

ROWING TERMINOLOGY

Rowing, like all sports, has its own wording and phrases to describe different movements, pieces of equipment and other aspects of the sport.

Below is a bank of helpful words and phrases for beginners in the sport to learn and pick up on during their Learn 2 Row (L2R) course at your club. Please note, participants should not be expected to learn all of the below phrases by the end of the course, and this is not an exhaustive list of rowing terminology.

The below information may also be useful for coaches, volunteers and helpers to have a basic knowledge of before running the Learn 2 Row course.

WORD/PHRASE	MEANING
FRONT STOPS	The front position at which the rower takes the catch
BACK STOPS	Sitting with straight legs and blade handle into the chest
EASY THERE	To stop rowing or paddling
BOW	The rower closest to the bow of the boat is also known as "bow"
STROKE	The rower closest to the stern (front) of the boat is also known as "stroke"
BOWSIDE	The bow rower's oar is on the port left side
STROKESIDE	The stroke rower's oar is on the port left side
COX (OR COXSWAIN)	The member who sits in the stern (except in bowloaders) facing the bow. The coxswain is responsible for steering the boat and coordinating the power and rhythm of the rowers
SCULLING	Sculling is the use of oars to propel a boat by moving the oars through the water on both sides of the boat
SCULLER	Someone who practices sculling (two oar) rowing
SWEEPER	Someone who practices sweep (one oar) rowing
WASH	The wake from a motorised boat
EIGHT	Referred to as an 8+, a coxed eight consists of eight individuals with one oar each and a coxswain

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(1/4)





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WORD/PHRASE	MEANING
FOUR (COXED)	Referred to as an 4+, a coxed four consists of four individuals with one oar each and a coxswain
DOUBLE	Referred to as a 2x, a double consists of two individuals with two oars each
PAIR	Referred to as a 2-, a double consists of two individuals with one oar each
QUAD (COXED)	Referred to as a 4x+, a coxed quad consists of four individuals with two oars each and a coxswain
SINGLE	Referred to as a 1x, a single consists of one individual with two oars
COXLESS	Referred to as the -, a coxless boat consists of either two or four individuals rowing in a boat without a coxswain, with one of the rowers steering the boat with their foot
COXED	Referred to as the +, a coxed boat consists of either two, four or eight individuals rowing in a boat with the addition of a coxswain, steering the boat and making calls from the stern or the bow
RIGGER	A part of a rowing boat's equipment used to provide leverage for a rowing blade or oar around a fixed fulcrum
RIGGER-JIGGER	A rigger jigger is 10mm at one end and 13mm at the other. An essential for every rower as they undo every nut in a European boat - 10mm for the riggers and 13mm for the top nuts
BLADE	The same as an 'Oar'
OAR	Oars are used to propel the boat
BOW BALL	Ball shaped safety cap that sits over the bow end of the boat. Compulsory on all rowing boats for safety of other water users
COX BOX	A cox box is an electronic device used in competitive rowing that combines a digital stroke rate monitor and elapsed time readout with a voice amplifier
ERGO/ERG/ ERGOMETER	An exercise machine with oars and a sliding seat, for exercising the muscles used in rowing
GATE	The bar across the oarlock that keeps the oar in place
COLLAR	Plastic sleeve fixed to the oar that the button circles. Button can be moved along the collar to adjust blade gearing.

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(2/4)





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WORD/PHRASE	MEANING
HANDLE	One end of the pole, called the "handle," is gripped by the rower.
HATCH COVER	Structure fitted over a hatch opening to prevent the ingress of water into boat.
LOOM	The part of the oar between the blade and the handle.
POGIES	A protective flap worn on the hands while rowing, to provide grip as well as insulation, and to keep the hands dry to prevent blistering.
RUDDER	Adjacent to the skeg and used by the coxswain (or in some coxless boats, by a rower using a "toe" or foot steering mechanism) to steer the boat via attached cables.
SLIDES	Sliding seat rowing takes place in boats that has seats on runners which move up and down the slide - hence the term "sliding seat".
TRESTLES	Portable stands used to support a boat for rigging, washing, admiring etc.
SPOON	The end of the oar which enters the water. Usually painted in the colours of the club represented by the athlete.
STRETCHER	A metallic or carbon plate inside the boat to which the shoes are attached. Secured with adjustable screws.
TAP DOWN	To the lower the hands at the end of the stroke to remove the spoon from the water.
CHECK UP	Verbal instruction meaning to bring the boat to a stop quickly. Perform an emergency stop.
CATCH	The moment at which the spoon of the blade is immersed in the water and propulsive force applied. Immersion and force application should be indistinguishable actions. Also called the Catch.
CRAB	An accident that occurs when a rower loses control of his or her oar.
BACK IT DOWN	Term used to describe using a reverse rowing action to manoeuvre the boat backwards or for turning.
LENGTH	Length of stroke- the arc through which the blade turns when it is in the water from catch to finish.
SQUARE	To turn the oar so that the spoon is at 90 degrees to the water. This action should be done early during the recovery to ensure good preparation for the catch.

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(3/4)



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WORD/PHRASE	MEANING
FEATHERED	Blade spoon is flat to the water. This is the position of the blade spoon for the recovery section of the stroke. Athletes must be careful to fully extract the blade before feathering.
FINISH	The last part of the stroke where the blade handle is drawn in to the body. Following this (assuming clean extraction) the boat will be at its maximum speed. Force must be applied to the spoon right to the finish so that water does not catch up with the spoon.
RUSHING	Moving your seat too quickly up and down the slide.
NOVICE	Term used to describe someone who has very little rowing experience.
REGATTA	A competition with events for different boat types and status athletes usually involving heats, semi finals and finals for each event. Boats compete side by side from a standing start.
LET IT RUN	To stop rowing after a given piece of on the water rowing length, but to put the handles of the oars either to the gunwales or out in front of the rower, in such a manner that the oar paddles are parallel to the water yet not touching it.
SIT READY	This is where the rowers are stopped with their oars squared and in the water at the catch and ready to start a race.
ALL IN ONE	The lycra that rowers wear when competing in races.
HANDS AWAY	When your hands and arms are stretched out straight in front of you toward the stern of the boat.
INSIDE HAND	In sweep rowing, the inside hand should do the feathering while the outside hand carries the oar.
OUTSIDE HAND	The outside hand should be at the very end of the handle while the inside hand should be approximately two hand widths down the oar.

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(4/4)

