



JUNIOR OUTRIGGER PROGRAM



INTRODUCTION TO OUTRIGGER PADDLING

Are you ready to jumpstart the Junior Outrigger Program created by *ARE Outrigger World* for your outrigger club? This guide helps to create a fun and educational program for your young paddlers.

This Junior Outrigger Program was designed by renowned outrigger paddling coach, Vaimiti Maoni, who has introduced generations of Tahitian kids to this sport. By using this program, you'll be able to impart the same skills, drills, sportsmanship, and teamwork as you prepare your juniors for sprint competitions.



SESSION 1: OPEN HOUSE – MEET AND GREET

GOAL: To permit participants and instructors to become acquainted with each other and the fundamentals of the outrigger canoe.

ACTIVITY: Meet with participants one-on-one to learn each person's name, height, and weight. This information will be used to strategically seat the paddlers for optimal performance and balance. (Note: Please don't risk subjecting them to any teasing by announcing their height and weight in front of their peers.)

It is also important to find out if they know how to swim or have any experience in paddling an outrigger canoe.

Once you've completed your introductions and made note of paddlers' body metrics, you can gather the group together to introduce everyone to each other. Let them know what they can expect to learn and accomplish in this Junior Outrigger Program created by *ARE Outrigger World*.



OUTRIGGER BASICS

INTRODUCTION TO THE CANOE ON LAND

- ☐ The canoe (VA'A: V6) and its rigging (Ama, and Iatos).
- ☐ Different types and sizes of paddles: Curved/ "S" paddle and straight paddle for steering.
- ☐ Water safety and wearing life jackets in case of a capsize ("Huli").
- ☐ How to get in the canoe (enter with buttocks first, then legs).
- ☐ How to get out of a canoe (exit with legs first, then push with the arms).



OUTRIGGER BASICS

CREW COMPOSITION

Explain the role of everyone in the canoe based on their seat position.

- ☐ Seat 1 is the “Stroker” who sets the pace for everyone to follow and modifies the rhythm by calling out “Tare”(pronounced Tar“a”).
- ☐ Seat 2 is the “Help Stroker” who assists the stroker to maintain the pace by staying in sync. Seats 3 and 4: One of these seats is the “Captain” who leads the crew. This person must be powerful enough to generate and maintain the canoe’s speed. In general, Seat 3 (or sometimes Seat 4) announce the side changes, “Tare” in Tahitian.
- ☐ Seat 5 “Help Steer”, this paddler, always the lightest weight, helps steer as needed and pushes like 2, 3, and 4.
- ☐ Seat 6 “Steer” (“Peperu”) directs the canoe by maintaining a straight line, navigating the course, steering, and following the rhythm of paddlers’ pace.

You’ll also want to explain how the crew paddles in a “quincunx” pattern. Seats 1/3/5 paddle on one side and seats 2/4 paddle on the opposite side.



PADDLING BASICS

Describe these fundamental stroke techniques and skills:

- ☐ How to paddle properly.
- ☐ How, why, and when to call a side change (explain).
- ☐ How to steer, using the blade as rudder to poke (“patia”) left and poke right.
- ☐ How to stop.
- ☐ How to reverse.

Refer to *ARE Outrigger World*’s YouTube videos: “V1 Turns *ARE Tahiti* V1 Marara Rudderless Outrigger Canoe” and “Paddle Stroke & Change Over – *ARE Tahiti* V1 Marara Rudderless Outrigger Canoe” for more instruction tips.



WEEK 1 SCHEDULE

MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY: Repeat the same exercises and gradually increase the distance from 0.5 to 1.0 miles. Repeat with breaks.

SATURDAY: Do a longer session with more miles to assimilate the stroke and paddle in sync.

WEEK 1 PRACTICE DRILLS:

Plan to take them on the water when the water is flat, and conditions are favorable.

Before their first on-water session, place the paddlers in their seat positions by their size and weight. For example, Seats 3 and 4 will have the strongest and Seat 5 will have the lightest.

Launch the canoe with a dolly and a minimum of four paddlers in the four front and 1 or 2 in the “ama.” This is an essential part of outrigger etiquette to help each other and work as team.

Coach will get in the canoe and demonstrate what was previously shown on land. Demonstrate how to use the correct posture, attack the water with paddle in a vertical position, push with the upper arms and legs, and then, pull with the body. Let them see how you steer and pull to propel the canoe.

Now, have them try paddling together and encourage everybody to work in sync.

Instruct your designated captains to call out each stroke (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10) and then call “Tare” after 10 strokes, so everyone will know when to change sides.

Remind your paddlers to hold the paddle vertically. Then let your teams practice paddling a straight line for 0.5 mile. This will give your steerer a chance to learn how to keep the canoe going straight by steering on the side of the direction they need to go.

Be sure to take breaks and suggest any corrections, so they can repeat these fundamental movements with good form.

After 45 minutes of practice, head back to shore for some braking exercise. Then show them the proper way to rinse and store equipment.

At the end of practice, hold a briefing for paddlers to ask questions and share their assessment of how they did as a team.



WEEK 2 SCHEDULE

MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY: Repeat the same exercises, and gradually increase the distance from 0.5 to 1.0 miles. Repeat with breaks.

SATURDAY: Do a longer session with more miles to assimilate the stroke and paddle in sync.

WEEK 2 PRACTICE DRILLS:

Build on the same practice drills as the first week. In this on-water session, have the Seat 3 position call “Tare” on the seventh stroke and then call, “Hey, hey, hey” for the three strokes and change sides. This emphasizes the importance of seat positions (Stroker, Captain, and Steerer). The Stroker establishes the rhythm after the “Tare” call.

Instruct the steerers to keep the canoe straight for two miles and turn back.

If the steerer wants to navigate to the right, he steers on the right or vice versa for the left.

Keep working on synchronization and changing sides.



WEEK 3 SCHEDULE

MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY: Do the same exercises, gradually increase the distance from 0.5 to 1.0 miles. Repeat with breaks.

SATURDAY: Do a longer session with more miles to assimilate the stroke and paddle in sync.

WEEK 3 PRACTICE DRILLS:

Continue applying the same practice drills as the previous sessions on the water. This week, introduce how to do calls (“Tare”) with different rhythms for the start, main part of the course, and the finish. This is how you shift gears in a canoe.

- The “Tatara Va’a” involves five strokes that are slower and deeper to generate more momentum at the start or push to the finish. The grip is 3” above the blade. The sound of this “Tare” is “Hip!”
- The “Huti Paari” is used to keep pace with powerful, long, and strong pulls. The grip is 6” above the blade. The sound of this “Tare” is “Hey!”
- The “Huti Pe’e” is used to finish strong. The stroke is not as deep and a bit faster. The grip is 3” above the blade. The sound of this “Tare” is “Hep!”

Give your juniors a chance to practice listening and reacting to their Captains’ three different “Tare” calls.

Next, have them work from the start with no change of sides during the first 20 strokes minimum – much like a dragon boat.



WEEK 4 SCHEDULE

MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY: 4 x 500 meters (alternating odd fast, even recovery pace).

SATURDAY: Paddle 3-4 miles, using the resistance bands to strengthen their stroke.

WEEK 4 PRACTICE DRILLS:

ON LAND: Show your juniors some stretching and warm-up exercises for five minutes.

ON WATER: Continue with stretching and warm-up exercises in their canoes for 10-15 minutes.

For resistance training, attach a bungee cord to the circumference of the center hull of a V1 canoe. This bungee cord will force them to pull more with each stroke during the different phases of paddling (start, main course, and finish).

Now, test their ability to paddle for 500 meters, breaking this distance down into six different intervals:

1ST INTERVAL: “Ttatara va’a,” the first 5-6 rowing strokes are very deep to power the canoe. The grip is 3" above the blade. After these strokes, the captain yells, “Go!” to transition to the next interval.

2ND INTERVAL: “Pine,” the stroke is gradually faster with the grip 3" above the blade. The stroker increases the cadence quickly during 20 strokes before changing. The captain keeps the rhythm during 2 or 3 calls for approximately 100 meters.

3RD INTERVAL: “Huti roa,” the stroke is slower, deeper, and more powerful for approximately 150 meters. Move the grip to 6" above the blade.

4TH INTERVAL: “Huti pe’e,” the stroke is not as deep and a bit faster than the huti roa with 2 “hep” calls in approximately 50 meters. The grip is 3" above the blade.

5TH INTERVAL: “Huti roa,” the stroke is slower and much deeper for approximately 150 meters. The grip is 6" above the blade.

6TH INTERVAL: “Pine,” a very fast stroke with a “Hip” call for the last 50 meters to the finish line. The grip is 3" above the blade.

If necessary, this could be simplified to three different intervals with:

1ST INTERVAL: Start for 100 meters.

2ND INTERVAL: Huti roa for 350 meters.

3RD INTERVAL: Pine for the last 50 meters.



WEEK 5 SCHEDULE

MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY: 1 x 500-meter warm-up; 3 or 4 x 500 meters (alternating odd fast, even recovery pace) and 8 x 20-second sprints.

SATURDAY: 4 x 500-meters after warm-up.

WEEK 5 PRACTICE DRILLS:

Repeat the same dryland stretching and warm-up exercises for 5 minutes and then in the canoe on the water for 10-15 minutes.

On water, do 1 x 500 meter warm-up using the different intervals more slowly; then complete 3 or 4 x 500 meters using the following six intervals:

1ST INTERVAL: “Ttata va’a,” the first 5-6 rowing strokes are very deep to power the canoe. The grip is 3" above the blade. After these strokes, the captain yells, “Go!” to transition to the next interval.

2ND INTERVAL: “Pine,” the stroke is gradually faster with the grip 3" above the blade. The stoker increases the cadence quickly during 20 strokes before changing. The captain keeps the rhythm during 2 or 3 calls for approximately 100 meters.

3RD INTERVAL: “Huti roa,” the stroke is slower, deeper, and more powerful for approximately 150 meters. Move the grip to 6" above the blade.

4TH INTERVAL: “Huti pe’e,” the stroke is not as deep and a bit faster than the huti roa with 2 “hep” calls in approximately 50 meters. The grip is 3" above the blade.

5TH INTERVAL: “Huti roa,” the stroke is slower and much deeper for approximately 150 meters. The grip is 6" above the blade.

6TH INTERVAL: “Pine,” a very fast stroke with a “Hip” call for the last 50 meters to the finish line. The grip is 3" above the blade.

If necessary, this could be simplified to three different intervals with:

1ST INTERVAL: Start for 100 meters.

2ND INTERVAL: Huti roa for 350 meters.

3RD INTERVAL: Pine for the last 50 meters.

At the end of the practice session, perform 8 x 20-second sprints with no side change to work on starts.



WEEK 6 SCHEDULE

Each day starts with 15-minute warm-up on land.

MONDAY: 3 x 500 meters and 8 x 20-second sprints

TUESDAY: 3 x 500 meters and 8 x 20-second sprints

WEDNESDAY: 6 x 500 meters (alternating odd fast, even recovery pace) and 8 x 20-second sprints

THURSDAY: 4 rounds of 8 x 20-second sprints with 2 minutes rest after each round

FRIDAY: Rest

SATURDAY: RACE DAY –

30 minutes before the sprint, on land warm-up well before entering the water by running, stretching, or doing burpees.

On the way to the starting line, do 2 or 3 x 20-second sprints to increase the heart rate before settling into the start line.



REFLECT ON YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Way to go Coach! Congratulations on preparing your juniors for their race. Can you believe how far they have come in just six weeks with the Junior Outrigger Program created by *ARE Outrigger World* and Coach Vaimiti Maoni.

You've played an important role in their development as paddlers, instilling a strong work ethic, sportsmanship, and teamwork. No doubt, you've created some fun memories and lessons that will last a lifetime. This is what Ohana is all about.

We are one big outrigger family! Keep us posted on your sprint races and follow us on social media at [@AREOutriggerWorld](https://www.instagram.com/AREOutriggerWorld) for everything about the world of outrigger canoeing.

We thank you for partnering with *ARE Outrigger World* to help grow this incredible sport worldwide.

