



Raft Building

Recommended Age Group: Yr. 7 +

Activity Description: In two competing teams, the group will construct and race rafts built from supplied materials.

Equipment Required:

- 12 white floating tubes (equipment for 2 raft sets)
 - 4 wood planks
 - 24 small ropes
 - PFD's (1:12 ratio, plus instructor and teacher)
 - Rescue aid: rescue tube or extra PFD in flat water
 - 1 canoe or kayak &/or buoy
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Number of Coastlife Staff Required: 1:20

Duration of Activity: 1.25 hrs

Suitable Location/Setting: Can be facilitated at any flatwater location where there is no current. This is usually at Mogareeka, Wallagoot Lake or the Kianinny Cottages.

Safety Considerations

- No one enters the water until instructed to do so, and an instructor must then be guarding, in a canoe, or in the water.
- Everyone must wear a PFD during this activity from when they are on the dock to the end of the program. When at the beach, a pdf needs to be worn from the time the students start building the raft to the end of the program.
- Wait until everyone is out of the water before lifting the raft from the water.
- Participants must wear closed toed shoes on the dock/beach, especially when building the raft.
- Swimming occurs only at the dock (or designated swim area at the beach) closest to the main building. No running in, diving, flips or cannon balls. Participants may jump in off the dock, swim up to 5m out, and then climb back up the ladder.

- At Mogareeka a site is chosen with min. wind, current, and staff are positioned down current to the participants in case they get moved away from the group.
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Program Delivery

Introduction Briefing Points:

- The activity is designed for a group of **12 to 16 students, 1 instructor and 1 teacher**. The main body of this activity consists of the group splitting into two teams and each team working together to plan and problem solve and build a raft. Each team will then race their raft and disassemble it.
- The **aim** is for students to work as a team, learn new skills like knot tying, use new skills and creative ideas to build a real object, move through the planning and problem solving process, have a lot of fun, stay safe, and enjoy the outdoors.

Activity Delivery:

- Before the activity begins set up two raft building stations with half the ropes, planks and tubes at each site. Keep all the PFD's at one site to explain everything to the group at once.
- Set up a buoy in the middle if needed, or have a canoe ready.
- **Introduction:** With the whole group at one raft building site (but not on the dock), explain the key safety points
 1. They won't be going into the water until near the end, so they need to keep hats, shoes, and clothes on until near the end of the program.
 2. They won't be entering the water until the raft is ready to go and they are instructed to do so.
- Explain the purpose of the activity.... To build the raft in two groups and then race, including disassembling everything and putting it all away. This is a team activity, everyone needs to get involved and help out each other.
- Demonstrate and explain the raft building process. Show a reef knot and a square lashing knot. They can practice and use these knots or any other to make their raft strong and also easy to undo at the end. They need to build a raft to hold a min. of 2 people.
- Make sure they understand the limited space on the dock and the need to be careful in moving around and working on the raft.
- Once the explanation and demo are finished, hand out PFD's and help to fit them to each person if needed.
- Split the group - one group walks with teacher to other site.
- Each group has 15 -20 mins to design and build their raft.
- Once your group is ready, have them sit on the dock, paddle over to check other group, make sure everyone's PFD's have been tightened and checked before entering the water.
- Instruct the groups to carefully lower the rafts into the water and get into position.
- Position yourself between the two sites to allow the groups to paddle to you and around and back to their original site. Blow the whistle to begin the race.
- Keep track of time; speed up the group if needed. The race finishes when one group has paddled around and back, everyone's out, the raft is out and is dismantled and all pieces have been put away how they were originally found.

- Make sure everything is tidy, if there is extra time the group can swim at the closest dock to the buildings or at a designated spot at the beach.

Debrief Points and Outcomes:

- Bring the groups back together for a quick 5 min chat at the end. Find out which group 'won' the race. What was their strategy? What was the other group's strategy? How did each group work as a team? What did they do well? How could they work as a more solid team next time? What was the most fun?
- Store the gear either up on the bank, under the deck, or at the beach above the tide line and bring it back to camp at the end of the day (or whenever you are leaving the site).