

Rowing at Goring Gap Boat Club

Goring Gap Boat Club is a recreational rowing club that aims to cater for all abilities of rower from the complete novice to the very experienced, with the objective of enabling everyone to enjoy however much time they have to spend on the water in a wide variety of boats and crews. With that in mind, GGBC offers the following club rowing sessions and other opportunities.

Main Club Sessions

Summer	Winter
Saturday 9am to 11am	Saturday 9am to 11am
Sunday 10am to 12pm	Sunday 10am to 12pm
Thursday 6pm to 8pm	

The switch between winter and summer sessions happens around the clock change in March and October, and exact dates are determined and published as the clock change approaches.

These sessions are managed by a rota of volunteer Session Managers (SM), so please ensure you make yourself known to the SM and they will organise your outing. Please arrive 10 minutes before the session start time shown above so that crews and outings can be organised efficiently.

Who are these sessions for?

All members are welcome at these sessions – from complete beginners to garlanded regatta winners. The SM will try to ensure that everyone has an outing they can enjoy. Depending on numbers, that might mean putting experienced rowers together in a light ('fine') boat, or putting a couple of experienced rowers in with some less experienced rowers to help balance the boat while they learn. Total beginners will be taken out in our stable tubs (also known as the touring gigs) to learn the basics (2 rowers plus a cox) before moving on to the larger but stable 'restricted' fours.

The ethos of the club is friendly and inclusive so we do ask that if you are more experienced you take your share of enabling beginners to learn the ropes. That might mean taking a seat in a boat of beginners or coxing the tub.

Go Row Days

On the first Sunday of each month, the Club Session will run in parallel with a Go Row introductory session for non-members who are interested in learning to row.

Anyone is welcome to attend these sessions, to find out if rowing is the sport for you, and if you would like to join GGBC.

Explore Rowing Sessions

8am – 10am. Every 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month (see dates on the calendar on the [GGBC website](#))

Who are these sessions for?

Club members who would like to improve and compete in friendly races between other recreational rowing sections of Clubs in the Thames Valley. Although it's competitive it is for fun. These races are generally sculling races in touring quads (wide stable boats). There will be about 6 races a year with as many crews as we can put together on the day. At these sessions, there will ideally be a coach available to offer guidance. Rowers need to be willing to cox or learn to cox in these sessions (and in the races) as there are no dedicated coxes.

Please contact captainofrowing@goringgapbc.org.uk if you would like to join these sessions.

Squad Sessions

8am – 10am. Every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month (see dates on the calendar on the [GGBC website](#))

Who are these sessions for?

The aim of these sessions is to allow experienced rowers to have a good work out and row with others at a similar level. It is sweep rowing. It is usually a mix of men and women although if there are enough rowers they may split on gender lines.

You may be asked if you would like to join the squad or you can ask the session manager to put you in touch with the organiser if you consider yourself an experienced rower able to enjoy a faster outing.

These outings are arranged during the week in advance by email. You cannot simply turn up and row.

Rowers who join the squad should be willing to take their turn at coxing during the squad session.

Importantly, the club relies on its experienced members to play their part in welcoming new rowers, and therefore there is an expectation that squad rowers will continue to contribute to the successful running of the main club sessions, either by volunteering as a Session Manager, or simply by staying on to help out with coxing, coaching, or whatever is needed.

Note: Explore Rowing/Squad Rowing have priority over the sculling/sweep blades and boats during their session times.

Rowing outside of Club Sessions

Rowing can be a dangerous sport as it involves strenuous exercise, heavy equipment and deep and often very cold water. For that reason, during the main club sessions we have a Session Manager who is trained to look out for the safety of rowers both on and off the water. However, club members have a responsibility to act in a safe manner whilst on the premises and on the water.

All rowers should have prior approval from the Captain of Rowing to use club equipment out of club session times. If you want to row out of hours please email captainofrowing@goringgapbc.org.uk .

If you want to row small boats (singles, pairs, doubles) out of hours then please ask for a sculling proficiency form to complete. If training is necessary for you to meet all the elements listed, this can be arranged.

Out of hours rowers should keep in mind basic rowing safety measures and follow the safety rules set out below:

- Wear appropriate clothing -- a layered approach is best for winter.
- Keep a spare set of warm dry clothes in the car.
- Make sure you do pre- & post-outing safety checks EVERY TIME you row.
- Take a mobile with you.
- Know the signs of hypothermia and what to do.

Very experienced rowers can row in fine boats outside of Club sessions, either sculling alone or together in a crew, in the following circumstances:

1. There must be a Session Manager present. That could be you. The responsibility of the Session Manager is to decide if conditions are suitable for the outing.
2. Outside of Main Club Sessions, the Session Manager is not responsible for organising crews. Those wishing to row out of hours must arrange to be self-sufficient, e.g. able to handle boats and with a cox, if needed.
3. Small boats are not allowed to go out alone during the winter months (between 1st November and April 30th) under any circumstances. The rest of the year, if you want to go out alone the Captain of Rowing must agree that you are competent to do so (and a record of this agreement will be kept by the membership secretary).
4. You should complete a capsized drill at the first available opportunity, if you have not already done one. Pass your name to the Captain of Rowing so they know you are waiting for an opportunity.
5. Anyone rowing in the twilight must have lights on their boat; all boats must be off the water before nightfall.

The stable tubs are also available for use in the same circumstances.

Safety Rules

Cold Water Rules

Cold water rules are in effect:

1. During the period 1st November to 30th April; or
2. When the water temperature is below 10 °C; or
3. When the air temperature is below 5 °C

When cold water rules are in effect:

- Small boats (single and double sculls) may not go out alone.

High Flow Rules

When yellow warning boards are displayed at Whitchurch Lock an assessment must be made of conditions on site by an experienced club official before rowing. There is no rowing when red warning boards are displayed without explicit permission from the Captain of Rowing. See <http://riverconditions.environment-agency.gov.uk/>

As a guide, to assist in decision-making, when the flow rate at Reading exceeds 50 m³/s an assessment should be made of conditions on site by an experienced club official before rowing and it is unlikely to be safe to row when the flow rate at Reading exceeds 75 m³/s. See <http://www.gaugemap.co.uk/#!Map/Summary/1070/1139>

Weather Rules

There is no rowing during thunderstorms. If thunder is heard during an outing, you must immediately return to the pontoon.

As a guide, to assist in decision-making, rowing is unlikely to be safe when the wind speed is sustained at about 20 knots, or gusts above 35 knots. See <http://xcweather.co.uk/forecast/Mapledurham>

There is no rowing permitted when fog obscures the far bank from the pontoon.