

SDBF Steersperson Skills

Need some tips on how to steer your dragon boat? Look no further!

i. Stance

- Face forward
- Spread feet front and back and sideways for balance
- Grip: novices use two hands, blade and T-grip are vertical. Advanced steerspersons can use the left hand alone.

ii. Basic Steering

- Left turn:
 - Novice - pull handle towards you, and the blade moves away
 - Advanced - rotate thumb away from you
- Right turn:
 - Novice- push handle away from you, and the blade moves towards you
 - Advanced - rotate thumb towards you

***Do not set the oar blade deep because it takes too much power to control.**

iii. Moving in Reverse

- Lift oar out of the water to avoid getting knocked out of the boat
- Watch behind you and note the effect of wind and waves
- Use draw strokes in the bow or stern to correct your position or direct the right side or left side paddlers to paddle forward or reverse

iv. Moving Sideways

- Use the draw stroke on the required side - you may need to have the other side push/pry

v. Pivoting boat left or right when stationary or moving very slowly

- Left pivot: left front and right back, use draw stroke
- Right pivot:right front and left back, use draw stroke

vi. Stopping forward moving boat

- Command is: “Hold the boat” and paddlers use reverse stroke(s)

vii. Stopping backward moving boat

- “Hold the boat” using forward stroke(s)

viii. Straight line steering

- Use only as much blade in the water as required to keep the boat straight
- Correct immediately - do not over correct
- Stay focused on your target or the centre of the course. i.e. look ahead to the next set of buoys

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ix. Controlling boat at start line

- Maintain centre lane position or to windward side for a side wind/cross wind
- Use front and back two seats to correct position with draws, reverse and forward strokes
- Make sure that you can see the line of buoys to the finish line

x. Practice

- Practice these skills till the team is competent
- Also practice starts every practice and with other boats if you have the time