

Canoe Camping

Introduction

In today's world of machines, conveniences, and speed, we often miss the real world that sometimes moves at a slower pace. Nature is made up of wind and water, daylight and dark, animals and fish, and even bugs. If you want to experience nature in a very fluid way, you might want to try canoe camping. In this sport, you combine your camping skills with your canoeing skills to reach areas unaccessible to the faster traveler, while experiencing the quietness of water. Your trips could be as simple as a one-nighter on a local stream or lake or as ambitious as a two-week trip into the wilderness. Either way, preparation and skill will make your trip more enjoyable.

Knowledge Level

To participate in this superactivity you should be a swimmer (see *Guide to Safe Scouting* for definition) and possess basic canoeing, camping, and first-aid skills (including CPR). You should also possess basic compass and map-reading skills and know basic survival techniques and the *Safety Afloat Plan*.

Fitness Level

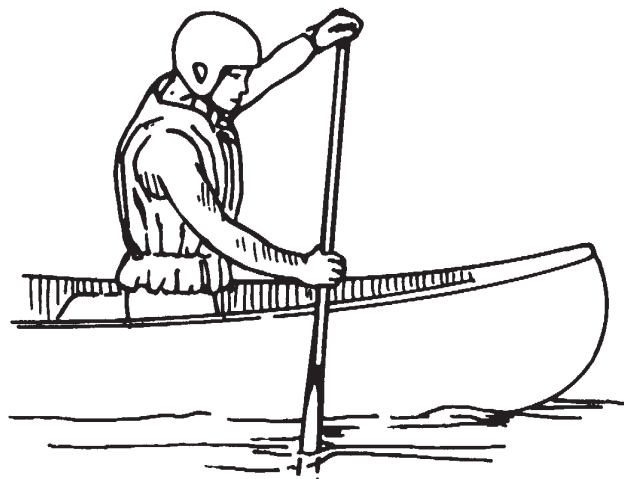
Fitness requirements depend on the environment and length of trip. Simple trips can be done by almost anyone. Long trips, heavy loads, and portages can require better physical fitness.

Safety

Review applicable BSA policies, which include *Safe Swim Defense Plan* and *Safety Afloat Plan* (which includes lifeguard requirements). Personal flotation devices (PFDs) are required to be worn by all persons engaged in activity on open water. Check the *BSA Guide to Safe Scouting*, available from your local council.

Where to Find Help

Check with your BSA local council to see if they offer canoes or any canoeing or camping courses. They should also be able to tell you where Safe Swim Defense and BSA Lifeguard courses are available. Your local outdoor store, library, college, or university can tell you if there is a canoeing club in your area. Sometimes they are called paddlers.



DAYS SUPERACTIVITY BACKDATING—CANOE CAMPING

- 180 Canoe camping is selected as your superactivity. Activity chair assigned. Assess your crew's canoeing and camping ability. Decide on preparation sessions you need.
- 175 Recruit consultant for your first session.
- 165 Annual parents' night. Share superactivity and plans. Cook some foods you might have while on your trip.
- 150 Promote in your annual program calendar and newsletter.
- 135 Physical fitness contest to check physical conditioning.
- 120 Make reservations with Northern Tier Canoe Base.
- 120 Complete Safe Swim Defense review and Safety Afloat.
- 120 Submit newsletter article.
- 110 Canoeing instruction, either in pool or lake.
- 90 Canoeing instruction, either in pool or lake.
- 90 Submit newsletter article.
- 75 Local canoe camping weekend trip 1.
- 60 Submit newsletter article.
- 60 Make arrangements to stay at military base, Scout camp, armory, etc., while en route if needed.
- 45 Local canoe camping weekend trip 2; use same foods you will use on wilderness trip.
- 45 Order vans or other transportation if needed.
- 30 Submit newsletter article.
- 30 Turn in your tour plan to council service center.
- 30 Final attendance list. Choose a person to call when you get off the water.
- 20 Purchase trail food.
- 14 Put article about your trip in your local newspaper.
- 14 Collect consent forms and medical examination forms. Check personal and crew equipment. Distribute name of person you will call when you get off the water.
- 5 Last crew meeting before departure. Last-minute details. Package food.
- 2 Purchase fresh food.
- 1 Pick up vans if needed.
- 0 Superactivity.
- +1 Put article and pictures of your trip in your local newspaper.
- +7 Potluck or cookout with families. Show slides.
- +14 Critique. Send a thank-you note to everyone who helped.

Note to activity chair. The above backdating schedule will vary greatly depending on your chosen activity and skill level. Feel free to build your own backdating schedule. Be more thorough if you want and share it with your crew. The following activity plan relates to the backdating schedule and like the backdating schedule is just "food for thought." Use what you want; modify and add to it.

CANOE CAMPING

MEETING AND ACTIVITY PLAN		
SESSION	SKILLS INSTRUCTION	SPECIAL ACTIVITY
1	Analyze your crew's canoeing and camping skills level. What will you need to work on?	Meet at an indoor pool. Have a canoeing expert bring canoes to teach you the basics of canoeing. If you can, try aluminum, ABS, and fiberglass canoes. Discuss designs, construction, paddles, clothing, safety, equipment, PFDs, etc.
2	Make a presentation on paddling techniques (three categories of strokes). Use dry drills.	Have a physical fitness contest to assess individual conditioning.
3	At a pool, practice what you have learned. Review the BSA <i>Canoeing</i> merit badge pamphlet to see if it can help you. Cover Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat.	Show video of Northern Tier National High Adventure Programs. Discuss itineraries and trip plans.
4	At a pool, practice what you previously learned. Practice spills, righting, and boat reentry.	Plan first canoe camping weekend. Discuss lightweight trail foods, their preparation, and equipment needed for trip.
5	Conduct final planning for your first weekend trip. Organize your crews and teams. Assess your equipment, both crew and individual.	Have an expert come from a backpacking store or club to make a presentation on trail foods. Teach you how to use trail stoves.
6	Analyze your first canoe camping trip. What areas do you need to work on? How were your camping and cooking skills?	Have a medical Venturing crew, Red Cross, or other agency do a first-aid course for you.
7	Discuss and practice portaging skills. Also, discuss trail safety on portages. (This is where most injuries occur.) Plan your next weekend canoe camping trip.	Show video of Quetico Provincial Park or Boundary Waters Canoe Area.
8	Analyze your second canoe camping trip. Are you ready for the big one? Practice map-reading and compass skills with map of Quetico or boundary waters.	Test how everyone has been doing with their physical fitness development programs.

9	Conduct final planning for the superactivity. Determine crews and teams. Have a shakedown for crew and individual equipment.	Have teams prepare some of the different types of trail food you might be using.
SUPERACTIVITY		
10	Have a family potluck or cookout. Invite people who helped you prepare for your trip and along the way. Send thank-you notes to those who helped.	Show slides of your trip. Have a fun awards ceremony for such things as most mosquito bites, worst cook, best paddler, most cheerful, etc.
11	Critique your activity plan and trip. How did you do?	Put your critique and activity plan in your crew program file for future reference.

Resources

BSA Resource Literature

Fieldbook, No. 33104

Passport to High Adventure, No. 34245

Tour Plan, No. 680-014

Conservation Handbook, No. 33570

Knots and How to Tie Them, No. 33170

Safety Afloat, No. 34368

Safe Swim Defense, No. 34370

Guide to Safe Scouting, No. 34416

Venturer/Ranger Handbook, No. 33494

Additional Resources

Being Your Own Wilderness Doctor, E. Russel Kodet and Bradford Angier, Stackpole, 1975.

Hypothermia, William W. Forgey, Indiana Camp Supply Books, 1985.

Wilderness First Aid, William W. Forgey, ICS Books, 1987.

Backwoods Ethics, Laura and Guy Waterman, Stonewall Press, 1979.

Be an Expert with Map and Compass, Bjorn Kjellstrom, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976.

The Canoe, Philip Shackleton and Kenneth Roberts, International Marine Publishing Co., 1983.

Canoeing and Kayaking Instruction Manual, Laurie Gullion, American Canoe Association, 1987.

The New Wilderness Handbook, Paul Petzholt, Norton, 1984.

Path of the Paddle, Bill Mason, North Word Press, 1984.

Roughing It Elegantly: A Practical Guide to Canoe Camping, Patricia J. Bell, Cat's Paw Press, 1987.

Whitewater River Book: A Guide to Techniques, Equipment, Camping & Safety, Ron Watters, Pacific Research, 1982.
Soft Paths, Bruce Hampton and David Cole, Stackpole, 1988.

Song of the Paddle: An Illustrated Guide to Wilderness Camping, Bill Mason, North Word Press, 1988.

The Wood and Canvas Canoe, Jerry Stelmok and Rollin Thurlow, Harpswell Press, 1987.

Organizations

American Canoe Association, 108 Hanover St., Fredericksburg, VA 22401.

American Red Cross, local chapters as well as the national office, 2025 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006. Web site: www.redcross.org.

U.S.A. Canoe and Kayak, P.O. Box 789, 330 South Tryon St., Lower Level, Charlotte, NC 28202.