing poles and equipment. Ocean kayaks are closed with a cockpit and may come with a "skirt" that the paddler wears to keep water out of the cockpit.



### **STAND-UP PADDLEBOARD (SUP)**

A paddleboard is like a giant surfboard. It is commonly made of foam with a fiberglass coating. Some paddleboards are inflatable. You stand up on a paddleboard and while standing use a long paddle to move about the water. It requires balance and strength.

## REQUIREMENT 3

### Review Safety Afloat.

Paddle crafts are all different types of boats. When boating during a Scouting activity, we follow the nine parts of Safety Afloat.



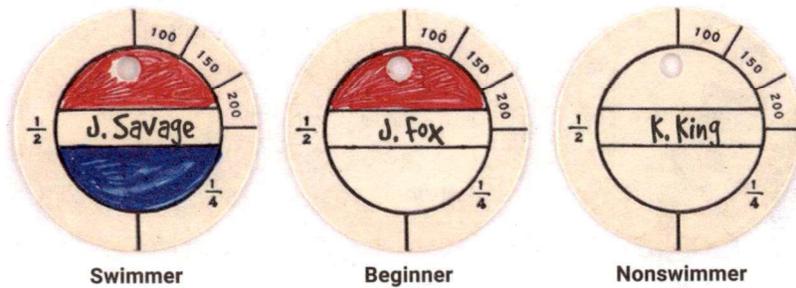
The first part of Safety Afloat is that for any boating activity in Cub Scouting, there must be an adult who has completed the Safety Afloat training and makes sure it's used during the activity. Below is the definition of qualified supervision for Safety Afloat. After reading it, discuss with your patrol or an adult what the responsibilities are of the adult who is serving as the qualified supervision.

It is best if the adult who will be the qualified supervisor for your paddle craft adventure leads the conversation and gives details on Safety Afloat.

**1. Qualified Supervision** — All activity afloat (on the water) must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult aged 21 or older who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of those in their care and who is trained in and committed to compliance with the nine points of BSA Safety Afloat. That supervisor must be skilled in the safe operation of the craft for the specific activity, knowledgeable in accident prevention, and prepared for emergency situations. If the adult with Safety Afloat training lacks the necessary boat operating and safety skills, then they may serve as the supervisor only if assisted by other adults, camp staff personnel, or professional tour guides who have the appropriate skills. Additional leadership is provided in ratios of one trained

adult, staff member, or guide per 5 Cub Scouts. At least one leader must be trained in first aid including CPR. Any swimming done in conjunction with the activity afloat must be supervised in accordance with BSA Safe Swim Defense standards.

- 2. Personal Health Review** – Completing the BSA Annual Health and Medical Record is required. Are there any restrictions on the part of the participant?
- 3. Swimming Ability** – Complete an annual swim test. Do you know what that is?



- 4. Life Jackets** – Properly fitted United States Coast Guard-approved life jackets are worn by everyone engaged in boating activities.
- 5. Buddy System** – Make sure each member is accounted for, especially when in the water.
- 6. Skill Proficiency** – Everyone in an activity afloat must have sufficient knowledge and skill to participate safely.
- 7. Planning** – Check for weather and contingencies as needed prior to your activity.
- 8. Equipment** – All craft must be suitable for the activity, be seaworthy, and be capable of floating if capsized.
- 9. Discipline** – Remember that rules are only effective when they are followed.

## REQUIREMENT 4

**Demonstrate how to choose and properly wear a life jacket that is the correct size.**

No matter what kind of boating you do, you must wear a properly fitted life jacket. The only life jacket you should use is one that has been approved by the United States Coast Guard.

Here is the performance list of Coast Guard-approved life jackets.



- ▶ Level 50 Buoyancy Aid – Not recommended for weak or nonswimmers. No self-turning ability.
- ▶ Level 70 Buoyancy Aid – Equivalent to the Type III life jackets. They are the most common life jackets worn by recreational boaters. No self-turning ability.
- ▶ Level 100 Life Jacket – High flotation life jacket. Some self-turning ability.
- ▶ Level 150 Life Jacket – High flotation life jacket. Offshore waters, self-turning ability.

You can see if the life jacket has been approved by the Coast Guard by locating the approval information printed on the inside of life jacket. The approval information must be clearly legible. If not, the life jacket has reached the end of its useful life and may not be worn.

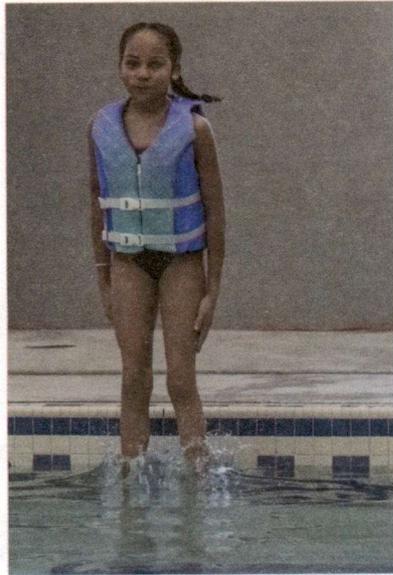
It is required that everyone, Cub Scouts and adults, wear a level 70 life jacket or above during paddle craft activities.

To make sure your life jacket fits, do this:

- ▶ Check the label to see if it's designed for your size and weight.
- ▶ Put the jacket on, buckle it, and tighten the straps.
- ▶ Hold your arms over your head. Have a friend pull up on the tops of the arm openings. If the jacket rides up over your chin or face, it's too loose.

## REQUIREMENT 5

Jump feet first into water over your head while wearing a life jacket. Then swim 25 feet wearing the life jacket.



Swimming with a life jacket is a good way to gain confidence. If your paddle craft were to tip over or you were to fall off your stand-up paddleboard, you would know how to be able to get back on your paddle craft. Paddle craft are designed to float even if they fill with water, so it is best to stay with your paddle craft if you tip over or fall off.



## REQUIREMENT 6

Demonstrate how to enter and exit a canoe, kayak, or stand-up paddleboard safely.

### CANOE

Start with putting the canoe in the water with the stern (back of the boat) in first. Make sure the canoe is fully in the water to avoid “bridging,” in which part of the boat is still on land and the other part in the water. Bridging makes the canoe unstable and dangerous.

Whenever you enter, exit, or move about a canoe, always keep three points of contact by keeping both hands on the gunwales (sides of the canoe) and moving one foot at a time. Stay low by hunching your back and bending your knees; this will make it easier to keep your balance.

Standing outside the canoe in the water, the bow (front) paddler steadies the bow with their knees while holding on to the bow deck plate. Next, with their paddle already in the canoe, the stern (back) paddler steps into the boat on the center line, facing the bow (front), then backs up to the stern and sits or kneels into their position, keeping three points of contact.



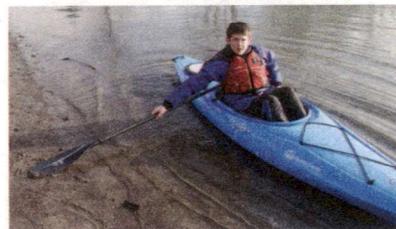
Once in position the stern paddler places their paddle in the water with the blade parallel to the canoe, up to the throat and holds the paddle shaft against the side of the canoe, locking their thumb of the shaft hand over the gunwale. This will reduce the side-to-side motion of the canoe as the bow (front) paddler gets in. The bow paddler places their paddle in the canoe and enters the canoe in the same way the stern (back) paddler did going to the center of the canoe. The stern (back) paddler is in their position and the bow (front) paddler is in the center of the boat. The bow of the boat will float free of the shoreline. The stern (back) paddler back paddles away from the shoreline, and the bow (front) paddler moves forward to their paddling position.

### **KAYAK**

When you kayak you are to always have a buddy, even if you are using a one-person kayak. Buddies with their own kayaks stay close together when they paddle. Having a buddy is not only for safety, but it also makes it easier to enter and exit a kayak.

Start with the kayak on a shallow shoreline. As with a canoe, you will need to wear appropriate shoes for the water.

To keep your kayak stable, bring it parallel to the shore. Use your paddle for balance by placing one end on the shore bank and the other end



just behind the cockpit rim of the kayak. Try to keep three points of contact with the boat such as both hands and a foot, or both feet and your seat. Never try to stand in a kayak. Instead, slide your legs in and out of the cockpit. Move slowly and keep your body low.

Getting out of a kayak is like getting in. As you approach the shallow shoreline, paddle the kayak so that it is parallel with the shore. Use your paddle to stabilize the kayak like you did when you got in. Lift yourself out of the cockpit and sit on the back of the kayak just behind the cockpit. Take your leg out of the cockpit and place it on the shore. Keeping three points of contact, take your second leg out to exit the kayak.

### **STAND-UP PADDLEBOARD**

Start with the stand-up paddleboard on a shallow shoreline. Grab each side of the paddleboard with your hands. Staying low, get on the board using your knees. Place the paddle in front of you parallel to your knees. Stay centered on the stand-up paddleboard. Holding on to the paddle shaft with both hands, slowly stand up keeping hands on the paddle. Stay centered on the paddleboard with your feet square to your shoulders and start to paddle.

To get off a stand-up paddleboard, approach the shallow shoreline slowly. As you approach, lower yourself so you are on your knees, like you were when you started. If the shoreline is soft wait for the stand-up paddleboard to hit the shoreline, then grab each side of the paddleboard with your hands and carefully step off.



## REQUIREMENT 7

**Discuss what to do if your canoe or kayak tips over or you fall off your stand-up paddleboard.**

It's always a good idea to get wet before you get into a paddle craft. Wanting to stay dry when using a paddle craft only adds to the fear of tipping over or falling off. If your canoe or kayak tips over or you fall off your stand-up paddleboard, the first thing to do is remain calm.

The No. 1 rule is to stay with your paddle craft. If you can get back in your paddle craft safely, you'll be surprised to find out that most canoes and kayaks can be paddled even when they are full of water. Paddle your way back to safety. Your buddy boat is there to help.



## REQUIREMENT 8

Learn two paddle strokes: power stroke and sweep.

### CANOE PADDLE

Canoe paddles come in different sizes. The proper size of a paddle is more about comfort and feel than an exact measurement. To see if a paddle is the right size for you, crouch down on land like you would sit or kneel in a canoe. Put the grip of the paddle on the ground with the tip pointing up. The throat of the paddle should be between your shoulder and nose.



### KAYAK PADDLE

A kayak paddle has two blades. It is designed so there is constant power moving the kayak through the water. Kayak paddles are measured in centimeters. The most important thing about selecting a kayak paddle is the comfort of the paddle in your hands. To size your kayak paddle, hold the paddle above your head horizontally (side to side) and centered. With your elbows bent at 90-degree angles, your hands should be 6 to 8 inches from the throat on either end of the paddle.





### **STAND-UP PADDLEBOARD PADDLE**

The paddle for a stand-up paddleboard is long and should be about 8 to 10 inches taller than you are.

### **PADDLE STROKES**

When canoeing, both people in the canoe paddle, usually on opposite sides and stroking at the same time. The person in the back steers and gives directions. The person in the front adds power and helps the canoe go straight.

To stroke a paddle properly, hold it firmly with both hands — one hand on the top of the handle and the other hand just above the throat, the area where the paddle starts to get wide. Bend forward a little, and let your upper body rotate as you paddle.

A kayak paddle has two blades that are curved, like a spoon. The curve of the blade is designed to catch the water. If your kayak paddles have an angled tip to them, the short part of the tip points down and the longer end of the tip points up. Grip the kayak paddle with your hands so they are the same distance from the center of the paddle.

To paddle, pick one side of the paddle to start with and place it forward in the water and pull back. Then place the other side of the paddle in the water and pull back. Rotate your body as you paddle so your arms are not doing all the work.

A stand-up paddleboard paddle is long. You hold it like a canoe paddle with one hand on the top of the handle and the other hand on the shaft. The lower your hand is on the shaft of the paddle the more power you'll get from each stroke. Hold the paddle so that it's comfortable.

### Power Stroke

Paddle strokes have three parts. The parts below describe how to move a paddle craft forward using a power stroke.

► **Catch.** Lower the paddle blade edgewise into the water in front of you, not too deep.

► **Power.** Pull backward.

► **Recover.** Position the paddle forward ready to begin another stroke.



**Backstroke.** To do the backstroke, push on the paddle instead of pulling.



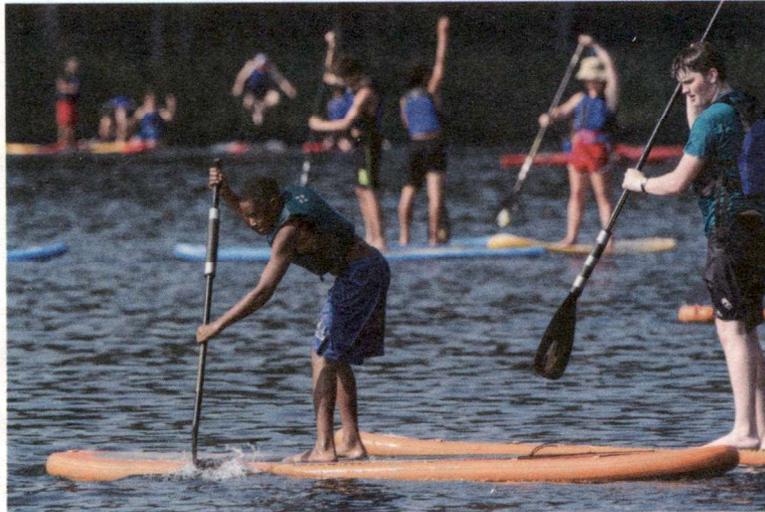
### Sweep

Use sweeps to turn a canoe. Reach out with the paddle and move it in a quarter circle, either forward or backward. Or use draw and pry strokes, pulling or pushing the paddle straight toward or away from the canoe.

Now it's your chance to demonstrate these steps. You can practice before you get into a boat by standing in knee-high water and paddling like you would if you were in or on your paddle craft. Using a real paddle, demonstrate the correct form for paddling.

## REQUIREMENT 9

Have 30 minutes or more of canoe, kayak, or stand-up paddleboard time.



Follow Safety Afloat. Make sure that you are on flat water and check the weather. A flat-water lake or river can become difficult to paddle in if it is windy. You want good paddling conditions when you're learning.

Canoes, kayaks, and stand-up paddleboards are all different. You may find that you like one better than the other or that you like all of them.