

Skills Proficiency Overview and Implementation (Version 5)

Anchorage Rowing Association Rowing Program

Background and Purpose

The “Skills Proficiency Level” system was designed to ensure the safety of ARA members, develop rowers’ skills, and protect club equipment. General information is provided below, as well as on the **ARA Skills Proficiency Checklist**.

The Skills Proficiency Level program is designed with the following goals in mind:

- Standardize content and instruction
- Ensure an improved and more complete learning process
- Establish and/or clarify expectations for club equipment use
- Ensure the safety of membership and lake users
- Increase understanding of proper boat use and selection
- Protect and maintain club-owned equipment

The **ARA Skills Proficiency Checklist** was created based on club experiences, input from rowers and benchmarking of multiple national clubs. The **Levels of Proficiency** also provide the basis for appropriate ARA club equipment use requirements for both sweep and sculling shells.

The progression from introduction to demonstration of skills takes place beginning with our Learn to Row/Scull courses, continues during time through the Novice/Junior sessions, and is ongoing with the Masters/Junior sessions.

Anchorage Rowing Association strives to provide individuals with quality and organized programming for a broad range of rowing skill levels. Sculling and sweep components include initial instruction for those with or without rowing experience, regularly scheduled coaching sessions for rowers of all levels and of utmost importance a safe and supportive environment for all rowers associated with ARA and users of Sand Lake. With skill progression rowers acquire greater confidence, safety and freedom. These acquisitions also increase responsibility.

A rowing proficiency level (I through IV) is determined for each ARA member based both on the coach’s knowledge and direct experience with the rower as well as demonstration of skills as lined out in the **ARA Skills Proficiency Checklist**. In addition to satisfying the requirements outlined in the checklist, time spent demonstrating and practicing required skills will be factored into level assessments. Coaches may choose to document hours spent on the water to help assess each rower’s comfort level and rowing ability.

Skills Proficiency and ARA Equipment Use

Use of club equipment is dependent on skill proficiency and goals. **In order to use ARA equipment during uncoached rows (not scheduled and no coach on water) members must be a Skill Level III with a Level IV rower on the water with them, or be a Skill Level IV rower.**

Coaches track members’ skill progression and approve individuals for rowing levels as follows:

Table 1. Levels of Proficiency and ARA Equipment Use

Level	Allowed use of Club Equipment*
Level I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can only use ARA equipment during coached rowing practice
Level II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can only use ARA equipment during coached rowing practice • Based on coach discretion
Level III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use ARA equipment with a Level IV experienced rower on the water with you (uncoached) • Sweep <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can row in pair with a coach present ▪ Can row in a straight four with at least two Level IV rowers in the boat (uncoached) ▪ Can row in a coxed four with at least one Level IV rower and a Level IV coxswain in the boat (uncoached) ▪ Can row in an eight with at least two Level IV rowers and a Level IV coxswain in the boat (uncoached) • Sculler <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can row in a single or double at coached times only ▪ Can row in a quad with at least two Level IV rowers in the boat (uncoached)
Level IV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent use of club-owned equipment outside of scheduled practice when properly signed up (sweep or sculling, as appropriate)

*Some technical requirements may differ between sweep and scull. **All equipment permissions are subject to coach discretion.**

Skill Proficiency Assessment will be provided periodically throughout the rowing season. Overview and practice time of the skills will be briefly provided during rowing practices.

Refer to the ***Skills Checklist for ARA Rowers*** document for the content criteria for the Skill Proficiency Assessment. Refer to the ***Boat Classification and Appropriate Use*** document for boat selection with approved skill level.

Refer to the annual ***ARA Team Management Plan*** for additional information.

Skills Proficiency Assessment Procedures

Refer to ***ARA Skills Proficiency Checklist*** for full details on skills required for each Level.

Step 1. Introduce basic skill sets needed for safe and effective rowing. Direct rowers to Skills Proficiency Checklist for review during the Learn to Row/Scull courses. Develop basic awareness and skills.

Step 2. Incorporate skills necessary for safe, effective rowing while providing review of the **Skills Proficiency Checklist**. Progression of skill instruction and experience will occur during Novice sessions. Informally assess rowers' skill proficiency and provide feedback.

Step 3. Implement instruction of complete set of skills necessary to successfully complete the **Skills Proficiency Checklist** through formal and informal rowing sessions. Coach may provide designated sessions outside of regularly scheduled practices for Skills Proficiency Assessments for rowers to achieve desired categories.

Rowers desiring to achieve Level III should review the **Skills Proficiency Checklist**, practice the skills and arrange to be assessed by a coach. Assessment may be made completed during regular sessions or arranged separately.

Rowers desiring to achieve Level IV should review the **Skills Proficiency Checklist**, practice the skills and arrange to be assessed by a coach. Assessment may be completed during regular sessions or arranged separately.

Upon successful completion of desired Level of Proficiency rowers are to refer to the ARA Club **Boats Classification and Appropriate Use** and **Team Management Plan** for more guidance.