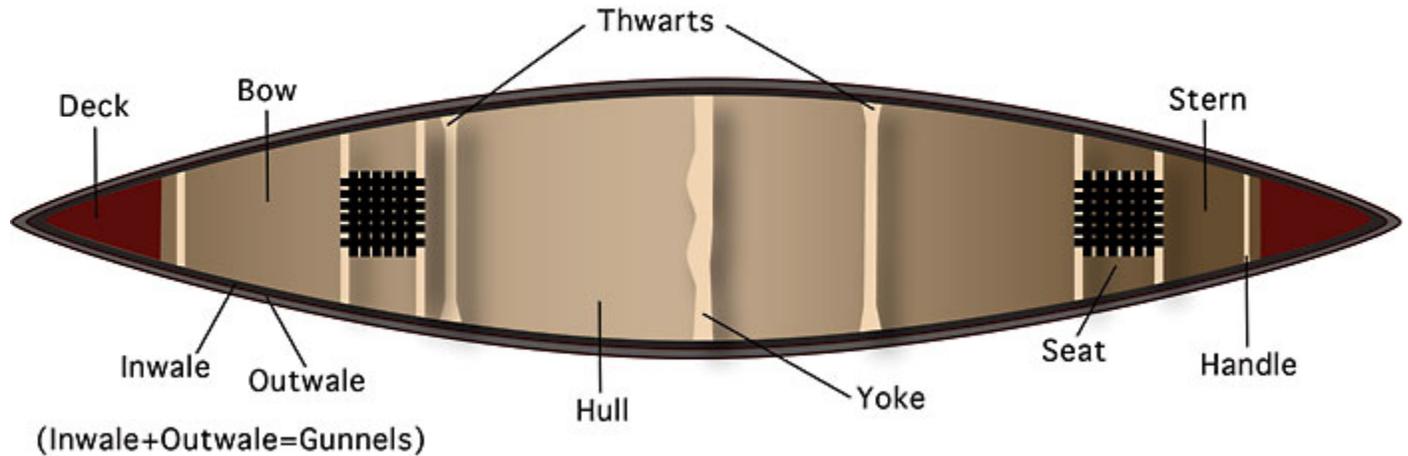


Canoeing – Level 1

Parts of a Canoe



Aft: Direction toward the back of the canoe.

Asymmetrical canoe: A canoe in which the widest part of the canoe is aft (behind). Asymmetrical canoes are often slightly faster than symmetrical canoes, but cannot be paddled stern first as easily.

Bailer: What you use to bail out the canoe, such as a milk jug.

Beam: The width of the canoe at its widest point. The beam, or width, may be measured at the gunnels or at the waterline. Some canoe manufacturers provide specific measurement points for beam at the gunnels, maximum beam, beam at the 4-inch waterline, and so on.

Bilge: The inside bottom of the canoe below the waterline.

Bow: The front of the canoe. (Also, the thing that usually hits the rocks first.)

Center line: Center line, more correctly called the keel line, is a straight line running from one end of the canoe to the other end.

Deck: The small triangular pieces of wood or other materials that are attached to the gunnels at the bow and stern of the canoe. (Or the thing you sit on with a beer at the end of a canoe trip.)

Depth: The distance from the inside bottom of the canoe to the top of the gunnels.

Draft: The distance from the waterline of the canoe to the part of the canoe that is deepest in the water. (Also what you have a pint of at the end of the trip.)

Flotation: Inflatable [float bags or foam blocks](#) that take up space inside the canoe to prevent the canoe from sinking if capsized or swamped with water. Come in different shapes and sizes for bow, stern, and midship.

Freeboard: The distance from the waterline of the canoe to the top of the gunnels.

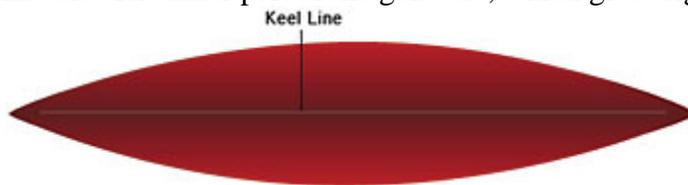
Grab loops: Loops of nylon rope or webbing attached to bow and stern to help carry the canoe.

Gunnel: Originally gunwale. The wooden, metal, or other material that runs along the top of the canoe hull and provides stiffness.

Handle: Usually one at bow and one at stern to help carry canoe.

Hull: The watertight body of the canoe.

Inwale: The inner part of the gunwale, which gives rigidity and strength to the hull.



Keel: A raised ridge running from bow to stern on the outside bottom of the canoe along the center line. Should be avoided for river canoes.

Keel line: The center line on the outside bottom of the canoe running from bow to stern. A flat keel line will have less rocker, or curve.

Knee pads: Placed on inside bottom of canoe to cushion knees during paddling.

Kneeling thwart: A thwart, or bar, that's been angled to allow for more comfortable solo paddling. Not as strong as a regular thwart.

Offside: The side of canoe that you are not paddling on.

Onside: The side of the canoe that you are paddling on.

Outwale: The outer part of the gunnel, which gives rigidity and strength to the hull.

Painters: Short lines attached to the bow and stern of a canoe to secure it to shore or assist in loading and launching. Should be made from floating line and be no more than the length of the boat.

Seat: Where you sit in the canoe. In a tandem canoe there's a bow seat and stern seat. In a solo canoe there's one seat aft of the center.

Skid plate: Applied on bottom of canoe by a professional or at home to protect outer skin of canoe. Often made of Kevlar.

Solo canoe: A canoe designed to be paddled by one person.

Spray deck: Attaches to top of canoe to protect from wind and water, with openings for cockpits and cargo.

Stern: The back of the canoe. Opposite the bow.

Symmetrical canoe: A canoe with bow and stern sections that are mirror images. A tandem symmetrical canoe can be paddled solo by sitting in the bow seat facing the stern. The stern then becomes the bow.

Tandem canoe: A canoe designed to be paddled by two people.

Throw rope: Packed in a [throw bag](#), this is used to retrieve swimming canoeists.

Thwart: Wood, fiberglass, or metal bar that attaches to the gunnels and stiffens the canoe from side to side.

Yoke: Similar to a thwart, but shaped to allow the canoe to be more easily carried on the shoulders.

Waterline: The level of the water on the side of the canoe hull.