

ESTABLISHING A SAFE COACHING ENVIRONMENT -

Part 2 - Equipment Checks

The third of a series of articles taken from the BCU's Level 2 Coach Support Book. Supporting Coaches develop and improve their coaching practices.

All equipment and resources that you will use need to be checked to make sure they meet the relevant health and safety requirements.

You need to be confident that when you issue any equipment to participants it is in good working order.

How you do this will depend on the individual situation.

by Ed Christian

Policies should be in place to make sure that equipment is well looked after and damaged equipment is removed from use. If the equipment belongs to your employer, i.e. the club or an outdoor centre, your induction should include an explanation of how kit is cared for, and your responsibilities. If you are not sure who used the equipment last or when it was last used, check it through before the group arrive.

If you are reasonably confident it will be in good working order, check it as you issue it.

Boats - Check to make sure:

- ☐ You have enough of the right type / size
- ☐ They have no sharp edges
- ☐ They will float! No extra holes! Is there a bung?
- ☐ The footrest is in good working order and adjustable
- ☐ The backrest is in good working order and adjustable
- ☐ There are no snag hazards, no loose ropes, etc.
- ☐ End grabs are operational

Paddles - Check to make sure:

- ☐ You have enough of the right type / size (left and right handed?)
- ☐ They have no sharp edges

Buoyancy Aids - Check to make sure:

- ☐ You have enough of the right type / size
- ☐ The stitching is intact
- ☐ The buoyancy condition has not deteriorated significantly
- ☐ Any adjustable features are functional

Helmets - Check to make sure:

- ☐ You have enough of the right type / size
- ☐ The cradle or padding is securely fitted
- ☐ Adjustable straps are functional
- ☐ Adjustable cradles are functional
- ☐ The helmet body is generally sturdy

Personal Clothing - If you are issuing any personal clothing such as Wetsuits, Cagoules, appropriate footwear or thermal clothing you need to make sure that:

- ☐ It is clean
- ☐ Appropriately sized and fitted
- ☐ In good working condition

Safety Equipment:

The session risk assessment will identify potential risks that you are likely to encounter during the session and identify how to control them. This is likely to include the requirement for the Coach to have some safety equipment to hand during the session. The Coach will need to be able to deal with potential and likely problems, for example:

Potential Problem:

Participants get too cold or too hot
Participants get tired or hungry
Participants get injured or ill
Participants get trapped
Equipment gets damaged or lost

Safety Equipment to Consider:

Spare clothing, group shelter, survival bag,
Spare food and drink, towline
First aid kit, mobile phone
Knife
Spare paddles, repair kit

It is important that the safety equipment is appropriate to the session and is prepared and accessible during it.

For a whole range of ... Coach Education Courses, Moderate Water Endorsement Courses, 4,5 Star Leader Courses, FSRT and WW Safety and Rescue courses, and more go to

www.canoeengland.org.uk/coachingcourses-dates