

Safe Rowing Rule

Subject	Pre-Outing Assessment of Risk		
Rule number	1	Version	5
Date	21 October 2025		

Safety Rule

All crews must assess the safety risk associated with their activities before each outing.

To undertake a simple risk assessment prior to each outing (pre-outing risk assessment):

1. Score each risk category of your planned outing using each column in Table 1.
2. **Multiply** all scores for each category together.
3. Check the total score with the risk level in Table 2.
4. Only proceed with your outing if you have reduced the risk level to **'Low' green level**.

Explanation

The pre-outing risk assessment can be a verbal conversation and agreement between crew members on the risk categories below, or mental check on these – for single scullers.

It is not necessary to write down or record each pre-outing risk assessment.

Refer to notes below on completing your risk assessment prior to each outing.

Table 1 Rowing Outing Risk Categories

River Level	Boat Type	Crew Competence	Cox Competence	Crew Member Health / Fitness	Coach with Crew	Weather Conditions	Outing Plan	Dark
High Red 3		Beginners / Novice 3	Beginner / Novice 3	Unwell or unfit 3	-	Poor 3	Downstream of English Bridge 3	-
Medium Yellow 2	1x 2- 2x 2	Intermediate 2	Intermediate 2	Below normal 2	No 2	Medium 2	Upstream of Welsh -and English Bridges 2	Yes 2
Low Green 1	4- 4+ 4x 8+ 1	Competent 1	Competent 1	Good 1	Yes 1	Good 1	Stay between Welsh and English Bridge 1	No 1

Table 2 Rowing Outing Risk Levels

Score	Risk	Actions
1 to 8	Low	Is there anything else you can do to be safer?
9 to 23	Medium	Is it sensible to go out? What will you do to reduce risk to 'low/green' <u>before</u> going on the water?
24+	High	Do not go on the water until you have reduced the risks.

Notes on completing your pre-outing assessment of risk

River Level

Refer to Safe Rowing Rule 2 – River Levels and Stream.

Crew Competence

In a single scull or any coxless boat, consider whether the person in the bow seat can steer the boat competently. No steering from 2, 3, or 4 seat when rowing on the River Severn.

Use sensible objective judgement. Be realistic about your skill level and that of your crew – it is YOUR safety.

Use this as a guide, from British Rowing.

<i>Beginner:</i>	In first few months of rowing, under close supervision by a coach
<i>Novice</i>	Individual that has progressed beyond beginner stage with less than 12 months of experience, regardless of age.
<i>Intermediate</i>	Individual that has been rowing for up to 2 years and still need support by coaching or club members with more capability and experience to be safe when rowing in all weather conditions.
<i>Competent</i>	Individual that has been rowing for more than 2 years and has a sufficient level of rowing capability and rowing fitness to be safe when rowing in all weather conditions.

Where a minimum of 50% of the crew are 'Intermediate' or 'Competent', and for sweep boats they are equally distributed on port and starboard, the crew is at the higher level of competence, for purposes of this assessment.

Cox / Steers Competence

<i>Beginner</i>	In first few months of rowing, under close supervision by a coach
<i>Novice</i>	Has limited experience on home water and still developing competence to control the boat and crew safely.
<i>Intermediate</i>	Competent when training and racing in good weather and stream conditions.
<i>Competent</i>	Competent when training and racing on a wide range of stretches of water and weather and stream conditions.

Crew Member Health / Fitness

Use sensible objective judgement.

<i>Good</i>	Able to undertake strenuous physical activity.
<i>Below normal</i>	Injury or illness affects your ability to undertake strenuous physical activity, shorter and/or less strenuous outings are appropriate
<i>Unwell or unfit</i>	Injury or illness may impact the health and/or safety of your rowing and that of your crewmates.

Coach

For a "yes", must be with the crew throughout the outing.

When on the bank must carry and be practiced in the use of a throw line.

Weather Conditions

Always check the weather forecast before your outing.

Avoid rowing in adverse weather, following guidance in Safe Rowing Note 3 – Poor Visibility and Weather.

Dark / Poor Visibility

Refer to Safe Rowing Rule 3 – Poor Visibility and Weather.