

Colorado Whitewater Instructors

Rolling Sample Course Curriculum

1. **Collect Waivers + ask about Medical Conditions**
2. Boat Fit
 - a. Toes touching bulkhead.
 - b. Appropriate spacing on hip pads.
 - c. Tightened back band
3. Paddle Grip
 - a. Right hand control (Right hand big knuckles line up with top of right blade)
 - b. Using indexing (Second knuckle lines up with bump of paddle shaft)
 - c. Same position every time
4. 4 Phases of a roll - Feel free to teach phases in an order that feels natural.
 - a. Setup
 - i. Both arms reaching out of the water. Not forward or back. Back arm especially needs to be extended. If the paddle doesn't seem parallel to the surface, it's a sign they need to rotate their torso more.
 - ii. Wrist neutral to 10 degrees back (like barely revving a motorcycle). Wrists forward makes people pull with their strong arm, push with their top arm, and lift their head.
 - b. Sweep away
 - i. Paddle moves away from boat along the surface. Don't try to do this while upright, it doesn't help.
 - ii. "Reverse Drill": Start upright in finish position, sweep paddle away and forward while falling towards paddle. Continue until upside down in setup position. Then reverse it to roll. If assisting with this, plan to step in while they flip upside down.
 - c. Activate Core / Knee Drive / Hip Snap
 - i. Practice on a boat or off of instructor's hands, off the gutter doesn't give feedback on if they are using their core or their shoulders.
 - ii. Practice slowly. Most people rush this step so practice should be at 1/10th speed to help isolate muscles. Even in a roll think 3 syllables of "Activate" instead of 1 syllable of "Snap".
 - iii. Different people think about different things. Oblique muscles activating, bottom knee driving, top knee pushing away. Ask them to practice each way to initiate.
 - d. Finish Position
 - i. Torso twisted, looking down shaft of paddle, paddle at surface
 - ii. Wrists back. Power face of paddle should point towards bow of boat. Right elbow might need to twist forward.
 - iii. Top hand "punches yourself in the face".

Notes:

- The term “hip snap” is antiquated and doesn’t help most students. First, most students think about either driving their knee or activating their obliques. Second, saying “snap” sends the wrong message. Work through what their body likes to concentrate on and use that language.
- Most people need their wrists rotated further back than they want to naturally. Laying on the back deck at the finish is primarily a way to get the same finish position of the blade without needing to pull the wrists as far back. So if your wrists are back enough, you should be trying to have an upright finish to make it easier to initiate your next stroke.
- There are lots of orders for teaching the phases of a roll. One way is hip snaps, then setup/finish, then practice the sweep away from a supported position. The Eric Jackson method is step one setup, step 2 sweep out, step 3 hip snap/finish. There are others.
- When holding a student in a “supported roll”, it’s often easiest to have them lay on your chest instead of holding them with your arm. Feel free to move to deeper or shallower water as needed.

Common Problems and Suggestions:

1. Lifting head / Punching out with top hand
 - a. Wrists back more to avoid the feeling of pressure on the blade.
 - b. Can be from rushing
2. Diving blade (blade slices with no resistance to the bottom)
 - a. Wrists are too far back. No resistance is good, into the bottom is bad
3. Diving blade (blade pushes deep with lots of resistance)
 - a. Often caused by not enough sweep away. Try reversing drill and slowing down.
 - b. Can be instinctual from feeling resistance because their wrist isn’t back enough.
 - c. Hip snap might be weak or non-existent. Practice hip snaps VERY slowly, initiate from something other than hands/arms/shoulders.
4. Bobble at finish or over-rolling and falling over on far side
 - a. Hip snap too late. Start it earlier and slow it down.
5. Getting 90% of the way up looking good but can’t finish.
 - a. Wrist not back enough at the very end of finish. Laying back at the finish can help with this but has its own problems.
 - b. Hip snap is only going halfway. Some people need to think about pushing their top knee away in addition to their bottom knee up. Finish of hip snap practice should be with the boat all the way up but the torso still in water. Imagine the C to C spine position and make sure to finish with final C.

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Intro to Whitewater Kayaking Sample Curriculum

Day 1: Welcome, Boat fit, Basic Strokes

1. Your goal is for the **first people in the water in less than 20 minutes**.
2. Waivers and Introductions (including **medical conditions!**)
3. Boat Fit
 - a. Toes touching bulkhead.
 - b. Appropriate spacing on hip pads.
 - c. Tightened back band
4. Skirts
5. Wet exits -
 - a. Short Version: "Pull your skirt and get out of the boat"
 - b. Tuck, Tap, Pull, Push
6. Paddles
 - a. How to hold
 - b. Paddlers box / Elbows in front of line of shoulders
7. Paddle around and have fun for a bit.
8. Posture, Separation, Rotation
9. Strokes
 - a. Sweep
 - i. Pre-twist to toes
 - ii. Sweep away from the boat with horizontal paddle shaft
 - iii. Finish behind you with torso twist
 - b. Reverse Sweep and Pinwheels focusing on resetting torso twist
 - c. Stern Draw
 - i. "The last third of a sweep"
 - d. Forward Stroke
 - i. More vertical paddle
 - ii. Toes to knees. Out before the hips.
 - iii. Quiet edges. No tilting or rocking forward and back
 - e. Coasting drill practice
 - i. 5 Forward strokes and pause and feel the boat spin out
 - ii. Practice quiet edges to coast as long as possible.
 - iii. Add in stern draws to correct the spin when it happens
10. Games

Day 2: Review, Carving, Bow Rescues

1. Review previous weeks strokes
2. Carving
 - a. Boat tilt/edge. ~3 levels, engaging knee. Tilt or Edge, not Lean.
 - b. Torso twist creates tilt
 - c. Practice 5 stroke coasting drill and then purposely add edge. Then add torso twist. "Look where you want to go."
3. Bow Rescues
 - a. Start with hip snaps and saving shoulders
 - b. 5 steps to a full practice. No one should just be thrown to the wolves.
 - i. Blow Bubbles
 - ii. Head all the way under
 - iii. Take one hand off
 - iv. Take one hand then the other off
 - v. Full practice a stroke or two away.
 - c. Try both sides.
4. Games
5. Explain next steps in the sport and where to find gear. Emails will be sent out after class.

Notes for Instructors:

- **"Sell it, Show it, Do it, Review it."** Repeat. That's it!
- Types of learners? Demos, explaining, feeling, discussing... Lots of ways to teach the same thing.
- Kindness goes a long way. Remember what it was like to be upside down the first time!
- Be kind to the lifeguards as well. We are partners in this.
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Safety for Instructors:

- Your needs are important. Wear enough layers, move slowly, drink water.
- Your student's needs are also important. Check in about temperature, restroom, water...
- For basic first aid, kindly refer people to the lifeguards. That's what they are there for.
- Don't exceed your first aid training. For instance don't reduce dislocations if you're not an EMT. This is a front country environment.
- **Compassion** without assigning blame. This is important from a care perspective and for risk management.
- Nearest 24 hour Urgent Care:
Emergency & Urgent Care Lakewood Centura Health
3280 S Wadsworth Blvd, Lakewood, CO 80227

Feel free to direct any questions to:

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