Canoeing – Level 3

Overall Warning:
Canoeing is an inherently dangerous activity that can result in serious injury or death. We recommend that you seek proper training and equipment before attempting this activity. We also recommend that the first time out be with an experienced canoeist. A life vest is required for all who participate in this sport.

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Level 3 - How to Carry a Canoe

Often you have to carry your canoe from the car to the water, or from one body of water to another, by yourself. By using proper technique you can avoid straining your back and ruining your trip.		

	Steps:
1.	Make sure the canoe is completely empty.
2.	Stand at the center of your canoe, even with the shoulder yoke.
3.	Roll the canoe onto its side, so that you are standing with the bottom side of the canoe against your legs.
4.	Bend at the waist and reach over the edge of the canoe to grab low on the yoke on the opposite side. Place your other hand on the upper edge of the canoe.
5.	Bend your knees, and lean back, rolling the canoe back over so that you are facing the inside and the canoe is hoisted up. Support the weight of the canoe on your bent knees, and counter balance it by leaning back.
6.	Push up quickly with one knee, and use your arms' strength to hoist the canoe over your head. Your hands should be wide apart on the yoke bar.
7.	Twist 90 degrees to the side, facing the front of the canoe with your head inside of the upside-down canoe.
8.	Allow the shoulder pads of the yoke to settle onto your shoulders.
9.	Relax, and carry your canoe to where you need to go.
	Tips:
1	Two people can do the same lift by standing side by side on opposite side of the yoke bar and on the same side of the canoe.
2	Be careful when setting your canoe down. Try to reverse the pickup procedure and not allow the canoe to drop. A rock could puncture your canoe and ruin your trip.
3	Stay aware of how much canoe you have in front of you and behind you - you don't want to perform any "Three Stooges" routines and whack people into the water.
	Warnings:
1	Keep your back straight when lifting heavy objects.
2	Always wear a life jacket when canoeing.

Level 3 - How to Land a Canoe in Currents

Landing a canoe in currents is trickier than you might think. Done improperly, you may capsize your canoe. Follow these simple instructions to do it right.	

	Steps:
1.	Learn to ferry and understand how ferry angles work (see "How to Ferry a Canoe").
2.	Decide that you want to land your canoe, and choose a safe spot.
3.	Turn the back of your canoe in the direction of the bank you wish to land on.
4.	Back paddle until the back of your canoe hits the shore.
5.	Allow the current to push the front of the canoe parallel to the shore.
6.	Use a paddle to stabilize your position against the shore and get out of the canoe one person at a time.
	Tips:
1	Understand that rivers run faster in the center, where the water is deepest, and slower at the edges. If you try to land your canoe nose-first, the tail will catch the current and spin around. Whipping around in such a manner exposes your broadside to the current and makes it very easy to capsize.

Level 3 - How to Ferry a Canoe

To "ferry" means to cross a river. By properly angling your canoe, you can safely and quickly negotiate your way across the current of a river.	

	Steps:
1.	Understand what a ferry angle is: Imagine the force of the water striking an object angled 45 degrees to it. Which direction is that object going to move in?
2.	Aim the front of your canoe upstream and at a 30-degree angle toward the side you wish to ferry to. If you wish to back paddle, aim the front of the canoe downstream, 30 degrees toward the side opposite the side you wish to ferry to.
3.	Paddle forward hard. Paddle straight forward, not toward the side you wish to obtain. Your forward motion, combined with the force of the current against your angled craft, will cause you to traverse the river quickly.
4.	Keep your eye on the opposite shore to keep your angle correct. Too much angle can turn you broadside to the current and put you in danger of capsizing.
	Tips:
1	Master the various canoe stroke techniques in still water before attempting to ferry.
2	The downstream paddler has more power than the upstream paddler when ferrying. Therefore, the downstream paddler should be in charge of keeping the ferry angle correct.
3	Once you know how to properly ferry angle, forward and backward, you'll see that there are all sorts of applications for it besides simply crossing the river.