



SELF-COACHING DRILLS

A coach's eye on your blade keeps technical crabs at bay during a practice.

But if you're out alone you need a way to self-coach. As a part of your daily warm-up choose a drill that gives you clear feedback and sets the tone for your row.

Two essential drills

Here are a couple of suggestions.

Feet-out rowing focuses on a clean release of the blade using the support of the water to assist the exit. The drill helps you row, tall preventing your weight from falling into the bow. Remove your feet from the shoes and place them on top of the stretcher. During the drive hold steady pressure against the foot stretcher and as you draw the oar handle. Tap down on the oar handle to release the blade in sync with legs down; just before you lose the pressure on the blade. Keep your weight over the handle as you then feather as the hands move away from your body. If the release is late, your feet will come off the shoes, and going in the water is likely. If you nail it, it's crisp and feels easy. Practice rowing slowly for 10 minutes feet-out.

Rowing with a pause at one-quarter slide helps you practice rowing with a quiet upper body on the recovery. Transition smoothly from the drive to the follow-through position of arms-body away. When your knees rise slightly at one-

quarter slide, pause. Let the boat glide for a count of one-one thousand, two-one thousand, then row on. Keep your upper body quiet and steady as you compress on the slide. Let the knees come up to your chest versus the chest dropping to the knees as you get ready to place the blade. Practice sets of 10 strokes.

If it helps you to focus, give yourself a score out of 10 for each set of the drill you do. Mark your improvement. If you don't get better, it may be time to head in to the dock and practice again another time. Practicing rowing wrongly will not be helpful in the long term and a tired body and mind finds challenging drills very hard to do successfully.

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