

## Risk Assessment: Moving Water



The following risk assessment covers typical paddling trips on wild rivers in the UK and abroad.

The hazards present and their severity

will vary depending on the river.

This risk assessment is relevant to paddling on artificial courses, but see the notes below the table.

Hazard	Risks	Control Measures	Prob.
<b>Travel</b>	<b>Car/ Minibus accidents</b>	Follow Highway code. Do not drive when tired.	L
	<b>Roof rack problems</b>	Train members to secure boats (2* training). Check roof racks before travel.	M
	<b>Trailer accidents</b>	Tow at correct speed, take extra care.	L
<b>Long Days</b>	<b>Exhaustion</b>	Adjust trip length to suit participants. Carry food.	L
	<b>Hypothermia</b>	Dress correctly for conditions. Carry hot drinks, spare clothing, group shelter and/or exposure bags.	M
	<b>Hyperthermia</b>	Carry cold drinks on hot days.	L
<b>Water</b>	<b>Accelerated/ Immersion Hypothermia</b>	Rescue swimmers fast. Teach rolling.	M
	<b>Drowning</b>	Require that all members are competent swimmers. Instruct on capsize drill, rolling and swimming in moving water. Teach rescue techniques.	L
	<b>Waterborne diseases</b>	Try not to ingest water. Take further precautions when there is a known problem	L
	<b>Stoppers and other river features etc.</b>	Avoid by good leadership and paddling. Teach methods for paddling through and in stoppers. Paddlers should know about swimming in and Wear helmet. Adopt correct position when capsized and when swimming.	M
<b>Rocks</b>	<b>Knocked Unconscious</b>	Wear helmet and buoyancy aid. Avoid rocks by use of good technique.	L
	<b>Injury</b>	Carry first aid kit.	M
	<b>Pinning</b>	Avoid rocks by good leadership and paddling. Know how to cope with broaching on a rock. Group leaders know how to rescue from pins.	M
	<b>Entrapment</b>	Use correct technique when swimming.	L
<b>Trees</b>	<b>Caught in strainer</b>	Avoid trees in river by good leadership. Knowledge of swimming techniques	L
<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Entrapment in boat</b>	Inspect equipment. Teach Capsize drill. Keep area between legs clear.	L
	<b>Breakage</b>	Inspect equipment and use appropriate equipment for conditions. Carry splits.	H
	<b>Entanglement in rescue equipment</b>	Learn how to use throwlines and chest harnesses properly. Carry knife.	M
	<b>Manual Handling Injuries</b>	Teach good technique at all levels. Ask for assistance when required.	M
<b>River Bank</b>	<b>Falling Injuries</b>	Wear helmet and buoyancy aid at all times. Wear appropriate footwear. Take care.	L
	<b>Falling into river</b>	Wear helmet and buoyancy aid at all times. Wear appropriate footwear. Take care.	L

Artificial courses will not have the same problems relating to long days, nor will the objective hazards (rocks, trees, stoppers etc.) be as severe. It is for this reason that artificial courses are useful sites for training, particularly for less experienced paddlers. However, the leaders of less experienced groups on these sites must be aware that the control measures based on individual skills may be unworkable and balance this against the lower objective danger. In addition, the artificial sites used have site specific risks, listed below.

Site	Risks	Control Measures	Prob.
<b>Cardington</b>	<b>Catching fingers in metal loops</b>	Instruct paddlers to keep hands away from river bed.	M
	<b>Impact on shallow channel</b>	Wear helmets.	M
	<b>Pinning on fibreglass 'rocks'</b>	Set course up to avoid hazards. Have rescuers ready on bank	M
<b>Nene</b>	<b>Pinning on bottom 'splat rock'</b>	Instruct paddlers to break out as early as possible. Teach paddlers to lean onto obstructions.	H
<b>Nottingham</b>	<b>Problems with paddling, swimming and rescue caused by water conditions</b>	Brief paddlers carefully about course and rescue procedures. Group leaders should be experienced in paddling at the course.	H
	<b>Contracting waterborne illness</b>	Brief paddlers. Wash before eating. Do not ingest water.	H
<b>Lee Valley</b>	<b>Collisions with rafts</b>	There is an assessment for the Olympic Course. Brief Paddlers.	L

Source : Cambridge Canoe Club

There is an assessment for the Olympic Course. Brief Paddlers.

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