

Small Boats Permission

Do you want to use a...

Single?

Double?

Pair?



Small boats (i.e. sculls and pairs) use is restricted by the club for reasons of safety.

The water we boat in can be extremely dangerous. The deep water shipping channel is only 200m from the clubhouse and is constantly used by large ships which are slow to manoeuvre. The catamaran ferry and hovercraft are some of the fastest craft afloat and, along with the many fishing and pleasure boats, makes our water hazardous even before we consider sea and weather conditions.

The current at the entrance to Portsmouth harbour, over 4 knots at spring floods, is one of the strongest in the country. Wind against tide can cause very rough seas. These conditions can, and do, change in a matter of minutes from safe to very difficult. Overfalls, areas of rough water caused by strong tides over an uneven seabed, are an additional hazard which affect our water. This patch of rough water can form anywhere from the harbour entrance to the Sealife Centre depending upon wind and tide.

For the inexperienced an offshore wind can be the most hazardous, i.e. a north-easterly wind. The conditions look perfect, the sea is flat being sheltered by the land. However, small boats are easily blown out into the shipping lane, and away from the shelter of the land where the wind is stronger, the waves larger, and the conditions get worse very quickly.

Close to shore are additional hazards, fishing lines, swimmers, and underwater obstructions such as posts, groynes and rocks.

It can be seen that rowing from Southsea can be very dangerous. This applies to fours as well as small boats, though with fours an experienced cox greatly reduces the risk.

For the reasons stated, a reasonable knowledge of the weather, tides, local conditions, basic navigation, rules of the road, buoyage and an awareness of others is required as well as proficiency in the boat before any small boats permission can be granted.

1. SMALL BOATS PERMISSION

If you wish to use the following types of boats:

- Single (1X)
- Double (2X)
- Pair (2-)

Then you must apply in writing to the committee for small boats permission (Committee meetings are generally held on the second Wednesday of each month).

Initially, provisional small boats permission will be granted to the applicant provided:

- You only go out when supervised (supervision means the ability to intervene if things go wrong);
- You only go out when the sea and weather conditions are suitable;
- You stay outside the club.

Once provisional small boats permission has been granted you may then apply in writing to the committee for full small boats permission.

Full small boats permission will be granted by the committee when the applicant can demonstrate:

- Control of their boat in all conditions;
- Reasonable knowledge of tides, local conditions, basic navigation and hazards particular to Southsea.

Full small boats permission can be rescinded from a member at any time if the committee feel it is needed.

Sculls/Doubles and Pairs will be treated separately.

A list of those with Small Boats Permission will be maintained on the notice board.

2. BOATS YOU CAN USE

With provisional small boats permission the club boats you may use are:

- Bertie Hooper (1X)
- Lancelot (1X)
- Peggy (2-)
- Freda (2X)

With full small boats permission the club boats you may also use are (only with permission from the captain or vice-captain):

- Jack Knighton (1X)
- Katie (2-)

3. SHOULD I GO OUT?

Before you go out, ask yourself...

- Is my competence suitable for the conditions?
 - o What is the Wind/Tide doing?
 - o Is it safe to go out?
- Am I wearing the correct clothing?
 - o Do you have the correct type of clothing on?
 - o Do you have enough clothing?
- Is the boat safe?
 - o Are the heel restraints fitted correctly?
 - o Is there a cord between the tongues of the shoes?
 - o Are the buoyancy compartments sealed?
 - o Is the Hull damaged?
 - o Are the riggers and gates on correctly?
- Do I know what to do if a capsize / incident occurs?
 - o Have I read the capsize drill posters in the club?
- Have I signed out?

Remember...

If in doubt, don't go out

Southsea Rowing Club has a number of lifejackets specifically designed to be used while rowing. Please ask if you would like to wear one.



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4. GETTING THE BOAT OUT THE BOATHOUSE

Make sure you have trestles out before you get the boat out:

- Singles use the small folded trestles in the singles bay.
- Pairs and doubles use the same low trestles that the fours use.

Don't obstruct access to the slipway with your trestles.

Singles

The easiest way to get a single out when you start is to get the help of another member - each hold an end of the boat.

Singles can be carried by a single person:

- Stand next to the rigger so that the rigger is closer to the stern than you are (if rigged).
- Put a hand on either side of the boat.
- Lift the boat around the balance point (this may take some practice).



Take care in high winds, as the boat can get blown around.

Ask for advice from an experienced member for help.

Doubles

Doubles need two people to carry. Each person carries an end of the boat.



Pairs

Pairs need two people to carry. Each person carries an end of the boat.

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5. RIGGING

The boat may be unrigged on the rack, in which case you will need to rig the boat before you can use it. In any case, at races you will be expected to rig the boat you will be racing in.

The riggers have tape on that are colour coded, with the same colour tape on the boat and the riggers.

Some important points to remember when rigging:

- The backstay of the rigger should go on the side towards the bow;
- All rigger bolts should have washers on;
- The washers should be between the riggers and the nuts;
- Riggers should not be put on too tightly, the nuts should be finger tight, with a half turn from a spanner;
- Remember the seat! There is nothing worse than getting the boat on the water and forgetting to have put the seat in;
- Remember to adjust any settings before you get on the water;
- The gates should be pointing towards the stern of the boat, so the oars are on the stern side of the pin.



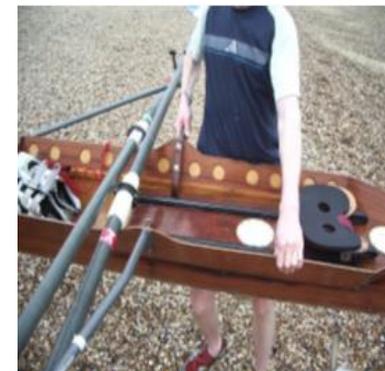
6. HOW TO GET THE BOAT FROM THE CLUB TO THE WATER

Before boating, make sure you've signed out with the date, time, boat and destination in the signing out book first.

Plan your route down to the water before you pick the boat up.

Singles

1. Put both sculls in the gates and place across the boat, tuck the handles under the riggers;
2. Stand next to the rigger so that the rigger is closer to the stern than you are;
3. Place one hand across the boat and hold the far saxboard;
4. Place the other hand on the saxboard/rigger next to you;
5. Lift the boat around the balance point (this may take some practice).



Doubles

1. Put both sculls in the gates and place across the boat, tuck the handles under the riggers;
2. Stand on opposite sides and ends of the boat;
3. Take hold of a major rib of the boat and lift.



Pairs

1. Put oars in the gates and place the oars across the boat;
2. Stand opposite your rigger;
3. Take hold of a major rib of the boat and lift.

Be careful as you walk down to the beach, the shingle can move from under your feet, the shingle may be steep and at low tides the stones at the waters edge can be very slippery.

7. LAUNCHING

Carry the boat far enough into the sea to avoid the shoreline. Be aware rocks may be lurking just under the surface you can't see, this is especially true when the tide is low.

Place the bow facing into the waves (or the wind if it is stronger).

Singles

1. Push the oars out until the collars of the oars are against the gates;
2. Hold the handles of the oars together – this provides a firm platform to avoid falling in;
3. Get your bum in first, then swing in your legs.



Doubles

1. Push the oars out until the collars of the oars are against the gates;
2. Hold handles of oars together – this provides a firm platform to avoid falling in;
3. Bow person should get in first (get in as for a single) and start rowing as necessary to keep the boat facing into the waves and off the shore.
4. Stroke person get in (get in as for a single).

Pairs

1. Push the oars out until the collars of the oars are against the gates.
2. Person furthest from shore should get in first – hold the oar against the saxboard and get your bum in first followed by your legs
3. The person in the boat should start rowing as necessary to keep the boat facing into the waves and off the shore.
4. Other person get in (get in as above).

Once in the boat row a couple of strokes to get away from the shore before sorting your feet out.

Keep an eye out to avoid drifting too close to the shore or your bow being turned from pointing into the waves while sorting your feet out.

Be aware of the wash from any ferries etc... when deciding to launch. This can be especially dangerous when the water is flat or at low tides when the washes can get bigger as they approach shore! Wait until any washes have died down before boating.

8. WHERE CAN I ROW (INCLUDING MAJOR HAZARDS)

Those with provisional small boats permission may only row outside the club.

Those with full small boats permission may row between Eastney and the harbour entrance.

Those with full small boats permission may row into Portsmouth harbour with the approval from a club officer (approval required on each occasion). Small boats must always be accompanied when in the harbour.



There are a number of hazards on the sea we row:

- Fishing lines from the beach and piers;
- Swimming only area marked by four yellow buoys parallel to the shore;
- Submarine blocks to the East of South Parade Pier, do not go over the blocks, even when they are submerged. Use the channel marked by the red and green posts;
- There are a number of buoys marking the shipping channel and windsurfer areas;
- Posts mark the entrance to Portsmouth harbour and the safe channel through the submarine blocks.
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You should aim to look over your shoulder about once every 3 – 5 strokes to ensure you are going in the desired direction (and not about to hit anything).

When the buoy is out in front of the club, keep an eye out for members who are using it to practice buoy turns. Boats may be rowing in and out of the buoy at race pace.

9. CONDITIONS

Look at the direction of the wind. It is possible to row into strong head/tail conditions but is much more difficult if side-on.

Conditions tend to be flatter with an off-shore wind, and rougher with an on-shore wind.

If the wind is off-shore, then be aware to avoid being blown away from shore as the conditions may be flat close to shore but quickly deteriorate.

What could be good/bad outside the club might be different on the straight by Eastney.

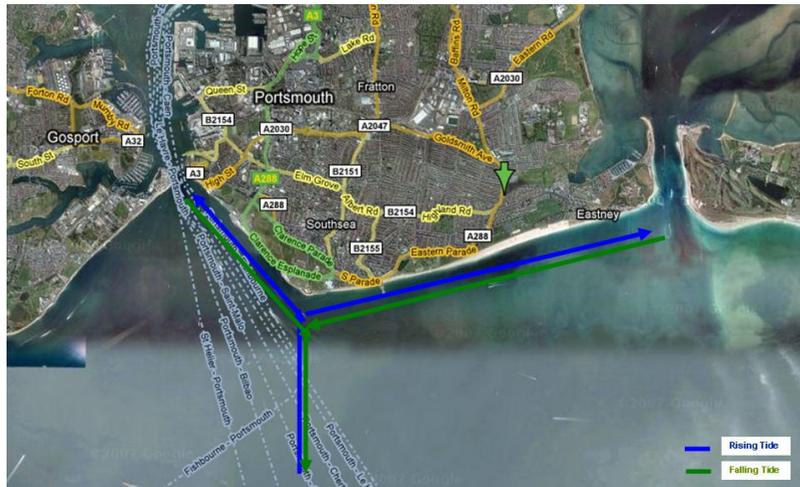
The point can be one of the roughest areas, as this is where the tide hits.

If the tide is rising:

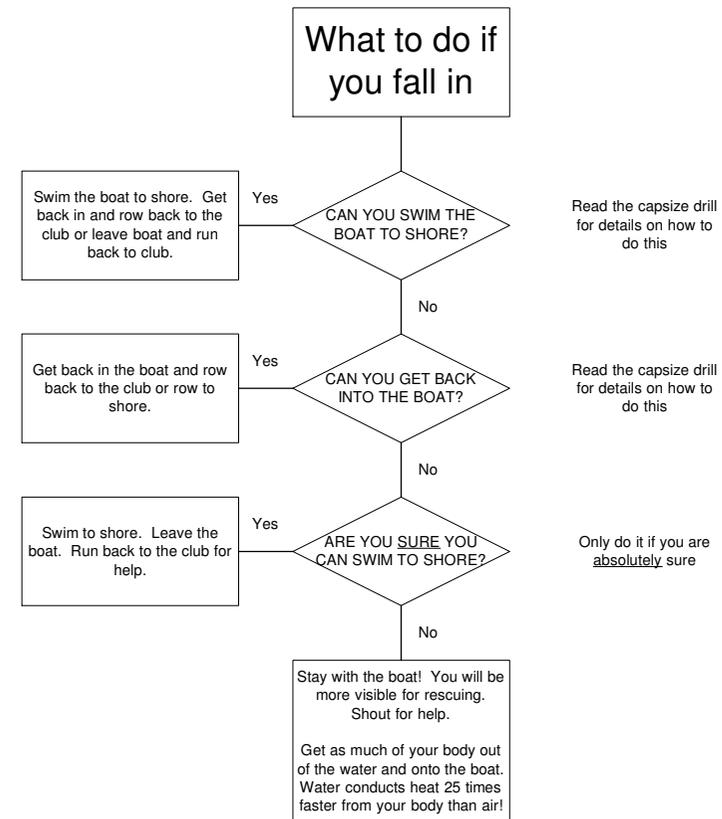
The tide comes from the Isle of Wight directly onto the point. The tide then flows along the shore to Portsmouth and Langstone harbours.

If the tide is falling:

The tide flows out of Portsmouth and Langstone harbours towards the point, it then flows towards the Isle of Wight.



10. WHAT TO DO IF YOU FALL IN



11. LANDING

When deciding to land, keep an eye out for the wash from any ferries etc... The washes can be especially dangerous when the water is flat or at low tides when the washes can get bigger as they approach shore! Wait until any washes have died down before landing.

Sort your feet out when you get a little closer to shore, but remember to keep your bow pointing into the waves while you do this. Keep an eye out to avoid getting too close to shore.

When you have decided to land, don't row parallel to the shore, come in at a steeper angle and turn the boat just before you land.

If it is rough, consider backing it down onto the shore. This gives you control and the ability to row away from shore if required.

Be aware rocks may be lurking just under the surface you can't see, this is especially true when the tide is low. There are also a couple of groynes to the East of the club which could be just below the surface, be careful of these.

When you have got close enough, swing both feet out together, followed by your bum.

It is advisable in a single to get out on the sea side, so that if a wash comes in it does not push the boat onto you.

In a double, you should agree who is getting out on which side before coming in to land.

In a pair, you should get out opposite your rigger.

If the boat is full of water, then ask for help with getting the boat in.

12. HOW TO GET THE BOAT FROM THE WATER TO THE CLUB

Once you have landed, get the boat out the water as soon as is possible. The longer you leave the boat in the water the greater the chance of a wave or wash hitting you.

Carry the boat like you would from the boathouse to the water:

Singles

1. Put both sculls in the gates and place across the boat, tuck the handles under the riggers;
2. Stand next to the rigger so that the rigger is closer to the stern than you are;
3. Place one hand across the boat and hold the far saxboard;
4. Place the other hand on the saxboard/rigger next to you;
5. Lift the boat around the balance point (this may take some practice).

Doubles

1. Put both sculls in the gates and place across the boat, tuck the handles under the riggers;
2. Stand on opposite sides and ends of the boat;
3. Take hold of a major rib of the boat and lift.

Pairs

1. Put oars in the gates and place the oars across the boat;
2. Stand opposite your rigger;
3. Take hold of a major rib of the boat and lift.

Be careful as you walk up to the beach, the shingle can move from under your feet, the shingle may be steep and at low tides the stones at the waters edge can be very slippery.

13. PUTTING THE BOAT AWAY

If you are cold go put warm clothes on before you sort the boat out.

Make sure you thoroughly wash the boat down using the hose and wipe down after.

If the boat needs to be de-rigged, put the riggers away tidily.

Ask for a hand putting the boat away if needed.

Sign back into the signing-out book.

If the boat has become damaged then you must:

- Write on the opposite side of the signing-out book your name, date, boat and the damage incurred;
- Wash and de-rig the boat, place in repair bay if empty.

If you have had an accident (e.g. capsize, slip, trip, injury to yourself...) then you must:

- Fill out a "Recordable Event" form in the ARA incident book in the kitchen.