

Equipment Handling Standards

BAB athletes are expected to use equipment safely, without causing damage. Treat the equipment as if it's your own.

Damage and Consequences

Everyone makes mistakes, and although we do not hold our rowers financially accountable for damage that is done to boats or lost equipment, there are consequences. Equipment is a valuable resource, and we must all learn to treat equipment with care and consideration for everyone that uses it.

- Athletes should assume that if equipment is damaged, rowing on the water is done for that day. This includes regattas. Exceptions in rare cases may be made but this is not expected.
- For incidents that result in damage, but are beyond the control of the crew (eg hidden log, slippery dock), the crew must immediately return the boat to the rack, and the remainder of the practice will be on land. This includes forfeiting a race depending on timing and resources: i.e. the crew may not take another boat if it creates a hot-seating or stressful situation for another crew, or if the incident indicates they are not prepared to safely handle equipment.
- For incidents that result in damage, but are preventable by the crew (not following rules, inattentiveness, rushing), the crew must immediately return the boat to the rack, and the crew will conduct the remainder of the practice on land. This includes forfeiting a race in most cases.
 - Additionally, the crew will not return to the water for at least 1 additional calendar day or at least 1 practice.
- For incidents that do not follow our boat handling policy, but do not cause damage to equipment, the crew must repeat the action under coach supervision until it is done correctly, and may be kept off the water for that day at the coach's discretion.
- For lost or damaged speed coaches and cox boxes, athletes should assume there will be similar consequences, such as lost time on the water as well as losing the privilege of using that equipment for the duration of the season or indefinitely.

Common mistakes

Off the water: Boats are most commonly damaged while being moved in and out of the racks, and in and out of the water, causing rigger dings, skeg damage, and scratches.

On the water: Most damage to the boat is caused by rowing too fast while returning to the dock. Other common damage is to skegs from running over rocks or logs.

Small equipment: Not returning equipment to its storage spot. Speed coaches and Cox boxes should go directly to proper storage after use.

Report Repair needs

- Report any issues with equipment to coaches, report anything that seems amiss, even if you didn't row that boat
- Do not row with broken equipment, or a boat that is missing hardware, this turns a small repair into a major repair.
- Report lost equipment immediately.

Oars

- Make sure that they are the right oars for your program and are a matched set of the right size
- Carry the oars blades forward, waist height

Moving Boats

- Have the right number of people:
 - 2 people for 1x/2x/2- in and out of the racks. Do not carry boats at the bow/stern, carry them 2-3 feet from the stern. This gives you better control.
 - 4 people on 4+/4x at all times
 - 8 people on 8+'s at all times, paying special attention when moving any 8+ to/from racks above ground level (i.e. if you can't reach it from the ground), or when lifting a boat from the water
- Coxswains - Speak loudly! Tell others around the area to be quiet so commands are heard.
- Rowers - Pay attention to the coxswain - no talking except to warn of a hazard, no music
- In a blind boat, one rower is the coxswain, and should take control of the process
- Move slowly: if you move slowly and make a mistake it causes less damage
- Rowers in the front look ahead for obstacles. The rowers in the back watch the riggers in front of you and watch the stern. Everyone is responsible for the entire boat.

Before Launching

- Unattended boats must always be strapped down - to the slings, trailer or rack.
- Make all adjustments on land: foot stretchers, check for loose nuts/bolts/tracks, check for missing spacers. Do not row a boat with missing or damaged parts
- Wipe down the tracks, wheels and oarlocks before rowing. This preserves these important parts of the boats.

Launching

- Coxswain must stand next to the skeg as the boat is lowered into the water, have one hand free, prepared to push the stern out over the water if it is too close to the dock.

- Go bow first when taking a boat down to docks (unless advised by the coach due to low water levels, then launching stern first might be applicable) .
- Press the inside gunwale away to angle the boat. This ensures that the skeg clears the dock.
- Do not put shoes or flip flops in the boat, this keeps damaging dirt out of tracks and wheels
- Water bottles must have a sleeve or sock to avoid scratching the hull.
- Keep riggers clear of the dock, and do not let gunwales and oarlocks pinch up against dock

Docking

- The hull should not touch the dock
- Most boat damage is caused by boats approaching docks too fast
- Approach the docks as if you are “parking” the boat next to it.
- Dock without the bow ball touching the dock, and don’t pinch the gunwales or riggers against the dock once you land.
- Use your bow rower(s) to get pointed toward the dock. Switch to stern pair at least one boat length from the dock (arms only)
- If there is excessive water in the boat, bail before lifting from the water
- Find a partner to carry 1x 's
- Wash/wipe down the boat whenever possible, pay special attention to tracks/wheels and oarlocks.
- Retrieve oars, wash handles and return them to the appropriate color-coded rack.
- Report any issue with any equipment

Coach Supervision

Coaches are responsible for the safety and actions of their athletes, and should use good judgment with the level of supervision of athletes who are handling equipment, regardless of the age or experience level of the crew. This may include supervising the crew as the boat launches/docks, when crews are moving equipment in and out of racks, giving more attention in difficult wind or new situations, and supporting and enforcing boat handling standards.