

WELCOME

A SmartStart for Paddlers!

American Canoe Association

Hi, I'm _____

_____ from the _____

and we offer a free presentation on paddlesport safety. Paddlesport is growing rapidly into one of America's

most popular outdoor activities. We want everyone to be safe and to have fun on the water. Every paddler is responsible for their own safety and needs knowledge and skills to be able to exercise good judgment in this potentially hazardous environment. This presentation contains useful information on safety, and helpful tips on boating skills.

Don't let accidents happen and make safety a priority! Remember, you're in Command!

CANOE · KAYAK · SUP · RAFT · RESCUE



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American Canoe Association



WELCOME



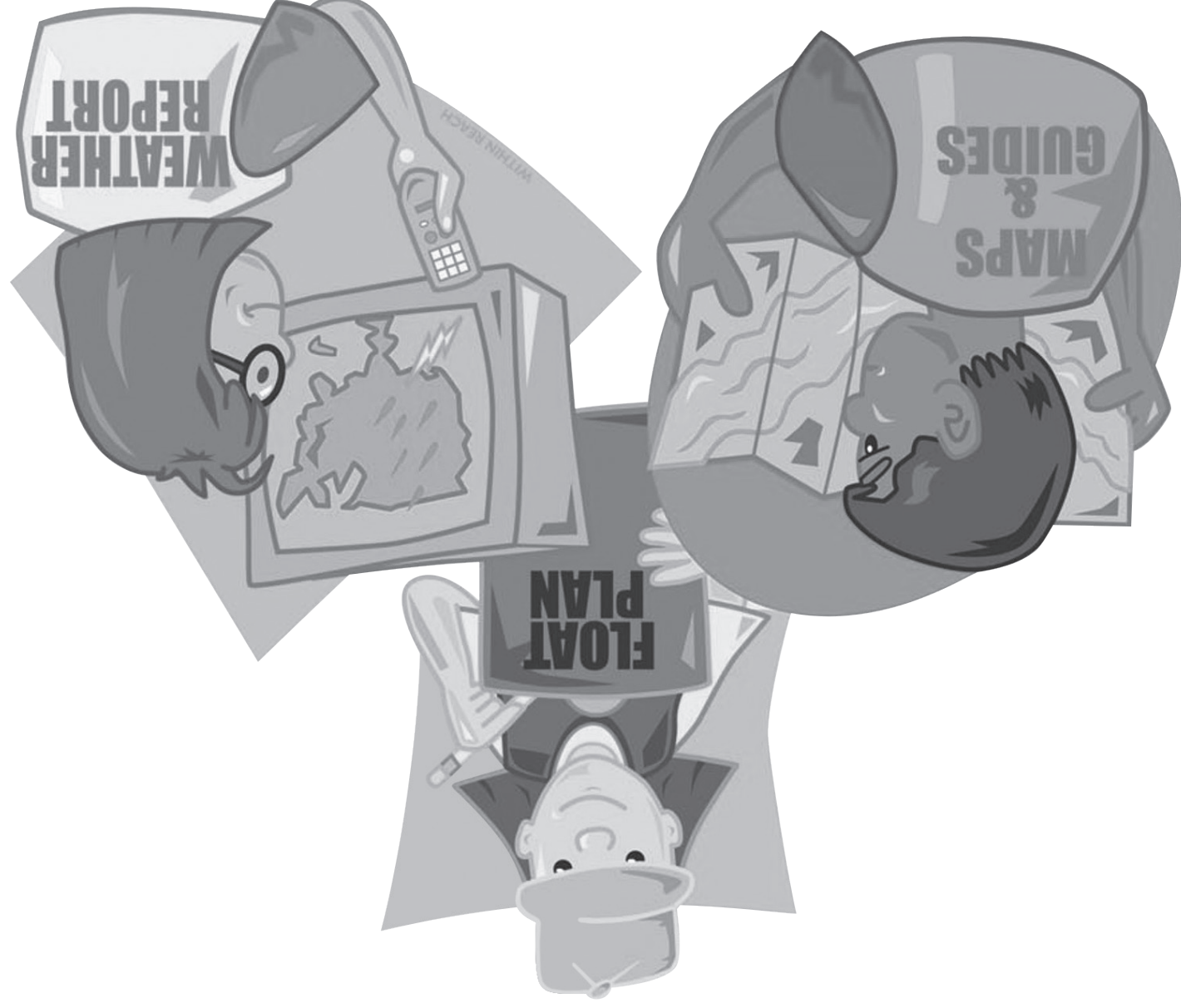
Produced under a grant from the Aquatic Resources (Wallop/Breaux)
Trust Fund administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

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Know Before You Go!

A few safety tips can help you enjoy a great paddling trip. Think for a moment, what do you need to be safe, comfortable, and to have fun?

First of all, paddling can be safely enjoyed, but accidents do happen. Carry applicable maps or charts, and a compass if needed. Plan an emergency course of action, and leave it with a friend, relative, or outfitter/marina. **This is your float plan.**



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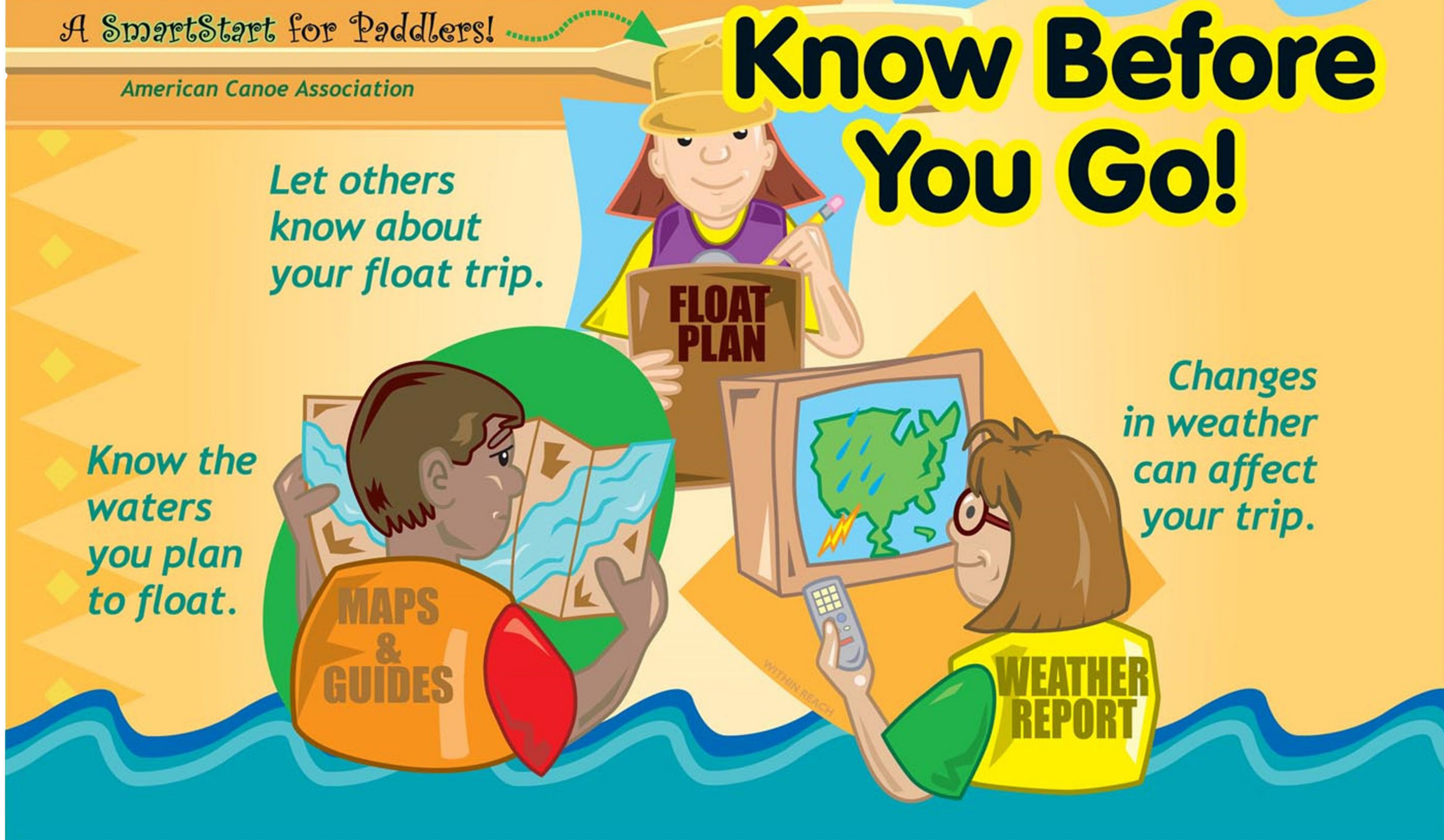
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Know Before You Go!

*Let others
know about
your float trip.*

*Know the
waters
you plan
to float.*

*Changes
in weather
can affect
your trip.*



Help Keep America Safe

Because of Homeland Security concerns, many Federal properties now have security zones. Naval vessel protection zones direct boaters to stay at least 100 yards away from all large Naval vessels (unless directed to approach) as well as installations, piers, and other security zones. Make sure you know about local restrictions too. **Help keep America safe!**

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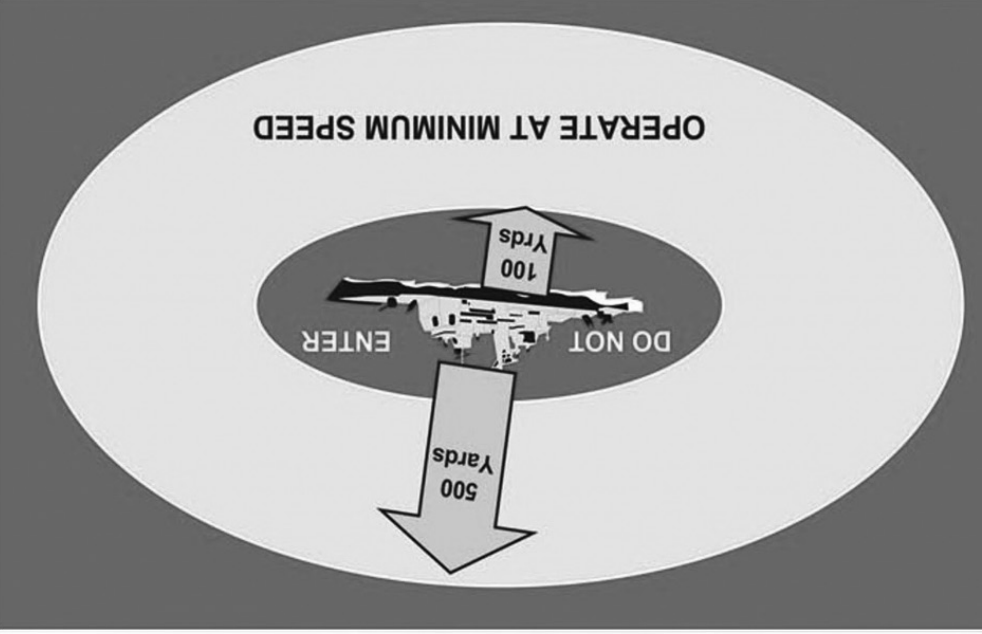
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WARNING!

Do not approach within 100 yards of any U.S. naval vessel. If you need to pass within 100 yards of a U.S. naval vessel in order to ensure a safe passage in accordance with the Navigation Rules, you must contact the U.S. naval vessel or the Coast Guard escort vessel on VHF-FM channel 16.

You must operate at minimum speed within 500 yards of any U.S. naval vessel and proceed as directed by the Commanding Officer or the official patrol.

Violations of the Naval Vessel Protection Zone are a felony offense, punishable by up to 6 years in prison and/or up to \$250,000 in fines.



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Be alert. Be safe. Be secure.

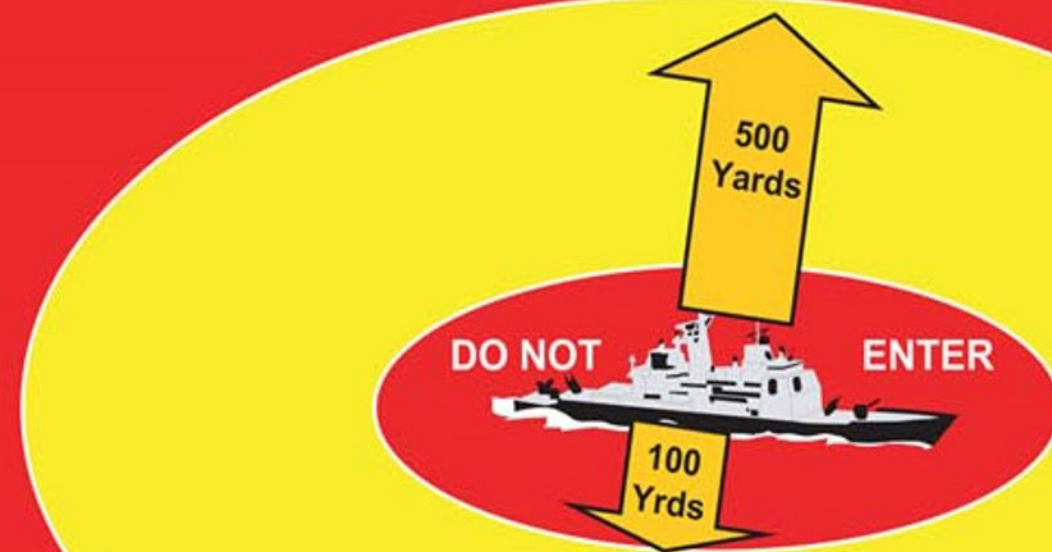
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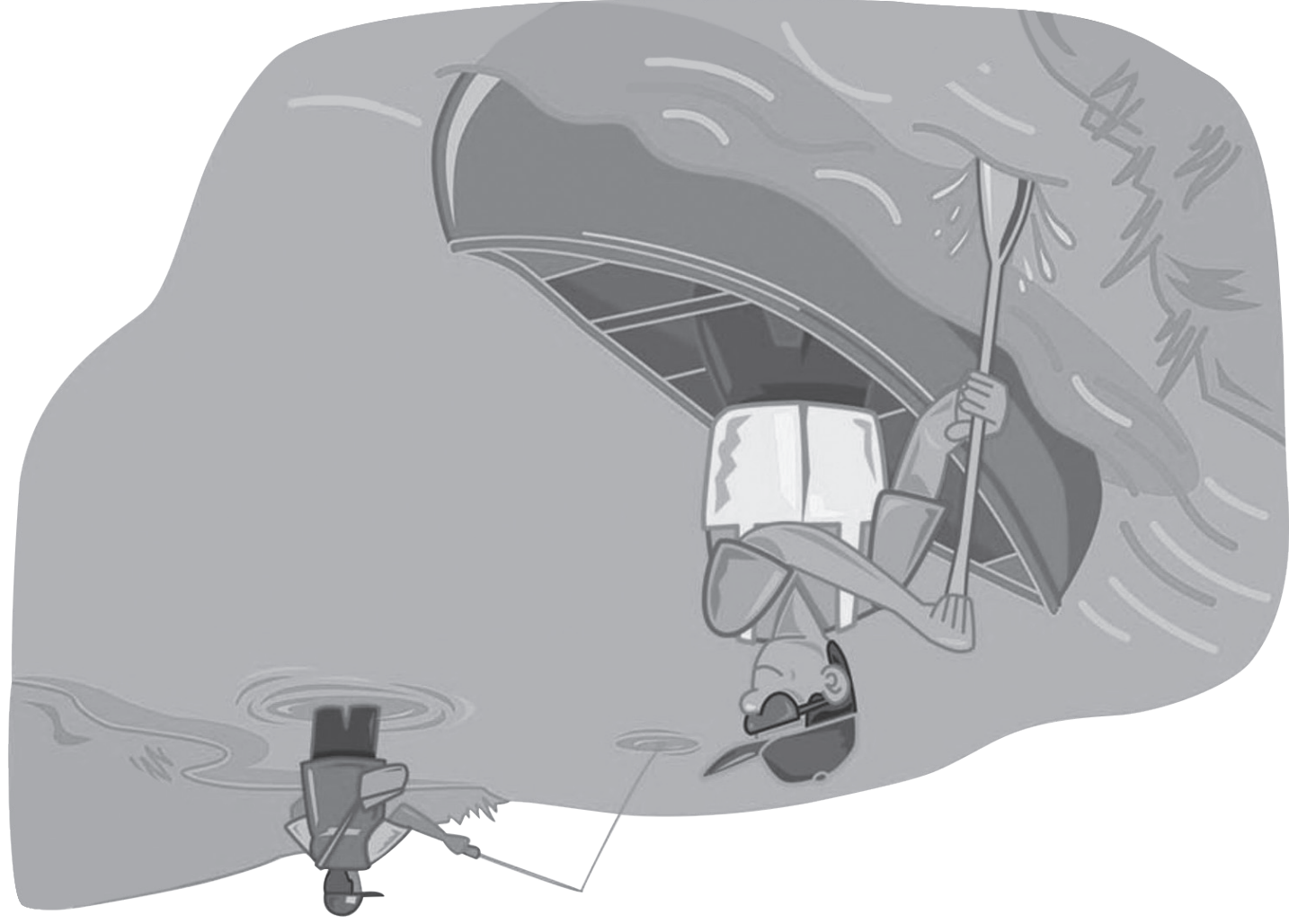
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OPERATE AT MINIMUM SPEED

Be Considerate of Others



Respect other users. Paddle as far away from anglers as practical, and cross busy waterways only when necessary and as quickly as possible. (Right angles are best). Also respect landowners. Don't trespass and leave no litter.

Leave the area cleaner than you found it.



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Be Considerate of Others



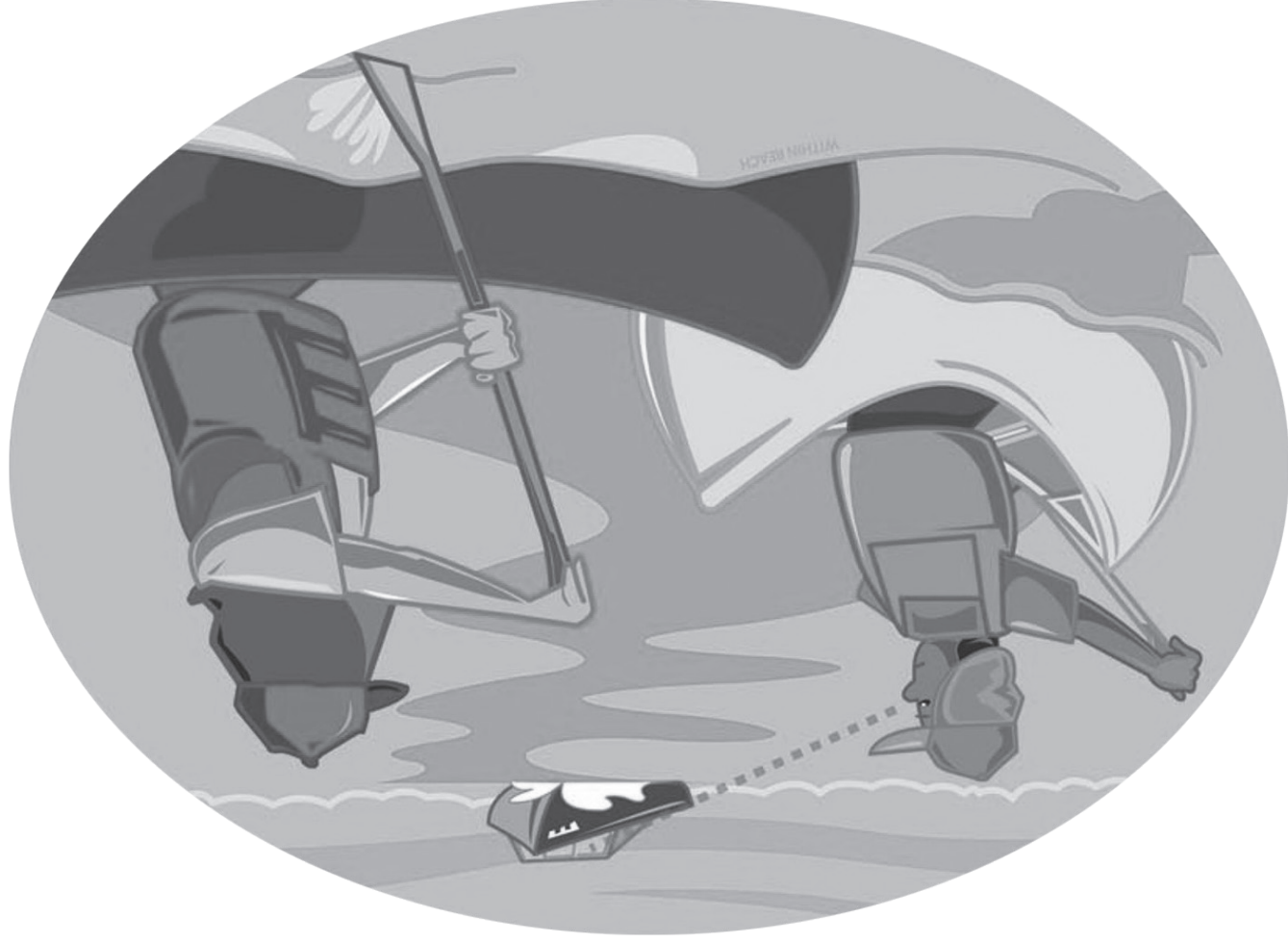
*Give others the
room they need.*

*Keep the
scene clean
and pick-up
all litter.*



Pay Attention!

Remember that people on larger, faster boats may not be able to see you, so stay alert and ready to move out of danger. Wear bright, reflective clothing. All boats are required to display proper navigation lights in conditions of low visibility. For canoes and kayaks, a bright flashlight will usually do. The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) also requires all boats to carry a loud whistle or other sound-signaling device. These are used to communicate with other boats, or to signal for help. The recognized emergency signal is five or more short blasts on a whistle or horn.



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Pay Attention!

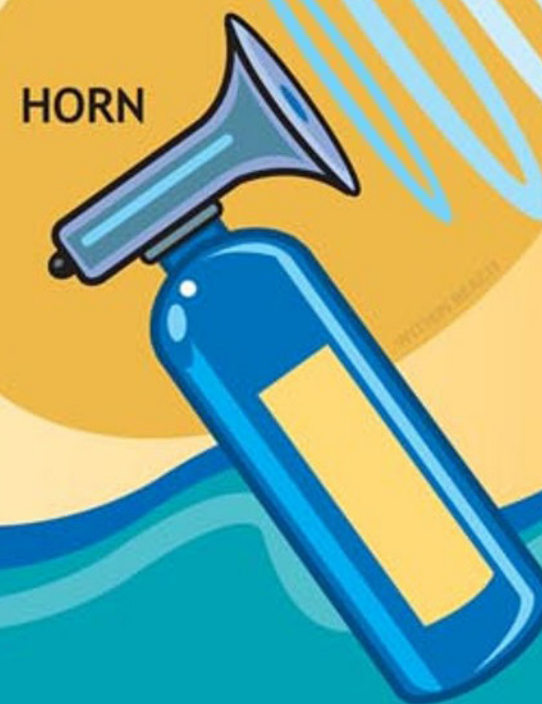
Stay alert and be ready to move out of danger.



FLASHLIGHT



WHISTLE



HORN

STAY VISIBLE:
*others
may
not
see you.*

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Never Boat Under the Influence

Paddling with a group is much safer than

traveling alone, and
please, no alcohol while

boating; you'll need
your wits about you!

**Never boat under
the influence.**



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Never Boat Under the Influence



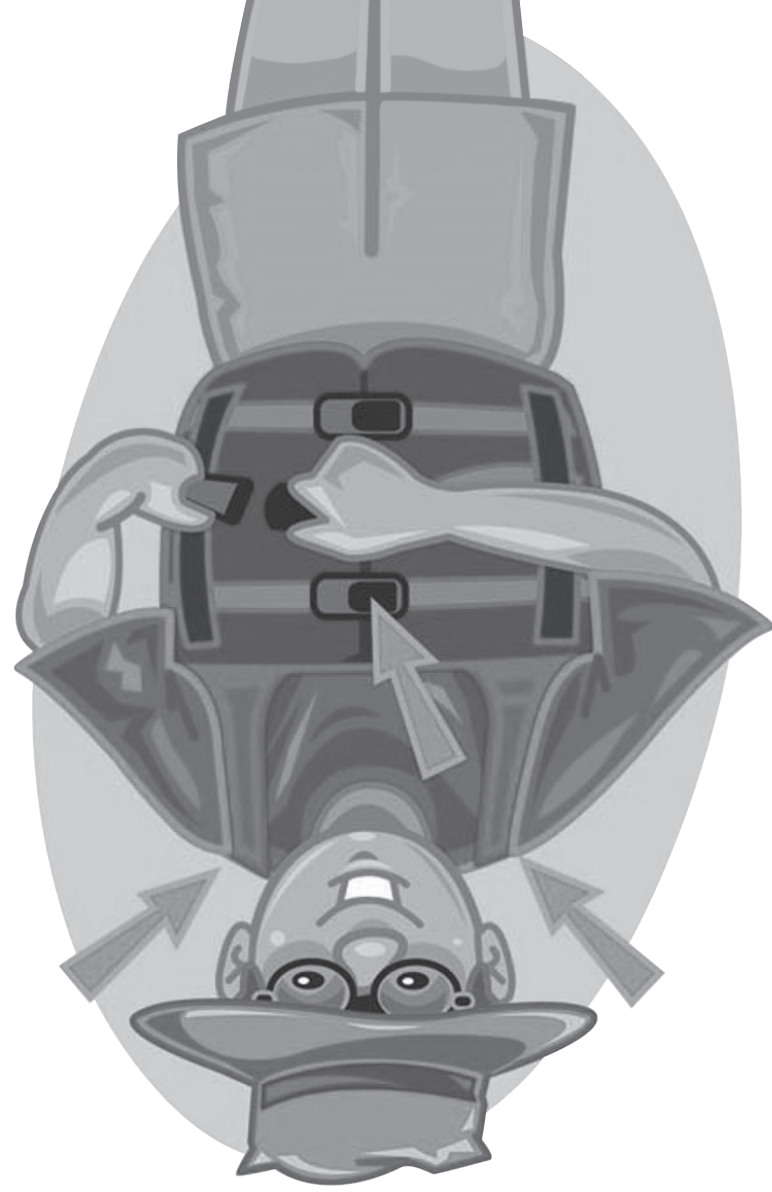
A group of paddlers is safer, but this should not be a drinking party!



WEAR IT!

Always wear a life jacket. These boats can be easily tipped over, and you need practice to reliably empty and reenter them. Meanwhile you will be in the water, which is often shockingly cold!

Gulping in a little water can start respiratory distress, you may experience cramping, or perhaps you've been injured. All these things can lead to swimming difficulties. Wearing a properly fitted life jacket (meaning snug!) is good insurance. This is such a simple safety measure. **Wear a properly fitted life jacket!**



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WEAR IT!

Be safe,
keep your
life jacket
snug.



Buckle-up!

Zip-up!

The right fit
provides
the right
flotation.



It doesn't
work if
you don't
wear it!



WITHIN REACH

PFD Types

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There are five

types of Personal

Flotation Devices.

It is important to

understand the

tradeoffs, the

strengths and

weaknesses of

each type, in

order to choose

the correct one for

your intended use.

The types are:

Off-Shore Life Jackets: Intended for offshore use because of their bulk. They are not recommended for paddlers.

Near-Shore Buoyancy Vests: Intended for calm, inland waters. They are not recommended for paddlers.

Flotation Aids: Intended for calm, inland waters. They are recommended for paddlers.

Throwable Devices: Should NOT replace a wearable life jacket. These are not required on canoes or kayaks.

Special-Use Devices: They may be appropriate and recommended for certain uses by paddlers.

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PFD TYPES

Read the life jacket's label.



Off-Shore Life Jackets:

Intended for offshore because of their bulk. They are not recommended for paddlers.



Near-Shore Buoyancy Vests:

Intended for calm, inland waters. They are not recommended for paddlers.



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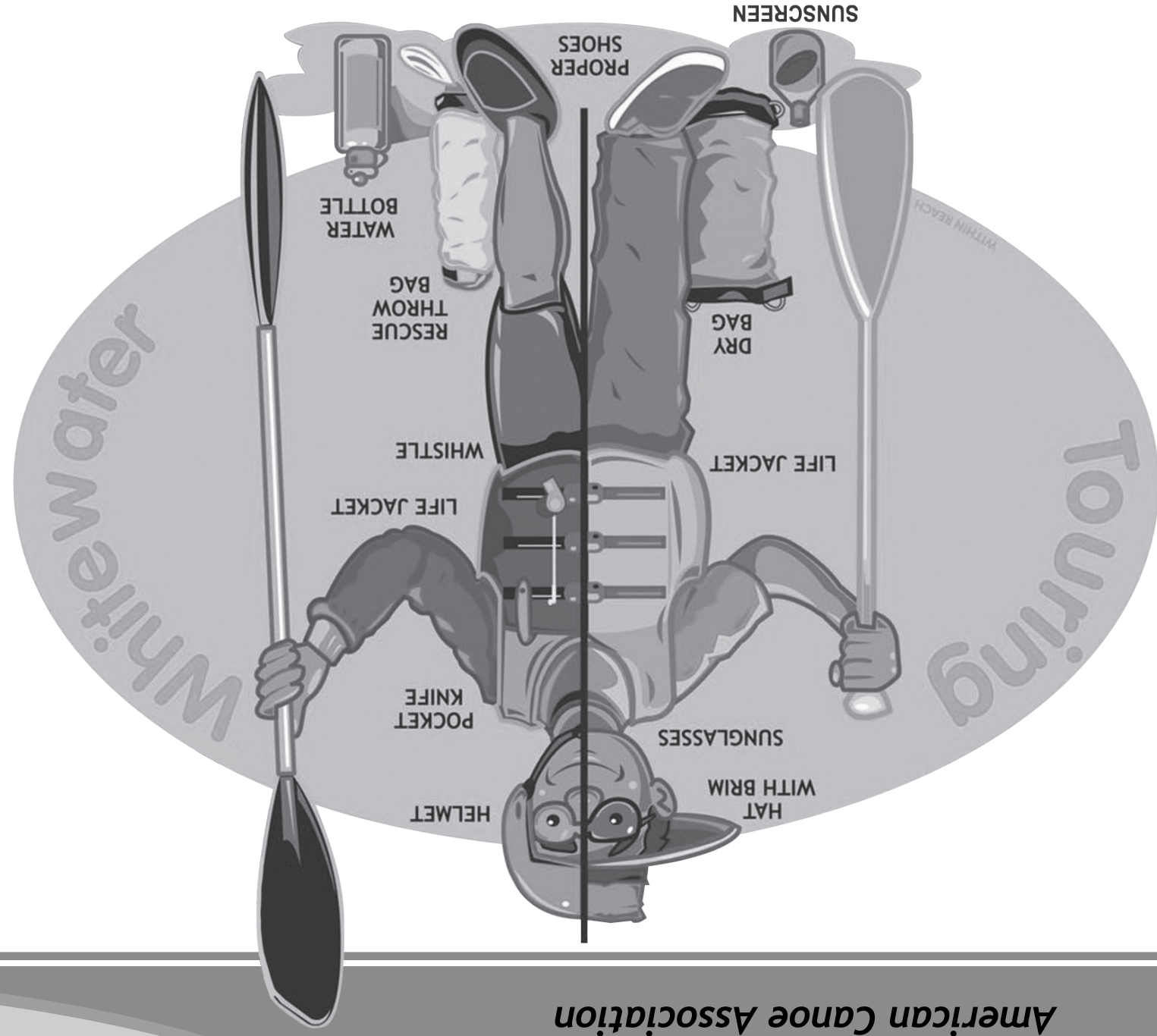
Special-Use Devices:

They may be appropriate and recommended for certain uses by paddlers.

Dress for Safety

Watch out for sharp objects around shore. Always wear shoes that will stay on your feet if you swim. River sandals, running shoes or wetsuit booties work best.

Clothes to fit the conditions, that you might have to swim in, will make you more comfortable. If the weather is sunny, sunscreen and a hat will help. On rainy days an insulation layer and a rain jacket can keep you comfortable and enjoying the trip. And no matter what the weather, **take plenty of drinking water.**



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Dress for Safety

*Be prepared
to be safe.*

*Be
prepared
to enjoy
your trip.*

*What
waters do
you expect
to paddle and
are you prepared?*

Touring

White Water



WITHIN REACH

Cold Water



If the water is very cold, or if the air and water

temperature don't add up to at least 120 degrees Fahrenheit, you may want a wetsuit, or a paddler's dry suit. Hypothermia is a very real danger, even on nice days. Know the H.E.L.P. and Huddle

techniques. They can save you if shore is not within swimming

distance. Stay with your boat. It offers useful floatation and is

more visible to rescuers than a swimmer. Consider taking along a

change of dry warm clothing in a waterproof container in case you do get wet and cold. These boats can be easily tipped over. If

you're properly dressed and prepared capsizing doesn't have to

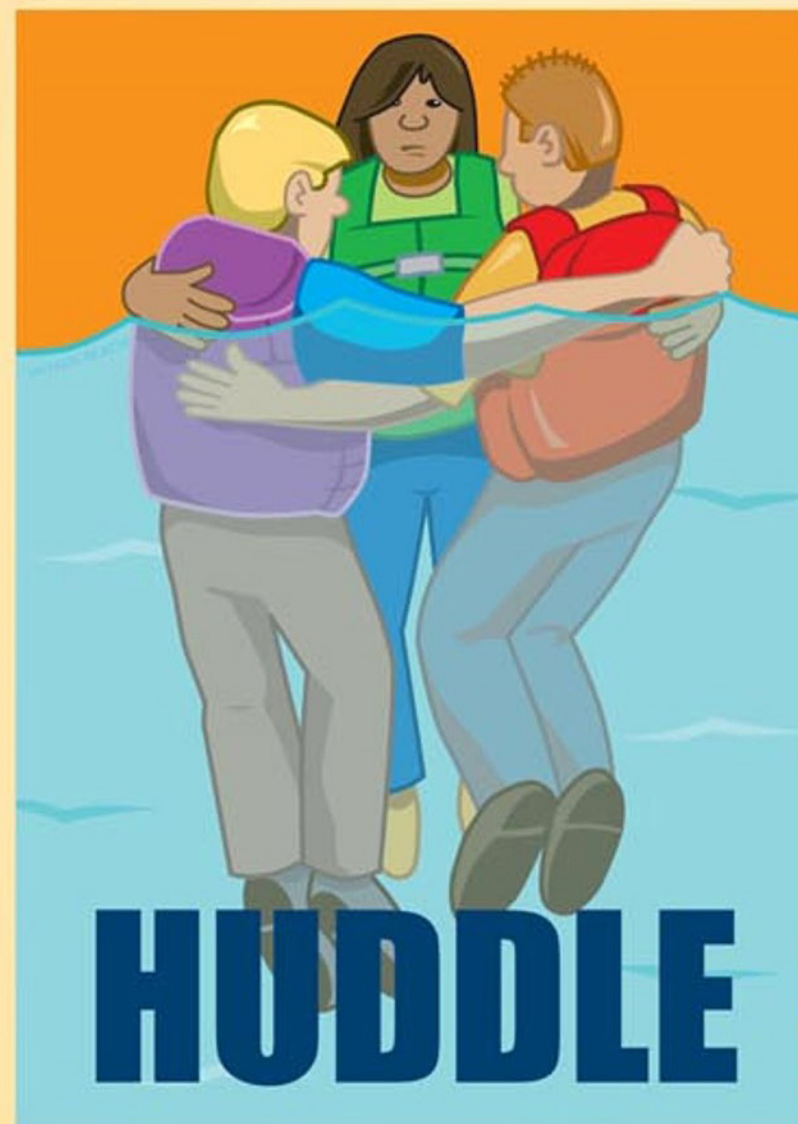
become an emergency situation.



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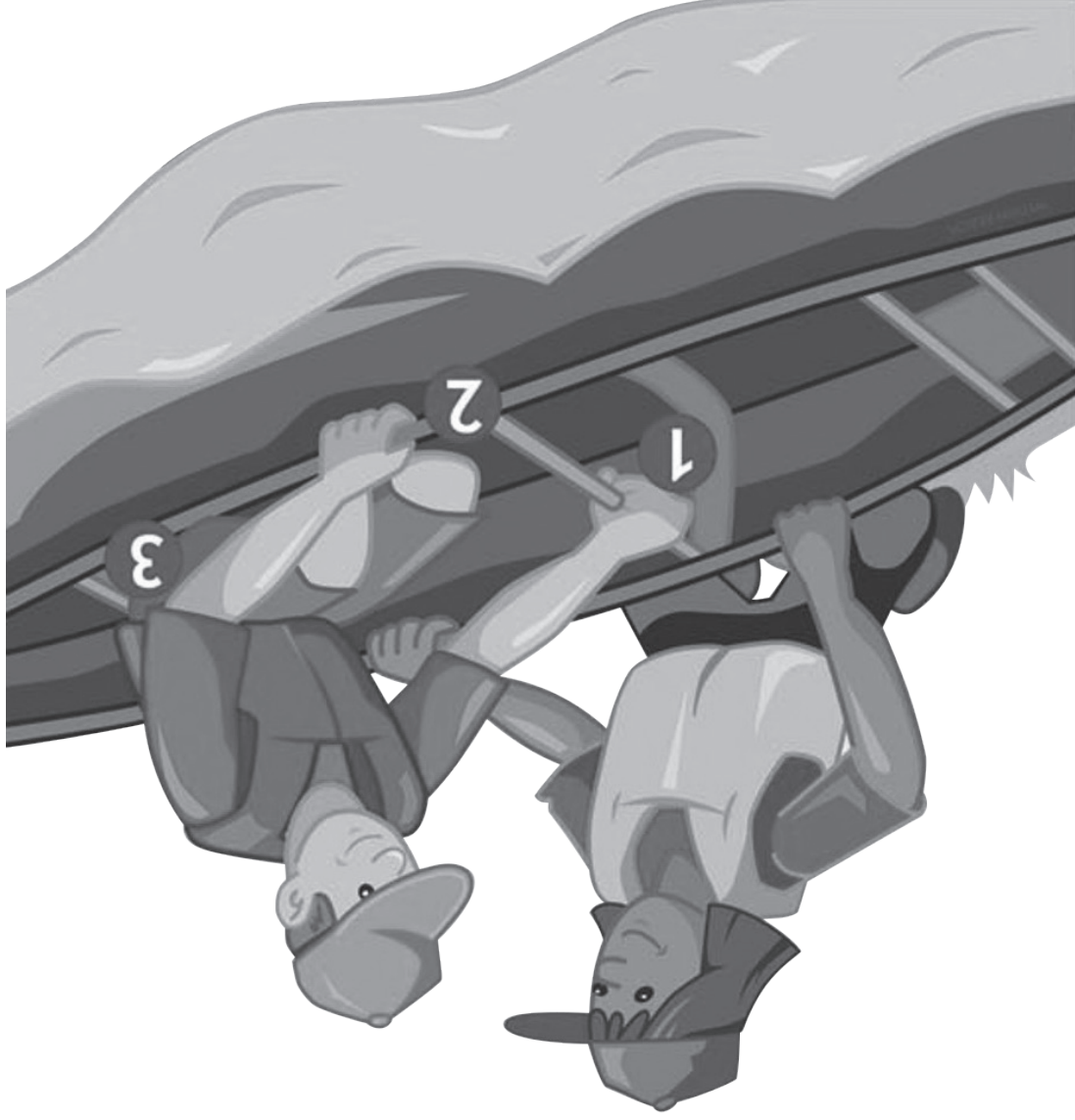
Cold Water



AVOID HYPOTHERMIA!

Boarding

Getting in these boats can be challenging. Bring the boat parallel to the shore or dock. Then always try to keep three points of contact with the boat, such as both hands and a foot, or both feet and your seat. Move slowly and keep your weight low. If two folks are getting in a tandem boat, the heavier one usually gets in the back (or stern) and does so first while the front (or bow) paddler holds and steadies the boat. The stern paddler then steadies the boat while the bow paddler gets in. The order is reversed for exiting the boat, with the stern paddler out last.



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Boarding

*Be a steadying influence on
your partner!*



*Keep at least three points
of contact and stay low for balance.*



Keep it Stable!

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Moving around in a canoe or kayak can be an unsettling experience. Minimize that

low and balanced over the centerline of the boat. Remember, three points of contact at all times! Your shoulders should stay within the sides to keep the boat from tipping over. If you lean over the edge of the boat, you can “kick” the boat out from under you! Keeping your paddle in the water will help to stabilize the boat. Any gear (bags, coolers, etc.) should be tied in and kept low and in the middle of the boat for improved stability.



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Keep It Stable!

Keep your weight low and balanced over the centerline of the boat.

DANGER

Leaning shoulders outside the edge of the boat can lead to capsize.

WITHIN REACH



Weather and Waves



Watch out for weather changes. Check the weather prior to beginning and during a float trip. Wind can blow you off course and can form large waves. Larger, faster boats can form large waves (wakes), too. If you come across waves, try to avoid having them hit your boat sideways. Angle your boat across the wave for the driest ride. Of course, other weather conditions like torrential downpour or lightning can be big dangers too. Fog and darkness are also hazards. Stay alert.

Before conditions deteriorate, get off the water.



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Weather and Waves

If waves do kick up,
take them at an
angle to stay dry.

WITHIN REACH

HAZARDS

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Avoid extreme conditions because high water, wind, or fast

current carry increased risk. Be aware that even gentle current can cause dangerous hazards, like strainers. These are trees, rock sieves, piers, docks, etc., that allow water through. Gentle current can generate enough force to hold and trap boats and people against these strainers, so they are serious hazards. Avoid them! Fast water may create waves, eddies, and powerful currents that require training and practice to navigate. Even gentle rivers may contain hazards, such as Low-Head Dams. These are dams with water flowing over the top. They have powerful churning currents on the downstream side and are life threatening, even when the drop is only a few inches. Since these can be invisible from upstream the paddler must be familiar with the intended route. Check guidebooks, maps, outfitters, and other paddlers for information on possible hazards. **Remember, when in doubt, get out and scout!**

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HAZARDS

Stay away from strainers!



*These extreme conditions are dangerous—avoid them.
When in doubt, scout!*

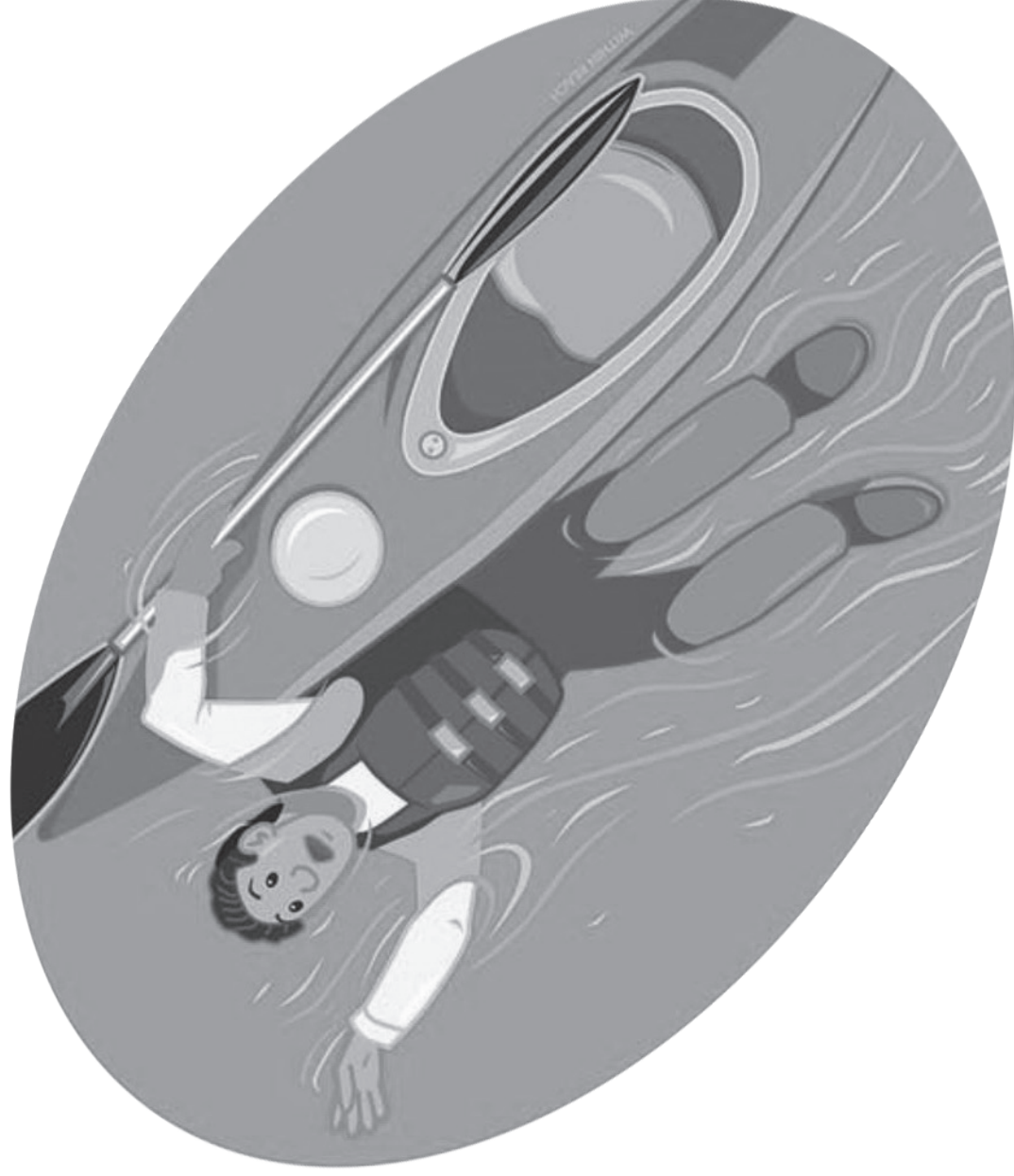
Stay away from low-head dams!



WETVIR BEACH

Plan to Get Wet!

Build confidence by practicing rescue on a nice day in a safe environment. Paddlecraft are usually small, light and easily tipped - capsizes are common. If you do tip over in current keep your body flat on the surface with your feet up. Back stroke to shore. Stand up only when the water is knee deep or less to avoid the serious hazard of foot entrapment in underwater rocks or strainers. If you are close to shore just swim your boat to the edge and dump out the water. Re-enter and you're on your way.



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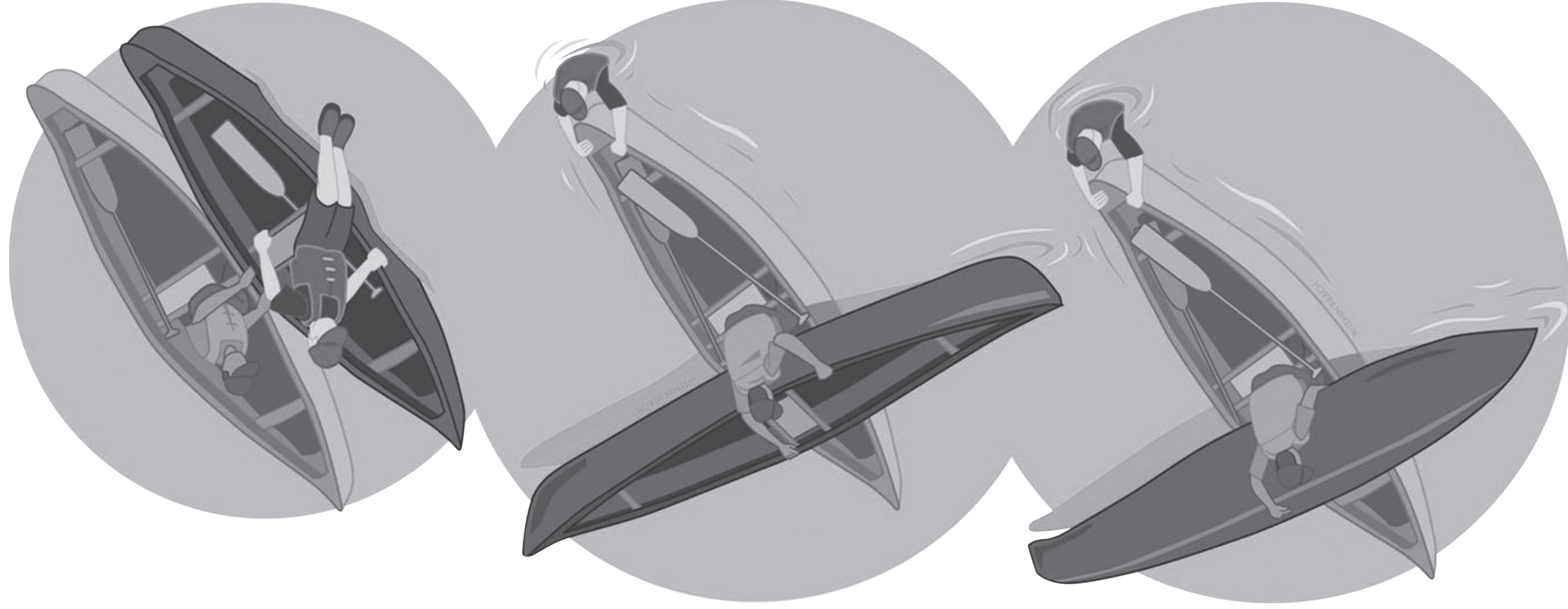
Plan to Get Wet!

If you fall out in current, keep
your feet on the surface and
swim to
shore.



Dump the water out,
re-enter and you're on your way.

Practice Re-entry



If you're too far out to swim your gear to shore, get your companions to help you empty and re-enter your boat. A little planning and practice can keep a swim from becoming a big emergency.

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Practice Re-entry

A



B

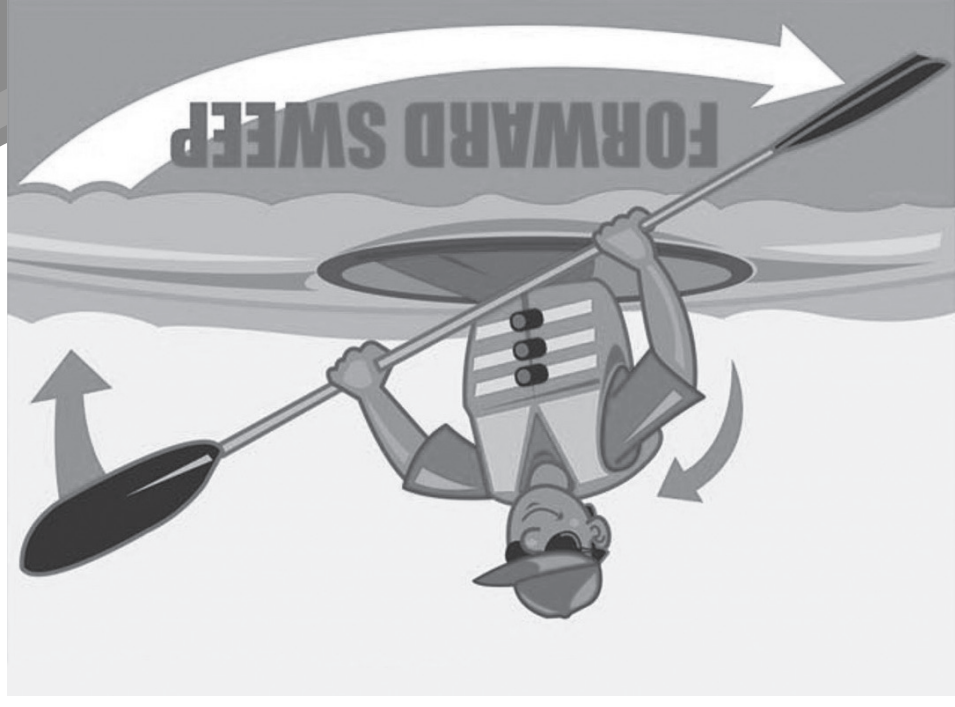


C



Kayaking is Easy and Fun!

Paddling a kayak is easy. Alternate taking paddle strokes on each side to go straight. Position your hands evenly along the paddleshaft, at least shoulder width apart and keep the blade close to the boat to track in a straight line. Sweep the paddle through the water in an arc away from the boat to turn. Back paddle to stop. If two people share a tandem kayak they should paddle on the same side at the same time, to avoid getting tangled up!



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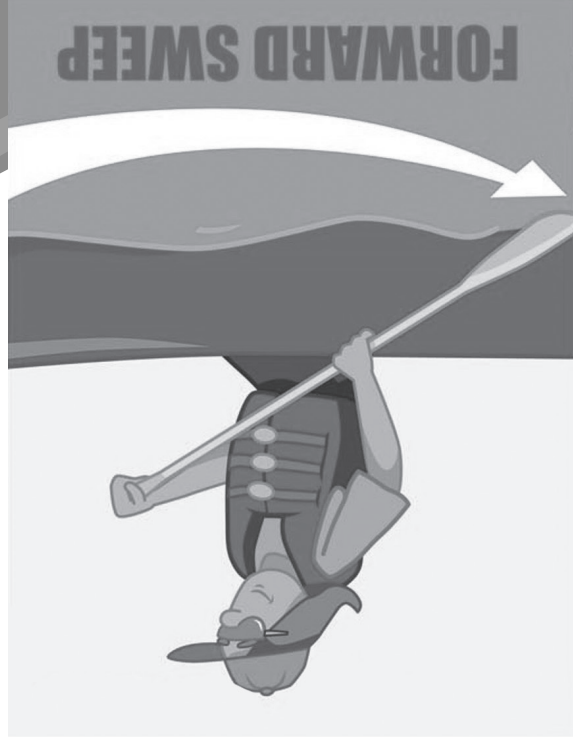
Kayaking is Easy and Fun!



Canoeing is Easy and Fun!

Paddling a Canoe is easy. Boats tend to turn away from a solo boater's paddle, or from the stern paddle in a tandem canoe. This veering can be simply fixed by switching sides every few strokes. Keep your paddleblade close to the side of the boat to track in the straightest line and to make switching sides less frequent. In most boats five to ten strokes per side is about right. To turn easily, sweep the paddle through the water in an arc away from the boat. Back paddle to stop the canoe. When paddling in tandem, canoe partners should always paddle on opposite sides, and time their strokes to be together. **Lots of communication will**

allow paddlers to work together to go straight, turn, or stop.



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Canoeing is Easy and Fun!



The Law and You

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Applicable Federal and State Laws and Regulations:

Federal requirements include carriage of personal flotation devices, sound producing devices, compliance with the navigation rules, and not boating under the influence of alcohol and dangerous drugs.



Some state requirements may also include having a boat registration, a launch use permit, an anchor, extra paddle, or attendance of a boating safety class. It is your responsibility to check with marine patrol officers (waterways law enforcement) for regulations that apply in your area. These officers can also provide valuable reports on current water conditions and other useful information.

Boat defensively. Watch out for other boats. You will know and follow the rules, but other boaters may not.

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The Law and You

Officers can provide regulatory information, valuable reports on current water conditions and other useful information.



It is your responsibility to know the regulations which apply to where you boat.

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**Know
and
Enjoy More!**

**Paddling is a wonderful, diverse, healthy
pastime.** You will be much safer, and enjoy the sport
more, if you learn more about it. Educational videos and
books, plus information on lessons from certified instructors
are available from the American Canoe Association. This

presentation cannot take the place of appropriate instruction
for paddling, swimming, or lifesaving techniques. Every
effort has been made to make this guide as accurate as
possible, but it is the ultimate responsibility of the paddler to
judge his or her ability and act accordingly.

**Contact the
American Canoe Association:
www.americancanoe.org**



**Enjoy your trip, and please,
wear your life jacket!**

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Learn more! www.americancanoe.org



CANOE • KAYAK • SUP • RAFT • RESCUE

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Know and Enjoy More!



The more you learn, the safer you'll be and the more fun you'll have!

