



Safety Competencies

By Tim Sindle

GRADE	SKILLS	EXPERIENCE	GEAR	RIVER EXAMPLE
Flat water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wet exit • Getting in and out of boat • Forward / Reverse and turning paddle strokes, emergency stopping • Basic hazards awareness – boating rules • Basic swimming in buoyancy vest • Wet exit, and take craft to the bank, empty it and get back in • Canoes – J stroke 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read with the PNSW website: Introduction to Paddling • Refer to the AC Safety Guidelines for details • Remain within reach of shore when swimming • Never paddle alone • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit on top or open cockpit kayak or Canadian canoe with sufficient bouncy to float • Paddle/s • Fitting bouncy vest for non or weak swimmer • Clothes for swimming including footwear & sun protection & cold • Drinking water • Whistle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat Water 10-20m from banks • Cooks River • Wollie Creek • Nepean River
Open Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brace Strokes (low) • Forward backwards paddling • Draw strokes • Deep water rescues • Towing • Above average swimming ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for a day on the water – maps, weather, group management, departure/return times, rests, food & drinks, extra clothes, equipment suitability, • Leave a trip plan with responsible person • Understanding of tides • Understanding of the effect of wind on open water • Understanding of hyperthermia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skirt to close cockpit and towing loop • Towline • Knife • pump • Emergency clothes for changed conditions • First aid and personal medication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inland Lakes and Estuaries • Myall Lakes • Tallowa Dam
Sea Kayaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surf Entry and Exit methods • Reading waves, tides, weather • Deepwater boat rescue/empties • Ability to paddle water chop, waves and strong winds • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pump/bailing device • Flares • Paddle Leash • Emergency Communication Device • Eskimo roll or paddle brace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enclosed or sit on top boat • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ocean



<p>2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wet exit • Forward / reverse and turning paddle strokes • Getting in and out of boat • Basic hazards (trees, rocks etc) • Can watch after self, can affect an out of boat self rescue with help. • Active/passive swimming (WW float position) • Knowledge of river signals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5+ flat water paddles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paddle • PFD • Helmet • Deck • Whitewater boat • Whistle • Clothes for conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrington (Bindera/Steps) • Wollondilly (Island Bend to Goodmans Ford) • Mitta (Jokers Section) • Lower Kangaroo River • Murray (Tom Grogin)
<p>3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confident break in/out eddies • Good edge control • Brace Strokes (low / high) • Forward backwards paddling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can competently watch after self and nearby others, can affect a self rescue and gear retrieval • Competent to use and be rescued by throw rope, and know issues. • Identify hazardous river features— sieves, strainers etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5+ Grade 2 rivers paddled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throw rope, and knife • Boat repair kit (Ductape, bolts etc) • Pin kit, pulleys, prussic, carabineers, etc.* • First Aid Kit* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moppy (<1m) • Upper Wingee (Berima section) • Upper Kangaroo River • Shoal Haven (Powerlines) • Lower Munyang section • Swampy Plains (low water) • Barrington (Cobark)
<p>3+</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% roll competent • Confidently make small eddies • River hazard perception • Ability to follow leader river line. • Group paddling, following and signaling. • Whitewater rescue techniques • Use river features to advantage • Can link individual strokes to form complex stroke combinations – draw sweep draw 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paddle PWS confidently • 10 + grade 2 • 5+ grade 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kayaking Specific PFD • Break down paddle* • Comms (EPIRB / Sat Phone)* • Compact wood saw.* • Maps, exit plans* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moppy (1-2.5m) • Nymboida platypus flat to junction (<1m) • Mitta gorge (to Hinoumanjie bridge) • Bundara • Matakaitaki NZ (lower) • Brologers Creek • Buller Sections (NZ) • Thredbo, 2 pipes, (Village to Ngarigo) • Herbert River QLD, 1.23m
<p>4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to see, and make lines (and back up lines) through complex rapids. Use of effective combination strokes • Team awareness, communication and rescue's. • Bomb-proof roll (99%) • Confidently make micro, and mid-stream eddies • Reverse ferry / eddy in / out • Boof stroke • Rescue competency (course or experience what to do in life/death situations) • First aid competencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50+ river days, (2-3+) • 50+ days at PWS • Make every eddy at PWS • Confident in holes at PWS • Regular paddling (every week) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable boat for river (e.g. creek boat for creeks) • Rescue/Harness type PFD (with knowledge of how to use it) • Emergency bag – warm clothes, food, if applicable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cobungra, (To Anglers Rest Camp Site) • Moppy (2.5m+) • Nymboida Platypus Flat to Junction (> 1m) • Murray Gates • Wingecaribee (Joadja to Island Bend) • Eucumbene (Kiandra to lake) • Glenroy (NZ) • Swampy plains (High Water) • Upper Nymboida (To platypus flat) • Lower Hokitika (NZ) • Upper Munyang (2 turbines) • Tully 44MW (Power Station to Campsite) • Glenbrook Creek
<p>4+/5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the above at an advanced level • Excellent risk management understanding • Blessings of the trip leader! • Realistic expectation of skill level and if this is a suitable section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100+ river days, (2-4) • 100+ PWS days • Specific River experience i.e. Flood / creek / big water / cold water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Titanium balls • Updated insurance policy • Camera to record proof 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper Styx (high water) NZ • Most Upper Sections West Coast NZ • Gwydir • Upper Geehi, • Shoalhaven (below powerlines)
<p>NOTE</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a guide only different people progress at different rates. If you have less time on the river, be warned! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each one of team need all the above plus. • * Quantity per group not necessarily per person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is average grade e.g Wingee / Nymboida has grade 4+/5 rapids that are usually portaged. • Rivers change with levels, so this is only a guide!

*This is not legally, morally, or bureaucratically binding, but should set a general competency indication for people to work from.