

Common Rowing Terms

Blade:	An oar.
Bow:	End of the boat that travels through the water first and is sharpest. Athlete that sits in the seat position nearest this end of the boat.
Bow Ball:	Ball shaped safety cap that sits over the bow end of the boat. Compulsory on all rowing boats for safety of other water users.
Bow Side:	The right hand (starboard) side of the boat as the cox sits or the left hand side of the boat for a rower.
Catch:	The moment at which the blade is immersed in the water and propulsive force applied. Immersion and force application should be indistinguishable actions
Cox:	Person who steers the boat by means of strings or wires attached to the rudder. Can be positioned in either the stern or bow of the boat.
Coxless:	Boat without a cox.
Crab:	When the oar becomes caught in the water at the moment of extraction and the blade handle strikes the athlete. Often causes unintentional release of the blade and significant slowing of boat speed.
Double:	Boat for two scullers.
Erg:	Indoor rowing machine used for training.
Feather:	Blade is flat to the water. This is the position of the blade for the recovery section of the stroke. Athletes must be careful to fully extract the blade before feathering.
Finish:	The last part of the stroke where the blade handle is drawn in to the body. Following this (assuming clean extraction) the boat will be at its maximum speed. Force must be applied right to the finish.
Four:	Boat for four sweep rowers. Can be coxed or coxless.
Gate:	The metal bar, tightened by a screw that closes over the swivel to secure oar.
Head of River [HOR]:	Race in which crews are timed over a set distance. Usually run as processional race rather than side by side.
Heel Restraints:	Attached to the heels of the shoes and to the foot plate. Compulsory safety feature that helps the athlete to release their feet from the shoe in the event of a capsized.
Oar:	Lever used to propel a rowing boat. Also known as a blade.
Pair:	Boat for two sweep rowers.
Quad:	Boat for four scullers.
Recovery:	The part of the stroke phase between the extraction and the beginning or catch when the blade is out of the water.
Regatta:	A competition with events for different boat types and status athletes usually involving heats, semi-finals and finals for each event. Boats compete side by side from a standing start.
Riggers:	Metal outriggers attached to the boat outer shell of the boat next to each seat that supports the swivel and the pin/gate for the oar/blade
Rigging:	The way in which the riggers, slides, swivel, pins, foot plate, oars and sculls can be adjusted to optimise athlete comfort and efficiency.
Rigger jigger:	A small spanner used for attaching and adjusting riggers.
Rudder:	The device under the boat which when moved causes change of direction. Linked to the cox or a crew member by wires.
Rolling start:	A racing start undertaken with the boat already moving.
Sculling:	Rowing with two oars.
Slide:	Two metal runners on which the seat travels.
Squaring:	To turn the oar so that the blade is at 90 degrees to the water. This action should be done early during the recovery to ensure good preparation for the catch.
Standing start:	A racing start done from stationary.
Stakeboat:	An anchored boat or pontoon from which rowing boats are held prior to a race starting.
Stern:	The end of the boat that travels through the water last.
Stroke:	One cycle of the oar The rower who sits closest to the stern of the boat in front of all the others and is responsible for the rating and rhythm of the boat. (other crew members can influence rating and rhythm from behind)
Stroke side:	The left hand (port) side of the boat as the cox sits or the right-hand side of the boat for a rower.
Stretcher:	A metallic or carbon plate inside the boat to which the shoes are attached. Secured with adjustable screws.
Sweep:	Rowing with one oar on one side of the boat.
Trestles:	Portable stands used to support a boat for rigging, washing etc