

# **Adult Learn-to-Row Skill Progression Framework**

## **GBR Program Philosophy**

Progression is based on skill mastery, not speed. Rowers may move through levels at different rates depending on:

- comfort on the water
- physical conditioning
- prior experience
- personal goals

The goal is lifelong participation not perfection.

- builds confidence gradually,
- emphasizes safety before performance,
- supports both recreational and pathway-to-masters athletes, and
- gives coaches and rowers a shared language for progression.

## **Learn to Row Level 1 – Exposure**

### **Purpose:**

Introduce adult athletes to rowing in a safe, welcoming, low-pressure environment focused on familiarity, confidence, and enjoyment. The course focuses on sculling with some exposure to sweep rowing.

### **Outcome:**

Athletes feel comfortable around boats, understand basic terminology, and can safely participate in coached rowing with close supervision.

### **Program Readiness Indicator:**

Athlete is ready to move to Level 2 when they can:

- Follow safety commands promptly
- Sit and row safely without fear
- Demonstrate basic stroke sequencing
- Remain calm and cooperative on the water

# Learn to Row Level 1 – Exposure Skills Chart

Rower:

Date:

Skills	No	Yes
<b>Safety &amp; Independence</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand basic water safety expectations (<i>supporting documents</i>)</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify bow, stern, port, and starboard</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate awareness of surroundings and traffic patterns (<i>supporting documents</i>)</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond appropriately to basic safety commands:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Check it down</li> <li>○ Hold water</li> <li>○ Weigh enough</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand “stay with the boat” concept</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate safe behavior on docks and launch areas</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow coach/cox commands transferring equipment to and from the water</li> </ul>		
<b>Equipment Familiarity</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify major parts of the boat:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hull, seat, tracks, foot stretcher, riggers, oarlocks, skeg</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify parts of the oar:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Handle, shaft, collar, blade</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Properly carry an oar (blade forward, curve up)</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open and close oarlocks correctly (including body position)</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand heel tie purpose</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry boat under direction of coach/cox</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean and tie down boats, return oars/slings</li> </ul>		
<b>Warm-up and Arrival</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrive prepared and ready to warm up</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize the purpose of a warm-up (injury prevention, mobility, readiness)</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand basic structure of a rowing warm-up</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow simple verbal instructions from a coach</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in group dynamic stretching</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jog, walk, or move continuously for 3–5 minutes</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempt basic bodyweight exercises (squats, lunges, arm circles)</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow coach direction for lineups</li> </ul>		

<b>Body Position &amp; Movement Awareness</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sit correctly on the seat (focus on pelvis position)</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand posture: tall body, relaxed shoulders</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate controlled movement on the sliding seat</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn basic sequencing concept:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Legs → Body → Arms (drive)</li> <li>○ Arms → Body → Legs (recovery)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<b>On-Water Introduction</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enter and exit the boat safely with verbal guidance/holding boat</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Push off and return to dock with guidance</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steering Mechanics</li> <li>• Back with left</li> <li>• Back with right</li> <li>• Back with both oars</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look over shoulder at finish for direction and safety</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Row short distances at low pressure on the square</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice stopping and holding water</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain basic balance with coaching instruction</li> </ul>		
<b>Erg Fundamentals</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe erg setup and adjustment</li> <li>• Assemble/disassemble</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proper foot placement</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the rowing stroke on the erg</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Row short segments with coaching support</li> </ul>		
<b>Attendance</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributes to athletes' ability to successfully complete expectations of the course</li> </ul>		
<b>Equipment Use</b>		
Sculling focus: Zephyrs, Rec 2x's		
Sweep exposure: Eights		

## Learn to Row Level 2 – Development

### Purpose:

For adult athletes to develop consistency, confidence, and foundational technique while increasing independence and endurance. The course focuses on sculling with continued exposure to sweep rowing.

### Outcome:

Athletes can row continuously with moderate coaching input and demonstrate growing technical control, independence and confidence.

### Program Readiness Indicator

Athlete is ready to move to Level 3 when they can:

- Row safely with minimal reminders
- Maintain technique during longer pieces
- Demonstrate awareness and independence
- Contribute positively to boat flow and rhythm

<b>Learn to Row Level 2 – Development Skills Chart</b>		
<b>Rower:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Skills</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Safety &amp; Independence</b>		
• Demonstrate consistent response to all safety commands		
• Understand basic traffic patterns		
• Show awareness of other boats and launches		
• Steer with minimal input from coaches		
• Participate in safe launching and landing procedures		
<b>Terminology &amp; Communication</b>		
• Understand and respond to coaching cues		
• Recognize basic drill names (supporting documents)		
• Use common rowing vocabulary appropriately		
<b>Warm-up and Arrival</b>		
• Arrive prepared and ready to warm up		
• Independently follow a standard warm-up sequence		
• Move through stretches and exercises with minimal prompting		
• Maintain continuous movement for 8–10 minutes		
Perform correct technique for:		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bodyweight squats</li> <li>• Forward and reverse lunges</li> <li>• Hip hinges</li> <li>• Core activation exercises</li> <li>• Shoulder mobility movements</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use time efficiently without coach micromanagement</li> </ul>		
<b>Technical Skill Development</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn foot and height placement in boat, how to adjust and why</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved posture throughout the stroke</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Controlled slide movement</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear blade positioning (square vs feather)</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear blade placement (catch &amp; finish)</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent catch and finish body positions</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced rushing on recovery</li> </ul>		
<b>Stroke Sequencing</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain proper stroke order with fewer reminders</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate connection at the catch</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand rhythm and timing</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Row in time with others in the boat</li> </ul>		
<b>Balance &amp; Boat Feel</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain balance during steady rowing</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice pause drills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Arms away</li> <li>○ Body over</li> <li>○ ¼ slide</li> <li>○ ½ slide</li> <li>○ Legas only</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recover balance after disruptions</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop awareness of boat run and glide</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand “Let it run” at hands away, blades off the water</li> </ul>		
<b>Erg Skill Development</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set the display for the workout and different views</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Row longer steady-state pieces</li> </ul>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand stroke rate</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to split/pace concepts</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate consistent technique under light fatigue</li> </ul>		
<b>Endurance &amp; Confidence</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Row continuously for 15–25 minutes with breaks</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate comfort in varying conditions</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain focus throughout practice</li> </ul>		
<b>Attendance</b>		
Contributes to athletes' ability to successfully complete expectations of the course		
<b>Equipment Use</b>		
Sculling focus w/continued sweep exposure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rec 2x</li> <li>• 2x</li> <li>• Zephyrs</li> <li>• 1x (B level)</li> <li>• Quads</li> <li>• 8+</li> </ul>		

## Learn to Row Level 3 – Competency

### Purpose:

For adult athletes to gain sufficient competency in sculling and sweep rowing to prepare them for successful transition into master's level rowing programs: recreational masters program, competitive development master's program, competitive master's program, or logbook sculling. Adult athletes may also choose to remain in Level 3.

### Outcome:

Athletes demonstrate safe independence, consistent technique, and readiness by coach assessment to transition to master's program participation.

### Program Completion Outcome

Upon completing Learn to Row 3 expectations, athletes are recommended to:

- Enter Master's Recreational
- Enter Master's Development
- Enter Competitive masters
- Enter Logbook Sculling
- Continue in Learn to Row 3

## Learn to Row Level 3 – Competency Skills Chart

**Rower:**

**Date:**

Skills	No	Needs Improvement	Yes
<b>Advanced Safety &amp; Responsibility</b>			
• Demonstrate full understanding of safety protocols			
• Assist newer rowers appropriately			
• Understand weather and water considerations			
• Show leadership through awareness and calm decision-making			
• Capsize boat and get back in with assistance			
<b>Terminology &amp; Communication</b>			
• Understand and respond to coaching cues			
• Recognize basic drill names			
• Use common rowing vocabulary appropriately			
<b>Warm Up &amp; Arrival</b>			
• Arrive prepared and ready to warm up			
• Lead themselves through a complete, appropriate warm-up			
• Self-monitor and modify warm-up when needed (tightness, soreness, weather)			
• Adjust warm-up based on workout demands			
• Help organize equipment and space			
• Independently identify line up & begin prepping equipment			
<b>Technical Competency : Sculling</b>			
	Sc Sw	Sc Sw	Sc Sw
• Consistent blade placement at the catch			
• Smooth, connected drive			
• Controlled finishes			
• Balanced recovery			
• Efficient movement with minimal disruption to the boat			
<b>Timing &amp; Team Rowing</b>			
	Sc Sw	Sc Sw	Sc Sw
• Match stroke timing accurately			
• Adjust pressure smoothly			
• Respond to rate changes			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain rhythm through transitions</li> </ul>				
<b>Boat Skills</b>	Sc	Sw	Sc	Sw
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comfortable in different seat positions: Everyone bow, both port/starboard</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain balance without frequent corrections</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand steering concepts in small boats</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate confidently in drills and pieces</li> </ul>				
<b>Erg &amp; Fitness Readiness</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain technique under higher intensity</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand practice organization (pieces/nomenclature)</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate pacing awareness</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in full workouts</li> </ul>				
<b>Knowledge &amp; Ownership</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand practice structure</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate absences appropriately</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Care for equipment independently</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate GBR expectations consistently</li> </ul>				
<b>Attendance</b>				
Contributes to athletes' ability to successfully complete expectations of the course				
<b>Additional Assessment Upon Request</b>				
Athletes may request a Captains test with rowing director to be qualified for logbook sculling				
<b>Equipment Use</b>				
Consistent exposure to sculling and sweep <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2x</li> <li>1x (A level)</li> <li>Quads</li> <li>8+</li> </ul>				