

Atlanta Rowing Club

Rowing Terms

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Backsplash	This term is in reference to the water thrown back toward the bow direction by the blade as it enters the water. Less is best. This indicates that the blade has been properly planted before the rower initiates the drive.
Blade	The oar; also the end of the oar which is placed in the water.
Bow	The front end of the boat; also used as the name of the person sitting nearest the bow.
Catch	The oar blade entering the water at the beginning of the stroke. Occurring at the end of the recovery phase, the catch is the point of the rowing cycle where the squared blade is inserted into the water. It is accomplished by an upward movement of the arms only.
Collar (or Button)	A plastic or metal fitting tightened to the oar to keep the oar from slipping through the oarlock.
Crab	A stroke that goes bad. The oar blade slices into the water at an angle and gets caught under the surface. A bad crab can catapult you out of the boat.
Drive	The part of the rowing cycle where the rower applies power to the submerged blade.
Erg(ometer)	A rowing machine designed to simulate the actual rowing motion; used for training and testing.
Feather(ing)	1> Term describing the turning of the oar to a horizontal (to the water) position. 2> Turning the oar blade flat during the recovery to lessen wind resistance.
Fin (or skeg)	A small flat appendage located along the stern section of the hull which helps to stabilize the shell in holding a straight course.
Finish	1> The oar blade leaving the water at the end of the stroke. 2> The part of the rowing stroke where you take the blade out of the water, and your head and shoulders are leaning to the bow-side of the hips.
Foot stretcher (or Clogs or Shoes)	An adjustable bracket in a shell to which rowers feet are secured.
Gunwale (or Gunnel)	That part of a shell which runs along the sides of the crew compartment through which the riggers are bolted.
Handle	The end of the oar you hold in your hand.
Hatchet	A type of oar with a blade larger in surface than that of a Macon blade.
Keel	The center line of the shell.
Layback	The upper body is leaning into the bow.
Oarlock	A U-shaped swivel which holds the oar in place. It is mounted at the end of the rigger and rotates around a metal pin. A gate closes across the top to keep the oar in place.
Pitch	The angle between a "squared" blade and a line perpendicular to the water's surface.
Port side	Left side of the boat, as facing the bow.
Puddle	Swirl of water following each stroke.
Rating	The number of strokes per minute.
Ratio	The ratio of time taken on the recovery to time spent on the drive. Recovery time should always be longer than time taken on the drive.
Recovery	1> The part of the rowing stroke from the release up to and including the catch. 2> The time between strokes -- the oar blade traveling through the air.
Release	A sharp downward and away (from the body) hand movement which serves to remove the oar from the water to a position horizontally parallel to the water.
Ribs	The name given to that part of the boat to which the skin of the hull is attached. They are typically made of wood, aluminum or composite materials and provide structural integrity. The riggers bolt to the ribs.

Rig	The arrangement of the oars or sculls, the mechanical "set-up" - which can vary according to size, strength, experience and technique of a given crew.
Rigger	The assembly of tubes which are tightly bolted to the hull to which are attached an oarlock.
Rigging	The adjustment and alteration of accessories (riggers, foot stretchers, oar, etc.) in and on the shell to maximize a particular rower's efficiency - based on their size and capabilities.
Rudder	A device used to steer the shell.
Run	How far the boat glides between strokes.
Rushing	When the upper body comes out of the bow and moves up the slide too fast.
Scull(ing)	1> This term is used interchangeably between the oars used in sculling, the sculling shell itself, or the act of rowing in a sculling shell. 2> The art of rowing with two oars.
Shell	A racing boat; Term for rowing boats
Skying	The fault of carrying the hands too low during the recovery, causing the blade to be too high off the surface of the water.
Sleeve	A plastic or leather wrap placed around the shaft at the location of the collar to protect the shaft from the tightening of the collar.
Slide	The track on which the seat moves.
Slings	Collapsible/portable frames with straps upon which a shell can be placed.
Split	The time a crew takes to complete a 500 meter segment of the race.
Squaring	Term describing the turning of the oar from a horizontal (feathered) to a vertical (squared) blade position.
Starboard	Right side of the boat facing the bow.
Stern	The rear end of the boat.
Stroke	Apart from the rowing action, this can also mean the person who sets the pace for the rest of the crew. The stroke sits nearest the stern.
Sweeping	The art of rowing with one oar.

<i>Expression</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
"Back it down"	Make the shell move backwards by reversing the rowing stroke.
"Bury the blade"	Submerge the blade totally in the water.
"Check it down"	Stop the forward momentum of a moving boat by holding water.
"Count down when ready"	Before proceeding, the athletes acknowledge that they are ready by calling out their position number out loud.
"Hands away"	At the close of the drive phase, the hands move away from the body.
"Hanging at the catch"	The blade is hesitating at the catch point, before entering the water.
"Heads up"	A command usually heard in the boathouse or on the dock. Pay attention as a shell is being moved and you are about to be run over.
"Hold water"	Method of stopping the boat. The blades are squared and buried in the water, athlete sitting in the finish position.
"Hot seating"	When two crews share the same shell during a regatta, it is sometimes necessary for the crews to switch at the finish line without taking the boat from the water.
"Let it run"	Stop rowing and let the boat glide with the blades off the water.
"Jumping the slide"	A problem where the seat becomes derailed from the track while rowing.
"Missing water"	A technical fault where the rower begins the drive before the catch is complete.
"One foot up & out"	The command for exiting a team boat. <i>Procedure:</i> The outside hand holds the oar(s) away from the body. The inside hand holds the gunwale to the dock. The inside foot is removed from the foot stretchers and placed on the step-in board - the body weight is shifted forward as the athlete stands supporting himself on their inside leg. The outside foot is placed on the dock and you get out of the shell.

"Power 10"	A race tactic -- a call for rowers to do 10 of their most powerful strokes.
"Ready all...Row"	Begin rowing.
"Set it up"	Keep the boat level (on keel). Items that affect set are athletes' posture, hand levels, rigging, timing, wind & current.
"Shooting your slide"	A technical fault where the butt travels towards the bow without the commensurate movement of the shoulders.
"Washing out"	Not fully recovering the blade during the whole stroke.
"Weigh-enough" or "Weigh-up"	Stop rowing!
"Weigh-enough HOLD WATER"	Stop rowing and hold water IMMEDIATELY! Usually indicates an impending collision.

***All the above information is taken and combined from a variety of sources -- mostly from the Rowing Handbook by Harold Y. Finigan. This handbook was developed as a guide to rowing for the Lower Merion High School's crew (coached by Finigan).*