



Paddle Start Award

The purpose of this resource is to provide support for Instructors, Coaches, Leaders, Raft Guides and Bell Boat Helms to deliver the British Canoeing Paddle Start Award. In conjunction with the support videos and documentation, this crib card can be used to shape your delivery.

The Paddle Start Award aims to provide an individual with the knowledge to enable them to safely get in/out/on/off of their craft, make it move and return to the start point. This is the first step into the world of paddling, with the emphasis on ensuring they feel safe, confident and ready to progress to the Paddle Discover Award.

Note: Any craft can be used for the Paddle Start Award including a SUP, Raft, Bell Boat, solo or tandem craft.

Clothing and Equipment

Engage in a discussion about what to wear and how to keep safe and warm

- Clothing to keep them warm and dry, including appropriate footwear.
- Explain why they should wear a buoyancy aid. Show them how to fit it correctly.

Provide a short overview of the craft and paddle they will be using

- A short overview of the craft they will be paddling including stability and general use
- Provide a suitable paddle, consider right or left handed, as well as size
- Show them appropriate seating/kneeling/standing positions so they are comfortable

Getting on the Water

Provide a safe and appropriate method of moving their craft and getting afloat

- Safe lifting techniques – sharing the load with others
- Consideration of the ground – slippery, uneven, narrow paths
- Highlight the importance of protecting the environment and minimising damage

Show a technique to get into/onto their craft

- Balance and stability, remembering their paddle is within reach

On the Water

Provide a safe and enjoyable experience giving them top tips in controlling their craft

- Highlight an awareness of any significant hazards – other water users/wildlife
- Demonstrate and explore simple methods of getting the boat to move/stop and change direction
- Consider using games, activities and a short journey to explore moving their craft

After the Session and Future Development

At the end of the session, round up the session and consider next experiences

- What did the individual enjoy?
- Congratulate and celebrate! Award them their Paddle Start Award!
- What could they do next time – different craft, skill development, a journey
- The Paddle Discover Award
- Local Clubs and Centres – The Go Paddling website is a great resource