



4-H 365.09



Please note: This project is meant for youth learning to paddle on calm inland bodies of water.

Canoeing

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Canoeing is an enjoyable sport for all ages and a wonderful way to experience the outdoors. To have a safe time on the water, study some basics about water safety, equipment, and techniques. Before you know it, you will be planning and experiencing your own canoe adventure!

When preparing for a canoe outing you can choose among several types of canoes and lots of equipment. In the past, canoes were made out of wood or aluminum, but today they are also made from fiberglass, plastic, or Kevlar. Each of these materials has advantages and disadvantages. Along with deciding which material works best for you, you also should consider the canoe's shape. Flat bottom canoes provide excellent primary stability and work best if you plan to canoe on calm lakes. Round or V-shaped bottom canoes have excellent secondary stability and help experienced canoeists make sharper turns. Selecting a properly fitting paddle is also important.

Another area of interest is safety. The three "Ws"—wind, weather, and waves—have a big impact on your safety. Personal flotation devices, better known as PFDs, are the single most important piece of safety equipment. You can choose from four types of PFDs, each with advantages and disadvantages. Selecting the appropriate type and size and having it securely fastened greatly increases your safety.

Before you learn to paddle you must take time to learn how to transport a canoe. You need to learn how to tie knots such as a figure eight knot and half hitches so that you can safely transport your canoe on a moving vehicle.

Plan Your Project

Use this idea starter AND publication 4-H 365 *Self-Determined Project Guide* as the starting place for your 4-H self-determined project. The *Self-Determined Project Guide* is available from your county OSU Extension office or on the web at www.ohio4h.org/selfdetermined. You may choose to do a little or a lot depending on your level of interest. Be sure to register your project with your county OSU Extension office.

The most exciting aspect of canoeing is learning the different strokes and techniques. Basic strokes include forward, reverse, J-stroke, L-stroke, push-away, draw, and the forward and reverse sweeps. The only way to master these skills is to learn from a certified instructor. The ACA offers several good courses. Each time you canoe you will notice improvement.

No matter what part of the country you live in, there is sure to be a lake to paddle. You don't need to travel to distant lands to enjoy beautiful scenery. America's natural resources are here for all of us to enjoy, and there is no better way to enjoy the beauty of a lake than to be paddling it in a canoe.

Related Resources

American Canoe Association—
Look here for an ACA course in
your area.

www.acanet.org

Canoeing and Kayaking
information

www.paddling.net

*Canoeing and Kayaking Instruction
Manual*, by Laurie Gullion

Canoe & Kayak Magazine

www.canoekayak.com

Introduction to Paddling — ACA

Paddle America, by Nick and David
Shears

Wenonah Canoe—Be sure to
request their free catalog, which
is loaded with information about
canoes and canoeing.

www.wenonah.com

Areas of Interest and Things to Do

Every self-determined project can be broken down into areas of interest. These are specific things members want to address during their project adventure. Using 4-H 365 *Self-Determined Project Guide*, identify at least three (3) areas of interest with at least three (3) activities per area to explore. Take your ideas from the list below or make up your own.

Selecting Your Canoe and Equipment

- Label the parts of a canoe and a paddle.
- Learn how to select a paddle that fits you. Explain a Palm Grip and a T-Grip.
- Select a properly fitting lifejacket. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of Class I, II, III, and IV lifejackets.
- Learn the advantages and disadvantages of the following canoe materials: wood, plastic, fiberglass, cross link, Kevlar, aluminum.
- List supplies and equipment needed for a canoe outing.

Water Safety

- Explain why group canoeing is safest.
- Explain the importance of wind, waves, and weather while canoeing.
- List all the safety equipment you should have when paddling.
- Practice rescuing capsized paddlers and boats using ACA standards.

Paddling Strokes

- Learn and demonstrate at least four (4) warm up exercises and explain the importance of doing them.
- Learn to perform the following strokes and understand when to use them:
 - A. **Forward and Reverse Strokes**
 - B. **Forward and Reverse Sweeps**
Practice the above strokes by paddling a figure 8 around buoys spaced 20 feet apart.
 - C. **“J” and “L” Strokes**
Paddle a canoe solo a distance of 500 feet in a straight line by using the “J” and/or “L” strokes.
 - D. **Draw and Push Away Strokes**
With a partner, use your draw stroke/push away stroke to slide sideways 100 feet across a waterway, then return to starting point.
- Register and attend an American Canoe Association's “Introduction to Paddling” course in your area.

www.ohio4h.org/selfdetermined



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