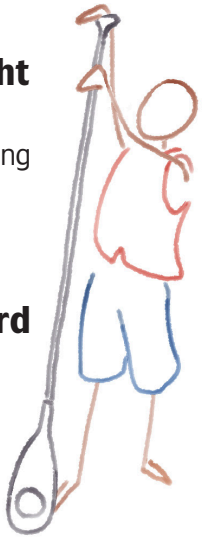
PADDLEBOARD QUICKSTART GUIDE

It's time to have some (more) fun on the water!

Let's get started...

1. Adjust your paddle height

Reach your arm over your head and bend your wrist. With its blade touching the ground, the handle of the paddle should rest at your wrist.



2. Carrying the paddleboard

To pick up the paddleboard, bend your knees and not your back. Carry the paddleboard under your arm, holding it with your hand by the handle. The handle is the centre of balance for the board. A paddleboard only weighs about 11 kg but it's a bit awkward, so it's easier for two people to remove from the rack and to carry.

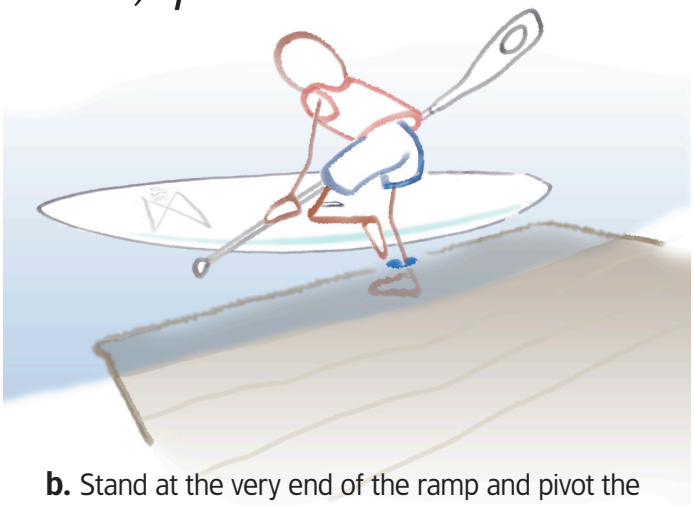
Be careful not to damage the fin on the ramp.

3. Mounting the paddleboard

Getting onto the paddleboard from the boat ramp is a little awkward, but take it slow and you'll get it. Attach your leash to your ankle. Walk carrying your board under your arm as far down the ramp as you can.

a. ***Place the board in the water fin down***, floating the nose first while lifting the back of the board slightly to avoid breaking the fin on the ramp.

Be sure to wear your PFD or tuck it under the shock cord at the front of the board. You should also have a sound-signalling device (whistle).

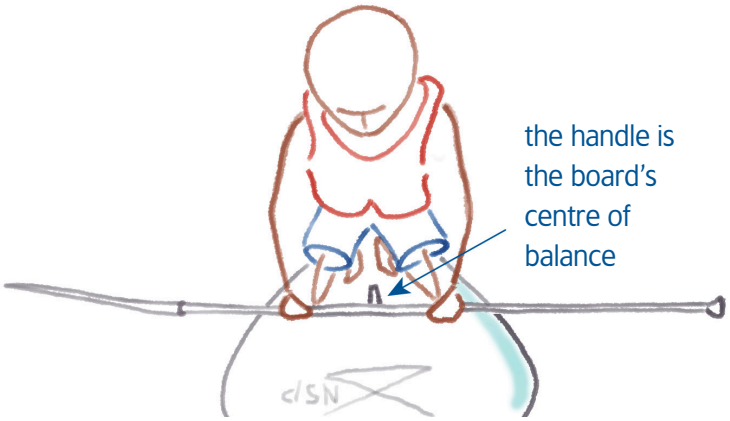


b. Stand at the very end of the ramp and pivot the board so that it is approximately parallel or at a 45˚ angle to the end of the ramp.

c. Lay your paddle on the board ahead of you and hold it in place gently with a free hand as you ***transfer your weight onto the middle of the board, at the handle.***

d. Mount the board on your stomach or knees ***(never standing!)*** in a smooth, gliding motion. Don't pounce. You'll find a style that works best for you.

(Alternatively, there's a small beach outside the south club gates; two people can carry the boards there.)

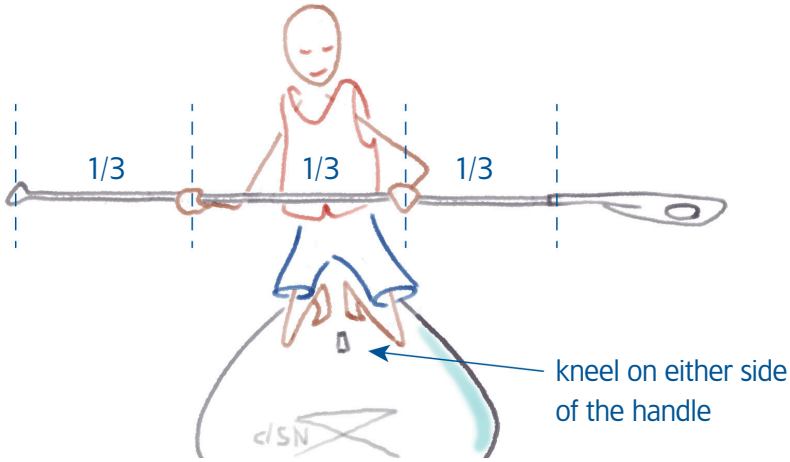


4. The basic kneeling position

The handle of the paddleboard is its centre of balance. ***Always have your knees on either side of the handle.*** Place the paddle centred across the board with your hands holding it on the board.

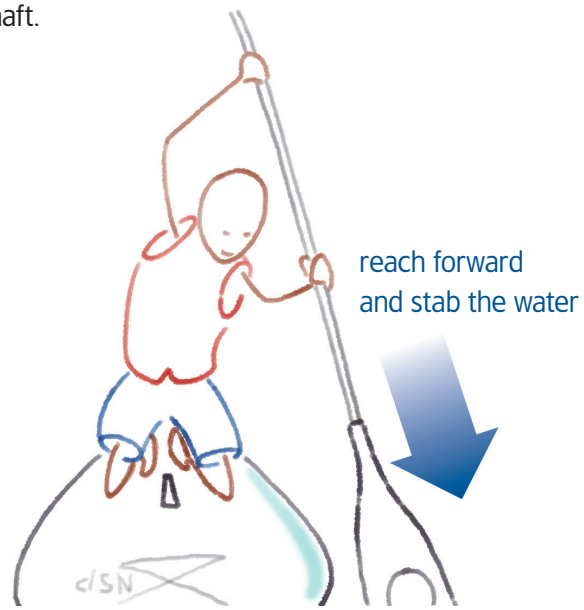
And now for the fun stuff...

How to paddle kneeling down



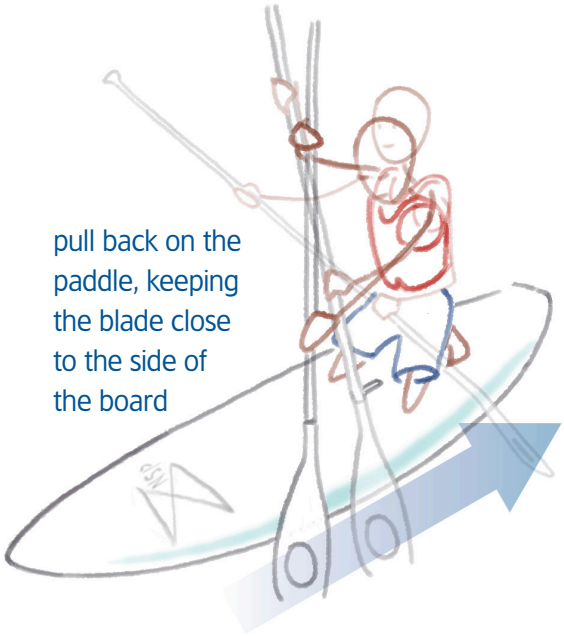
1. Holding your paddle

Hold the paddle with your hands at the 1/3 and 2/3 positions. The palm closest to the blade should be over the shaft and the palm closest to the handle should be under the shaft.



2. Keep your paddle face forward

You'll notice that the paddle is bent where the shaft meets the blade. Always hold the paddle with the angle of the blade facing forward. (The logo on the blade should face forward.)



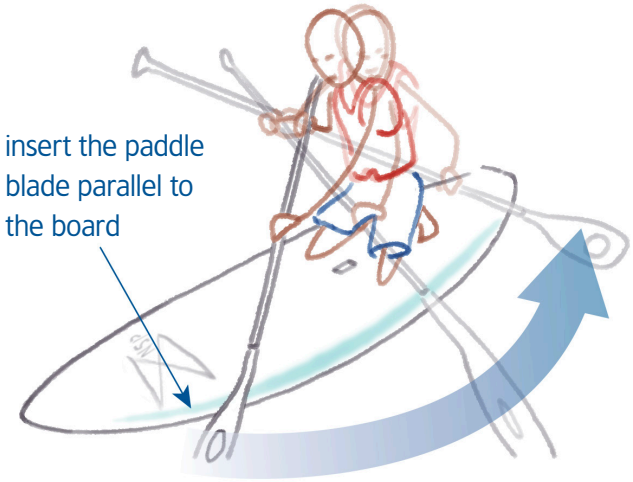
3. Paddling in a straight line

Reach your paddle blade well forward — about as far as the logo at the front of the board — and stab the water. Make sure you bury the entire blade, then pull back on the paddle keeping the blade as close to the side of the paddleboard as you can. Make a long stroke, bringing the paddle all the way back.

Make 3 to 5 strokes on one side of the board, then reverse your hands and make 3 to 5 strokes on the other side.

TIP 1: *If you make a lot of tentative, short strokes, the paddleboard will only make little zigzags forward.*

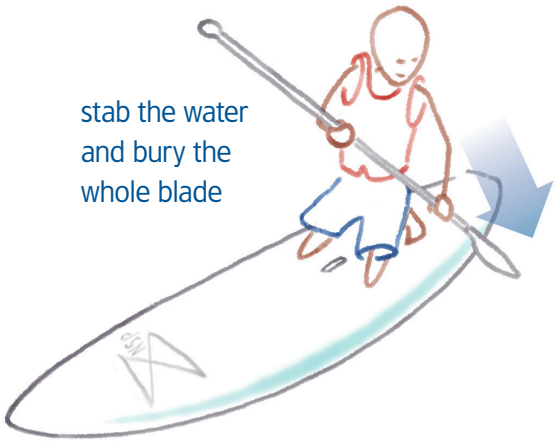
TIP 2: *The farther your blade is from the board when you sweep it back, the less straight the board will go.*



4. How to make a turn

Reach forward to make a normal stroke, but insert the paddle so the blade is parallel to the board, with the edge of the blade facing forward. Now sweep your paddle back in a wide, sweeping arc, or C-stroke.

TIP: *The wider your sweep, the more quickly the board will change direction. If you do a lot of little baby C-strokes, it will take much longer to turn.*



5. Putting on the brakes

To stop the paddleboard from going forward, reach back with the paddle to about where you would normally end a stroke, stab it into the water, again making sure you've buried the whole blade, and hold it in position.

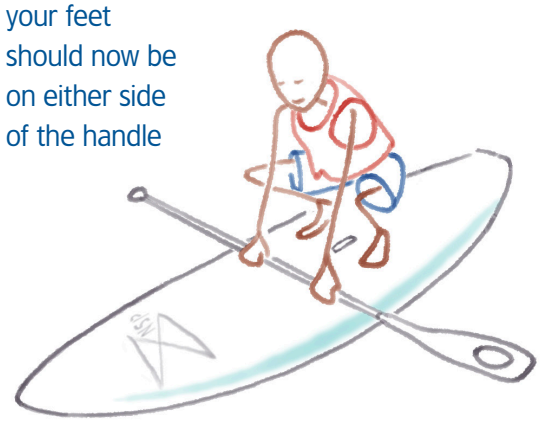
How to stand up on the paddleboard

1. Getting ready to stand up

Start while kneeling, with your hands holding the paddle down on the board in front of you. ***Shift forward to move your weight onto your hands.*** This is important because this way your hands will hold the board steady.

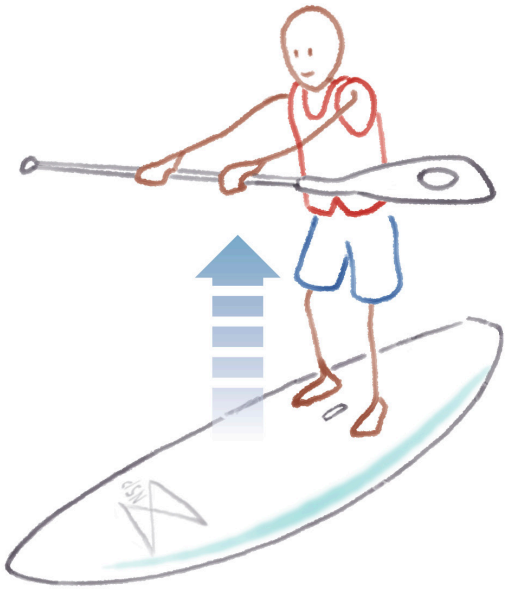
2. How to keep your balance while moving onto your feet

Move one knee up and forward until that foot is under you. ***Keep your weight on your hands.***



3. Assume the frog pose

Now move the other foot into position under you. You'll now be squatting in a sort of "frog pose" with your feet on either side of the handle where your knees had been.



4. Hold your paddle in front of you for balance

Lift the paddle up in front of you and ***use your legs*** to lift yourself straight up to a standing position.

How to paddle standing up

1. You already know how!

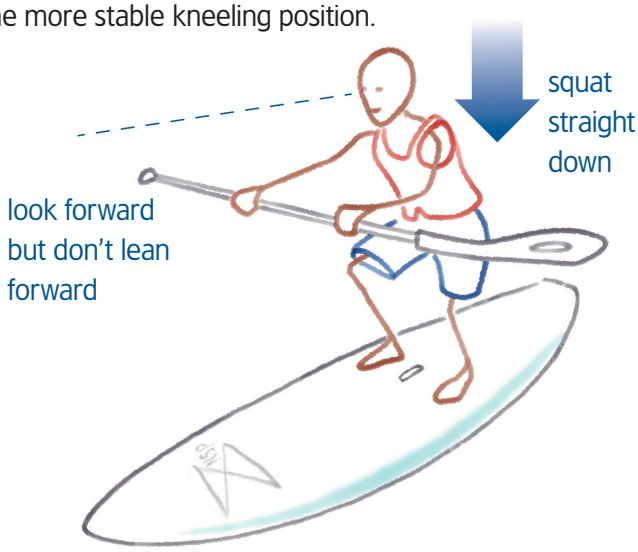
Now that you're standing, use one hand to grab the handle at the top of the paddle, with the second hand held comfortably down lower. ***All the paddling strokes and manoeuvres are the same as for kneeling.***

2. How to make a U-turn

First, stop the board by "putting on the brakes." Now, make several reverse paddle strokes with the paddle close to the board. The board will quickly rotate in position, without the wider, forward-moving arc of a normal turn.

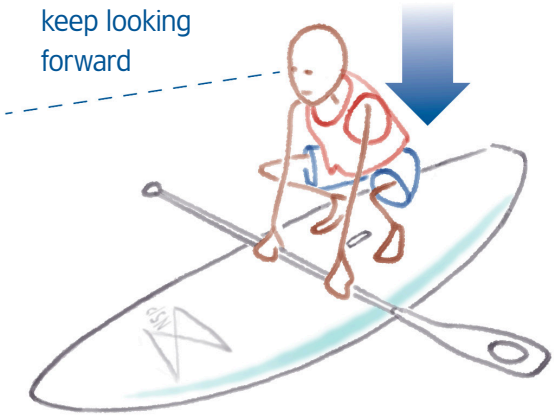
How to drop down on the paddleboard

If you're feeling unstable or a bit wobbly, or maybe there's a boat wake or swell, you'll want to lower yourself back to the more stable kneeling position.



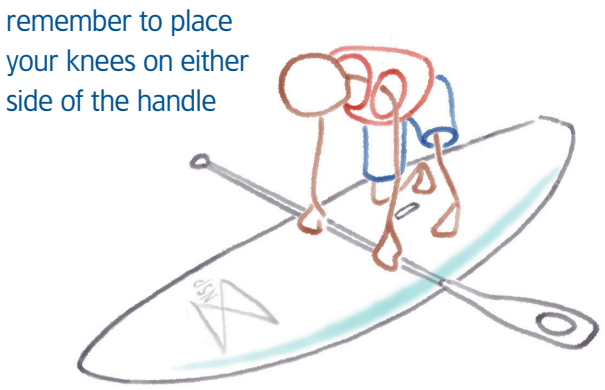
1. Avoiding a fall

Note: It's very important NOT to lean forward to go down, because your momentum will go forward and, well... splash. Hold the paddle straight out in front of you across the board. ***Look forward — don't look down.***



2. Straight down to the frog position

Then, using your legs, squat straight down. As you reach the "frog pose," put your weight on your hands and paddle, just like you did when you were standing up.



3. Go back to the original kneeling position

Now put first one foot back to go onto your knee, then the other. Now you're in your original kneeling position and ready to paddle forward again.

Balancing acts: A few tips to keep you out of the water

TIP 1: *Keep your feet about hip-width apart, with your knees slightly bent and your back straight.*

TIP 2: *Keep your head and shoulders steady and upright. Move your hips to shift your weight.*

TIP 3: *Look ahead, level with the horizon. Don't stare at your feet!*

TIP 4: *Keep your paddle in the water as much as possible. It acts like the outrigger on a canoe, giving you extra stability.*

TIP 5: *If we feel unstable, we tend to grip the board with our feet. Try to keep them relaxed. Wiggle your toes, or rock from heel to toe, from time to time so they won't get tired or numb.*

Oops! How to fall off a paddleboard. And how to get back on

let your legs float to the surface behind you, then kick forward

1. Have a good fall

Sooner or later, you're going to fall off the paddleboard. We all do. It's a watersport – ***it's okay to get wet.***

Try to fall away from the board, and flat against the water if you can. You're tethered to your board with the foot leash, so watch that your board doesn't come back quickly and hit you.

TIP: *If you can hold onto your paddle when you fall, great. But don't worry if you let go of it. First get back on your board, then you can paddle with your hands to reach your paddle.*

2. The easy way to get back on

Position yourself next to the middle of your board. Grab the handle with one hand and pull yourself across the board so you can reach the opposite side with the other hand. Let your legs float to the surface behind you, and kick while pulling on the handle and opposite rail to slide yourself onto the board.

TIP: *Kick your legs out behind you (not down) to help slide your chest onto the board.*

Coming home, to QCYC

1. By now you're a pro. And coming home? Piece of cake:

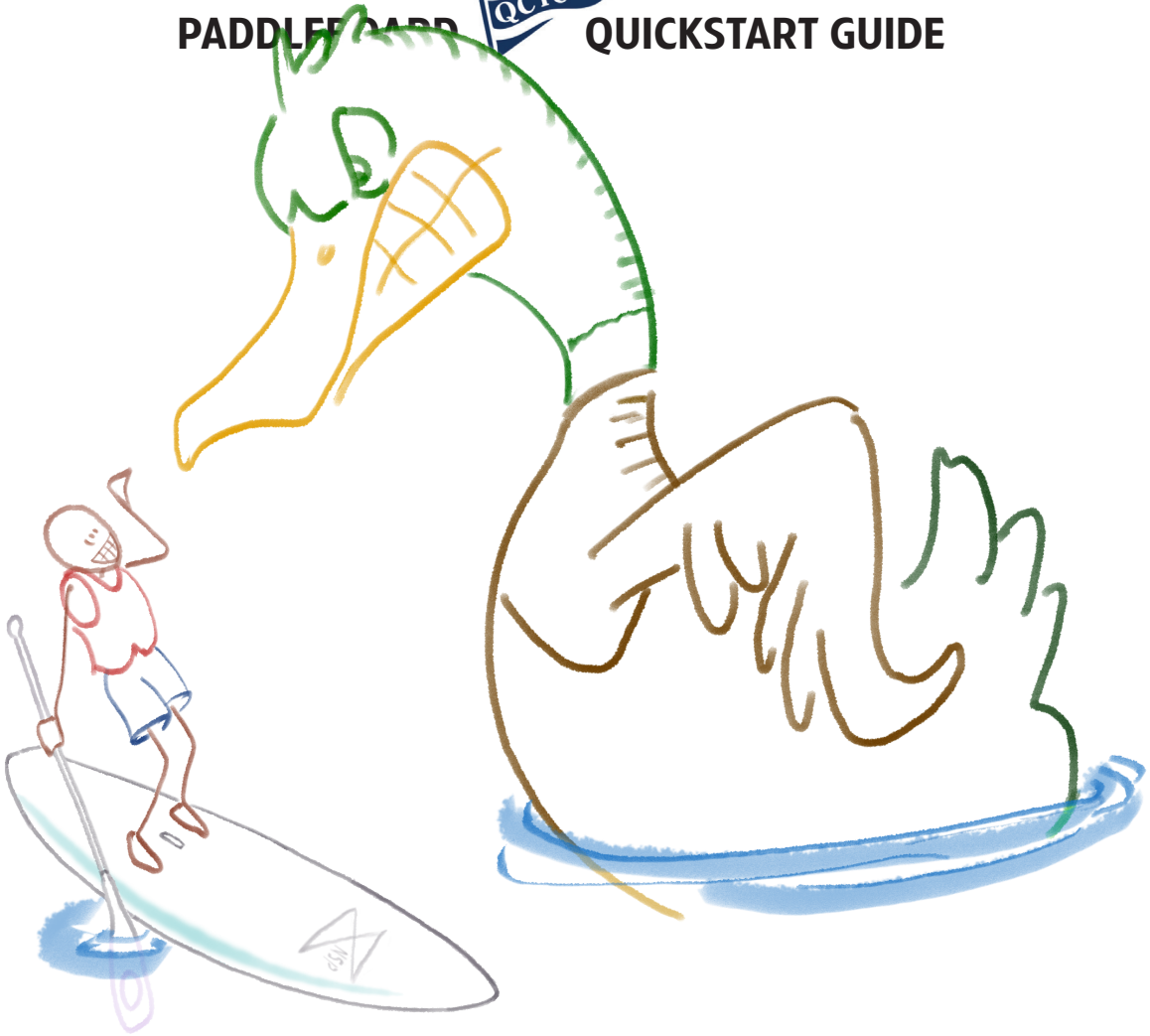
a) In the kneeling position, paddle straight onto the ramp with the nose facing the drysail yard.

b) Once you are over the ramp you can step off the board with one foot and then the other. The fin will still be in deeper water.

c) Standing on the end of the ramp, remove your ankle leash, then flip the board on its side (in the water). Place the board under one arm, grasping the leash and handle in the carrying hand and your paddle in your free hand.

d) Walk up the ramp and return the board to the rack.

A few final pointers...



A few final pointers...

TIP 1: *Especially if you're a novice paddleboarder, go with a friend.*

TIP 2: *Please respect the island wildlife. Just because you CAN get close going on a paddleboard, doesn't mean you should.*

TIP 3: *Steer clear of rocks and shallow areas. The fin of your board can catch and...splash.*

TIP 4: *Right of way: You're easily manoeuvrable on your board. Respect and keep out of the way of other boats and watercraft that might be less aware and less manoeuvrable than you are.*