



## Safety Alert - Back to Basics

### Back to Basics

Some rowing safety issues are so simple that they are often taken for granted and sometimes forgotten. Please care to keep these basic safety measures in mind and act accordingly.

Check that the gate on your rigger is fastened properly. Sometimes the bar at the top of the gate appears to be fastened tightly but the groove in the nut has not surrounded the cylindrical part of the gate. There is an example of what can go wrong in the video [here](#).

Do not forget to check the rest of the boat too. Be careful to check the heel restraints are in good condition and not too long, and that the hatch covers are correctly fitted. There is a video on boat checking on the website [here](#).

Be aware of the circulation pattern or navigation rules in the area where you row. These are designed to keep you safe. However, you should still be aware of what is happening around you.

When you look ahead then check on both sides of the boat. There is a temptation to look over the right shoulder towards the centre of the waterway, but you will not then see boats between you and the bank. Most rowers comply with the circulation plan but there are increasingly more people afloat, in other types of boat, who do not understand those rules. There is an example of what can happen do not keep a good lookout [here](#).

If you see another boat that is running into danger, perhaps about to have a collision then shout a warning. Simply shouting "LOOK AHEAD" can be sufficient. However, it is still important for everyone to keep a good lookout. Please do not think that you can rely on warnings from others but pay attention if you hear one.

Practise emergency stops so that you and your crew mates can stop bring your boat to a standstill in less than one boat length. Use the "slap, bury, square" technique. There is more information in the video [here](#).

If you are in a 1x then keep control of the handles. If you let go of them then do not be surprised if you capsize.

There is nothing clever or difficult about any of this, it is just a matter of taking care to get the simple things right.

**Rowing Safety is not Rocket Science.**

Stephen Worley  
Honorary Rowing Safety Adviser  
[safety@britishrowing.org](mailto:safety@britishrowing.org)

May 2024

[This Safety Alert is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.](#)

