

EQUIPMENT	
Blades	The wide flat section of the oar at the head of the shaft. The two types are called hatchet and spoon.
Hatchets	These oar blades have a bigger surface area than the standard or spoon blades and have a hatchet or meat cleaver shape.
Oar	The piece of equipment that each rower uses to propel the boat. In sweep rowing, each oar is approximately 12 feet long, lightweight and well designed.
Shell	The racing boat. Shells come in configurations and sizes for single rowers, pairs, fours and eights. An eight is approximately 60 feet long. Narrow (about two feet wide at its widest point), and weighs about 380 pounds.
Scull	A shell configured so that each rower uses two oars. This term is also used interchangeably when referring to the oars used in a sculling shell, the shell itself, or to the act of rowing a sculling shell.
Sweep	A shell configured so that each rower has one oar. Oars on a sweep shell are normally alternated from side to side.
Foot Stretcher	An adjustable bracket in a shell to which the rower's feet are secured in attached sneakers or similar footwear.
Rigger	The device that connects the oarlock to the shell and is bolted to the body of the shell.
Oarlock	A U-shaped swivel that holds the oar in place. It is mounted at the end of the rigger and rotates around a metal pin.
Button	A plastic or metal fitting tightened on the oar to keep the oar from slipping through the oarlock.
Slide	(Or Track) Two tracks on which the seat moves. The seat moves forward and backwards on the slide, enabling the rower to "gather up" his or her body at the start of the stroke and then use the combined power of the legs, back, and arms when actually executing the slide.
Gunwale	(Or Gunnel) Top section on the slides of a shell, which runs along the sides of the crew section where the rowers are located. The riggers are secured to gunwale with bolts.
Keel	The centerline of the shell. The term refers to the extent to which the boat is balanced from side to side while rowing. A "good keel" is where the shell is rowed with little or no continual dipping to port or starboard.
Rudder	Steering device at the stern. The rudder is connected to cables (tiller ropes) that the coxswain uses to steer the shell.
Skeg	(Or Fin) A small fin located along the stern section of the hull. This helps to stabilize the shell in holding a true course when rowing. All racing shells have a skeg. The skeg should not be confused with the rudder.
Rigging	The adjustment and alteration of accessories (riggers, foot stretchers, oars, etc.) in and on the shell. Examples of rigging adjustments that can be made are the height of the rigger, location of the foot stretchers, location and height of the oarlocks, location of the button on the oar and the pitch of the blade of the oar.
Slings	(Or Boat Slings) Collapsible/portable frames with straps upon which a shell can be placed temporarily.
ROWING CYCLE TERMS	
Stroke	One full motion to move the shell. It is also used as a term referring to the stern-most rower who sits nearest the coxswain.
Catch	The start of the rowing cycle at which the blade enters the water. It is accomplished by an upward motion of the arms only. The blade of the oar must be fully squared at the catch.
Feathering	The act of turning the oar blade from a position perpendicular to the surface of the water to a position parallel to the water. This is done in conjunction with the Release.
Release	A sharp downward (and away) motion of the hand, which serves to remove the oar blade from the water and to start the rowing cycle.

Recovery	Part of the rowing cycle from the release up to and including where the oar blade enters the water.
Squaring	A gradual rolling of the oar blade from a position parallel to the water to a position (almost) perpendicular to the surface of the water. This is accomplished during the Recovery portion of the rowing cycle and is done in preparation for the Catch.
Drive	That part of the rowing cycle when the rower applies power to the oar. This is a more or less blended sequence of applying power primarily with a leg drive, then the back, and finally the arms.
Finish	The last part of the Drive before the Release where the power is mainly coming from the back and arms.
Rating	The number of strokes per minute. Also known as Stroke Rating.
Crab	(Not a hard or soft-shell edible.) "Catching a Crab" refers to a problem encountered by a rower when his or her oar gets "stuck" in the water, usually right after the Catch or just before the Release and is caused by improper squaring or feathering. The momentum of the shell can overcome the rower's control of the oar. In extreme cases, the rower can actually be ejected from the shell by the oar.
OTHER TERMS OF INTEREST	
Bow	The forward end of the shell.
Stern	The rear end of the shell.
Port	The left side of the shell when facing the bow. In sweep rowing, the designation of a rower who normally rows with an oar on the port side.
Starboard	The right side of the shell when facing the bow. In sweep rowing, the designation of a rower who normally rows with an oar on the starboard side.
Coxswain	(Or Cox, or Cox'n) The person who sits at the stern of the shell (although this may be in the bow of some "4s"), steers, gives commands, calls the ratings, and urges the rowers on in a race. A knowledgeable coxswain will generally serve as an "on-site/in-the-shell" assistant to the coach. Relatively light in weight, a good coxswain will have as much competitive spirit as the rowers and can make a considerable difference in a race.
The Stroke	The rower sitting nearest the stern (and the coxswain). The stroke is responsible for setting the stroke length and cadence for the rest of the crew, following the commands and encouragement of the coxswain.
Check	Any abrupt deceleration of the shell caused by some uncontrolled motion within the shell; an interruption in the forward motion of the shell.
Course	A straight race course for rowers that normally has 4-6 lanes. In high school, the course length is 1500 meters, while in college and Olympic events, the course length is 2000 meters.
Cox Box	A small electronic device which aids the coxswain by amplifying his or her voice and which gives a readout of important information such as stroke count.
Ergometer	A rowing machine. An "erg" allows beginning rowers to learn the basics to learn the basics of the stroke before going on the water, and is used by all rowers to develop their conditioning.
Weigh-Enough	Actually sounds like "way-nuff". This is the coxswain's call to have all rowers stop rowing.