

Safe Swim Defense Safety Afloat Review

1. The first and last point of both Safety Afloat and Safe Swim Defense are the same.
 - A Yes, Qualified Supervision is first, Discipline is last.
 - B Yes, Discipline is last and Qualified Supervision is first.
 - C Yes, However different information is presented for each defense.
 - D All of the above are correct statements.

2. Part of the required qualifications for “Supervisor” for Safe Swim Defense include:
 - A Is a mature conscientious adult 18 years of age or older...
 - B Has completed BSA Lifeguard Training or holds an equivalent recognized certification.
 - C Has completed BSA Safe Swim Defense
 - D All of the above

3. Your Troop is planning your first aquatic activity of the year. Who should take the BSA “Swimmer” test?
 - A Only the new Scouts that have not completed the Swimming Merit Badge.
 - B Only the adults and youth that will be part of the Qualified Supervision for the activity.
 - C Everyone; Scouts, Scouters and guests, who plan to participate.
 - D Those Scouts that are not sure of their swimming skills and want to take the test.

4. You are planning a Troop Swim during your week at your favorite Summer Camp. The “swimming hole” is a natural spring with a high bluff on one side. The water is clear and cold. Your Troop has used this area “every summer” for the last 5 years.
 - A This location may not meet the requirements for a “Safe Area”.
 - B You do not need to check the swim area since you have used it before.
 - C Diving will be permitted from the bluff but only from 12 feet or more above the water.
 - D It will be OK to jump feet first from the bluff at any height since the water is over 20 feet deep.

5. You are on an approved canoe trip on a flat-water river. Your Troop has reached the planned evening campsite. Your Scouts want to swim in a calm area of the river near the campsite.
 - A This activity can not permitted.
 - B The activity may be permitted if all participants wear PFD’s and all other conditions are met.
 - C The activity will be permitted but only if additional trained lifeguards are available.
 - D The activity will be permitted but only for Scouts who have completed Lifesaving Merit Badge.

6. You check the planned swimming area and find that all requirements of “Safe Area” are met. You determine, however, that you can not see your Troops twelve inch diameter, white “flying disk” when it is in about three foot deep water.
 - A The swimming activity cannot be permitted in this area.
 - B The activity must be restricted to surface swimming only.
 - C Swimming will be unrestricted but diving will not be permitted.
 - D Swimming and diving are permitted.

7. BSA Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat Training:
 - A May only be taught by a person authorized by the local BSA Council.
 - B Must be taught to all Scouts and Scouters participating in aquatic activities.
 - C Must never be taught to Scouts under 18. This is an adult class only
 - D May be taught by anyone with aquatic knowledge and skills

8. Personal flotation devices, PFD's
 - A Must be worn by all persons engaged in open water activities
 - B Must be properly fitted and U.S. Coast Guard-approved for the intended use.
 - C Must be rated for the size and weight of the wearer.
 - D All of the above are correct statements.

9. Canadian rules for PFD use by U.S. citizens in Canada...
 - A All PFD's approved by the U.S. Coast Guard for the intended use are acceptable.
 - B PFD's must be Red, Yellow or Orange in color.
 - C The Canadian Government seldom imposes the \$200.00 fine for PFD violations.
 - D None of the above are true.

10. All Scouts and Scouters planning to participate in an activity afloat must:
 - A Have completed American Red Cross Fundamentals of Canoeing or Kayaking.
 - B Have passed an approved "basic handling test".
 - C Have completed a minimum of three hours of instruction in the type of craft to be used.
 - D Either B or C meet the minimum "Skills Proficiency" requirement for Safety Afloat

11. Part of the required qualifications for "Qualified Supervision" for Safe Swim Defense include:
 - A Must have current CPR training from a recognized training agency.
 - B Must be a currently certified BSA Lifeguard or hold an equivalent certification.
 - C Must be over 18 and committed to compliance with the 8 points of BSA Safe Swim Defense.
 - D Must have completed "Safe Swim Defense"

12. Part of the required qualifications for "Qualified Supervision" for Safety Afloat include:
 - A At least one must have current CPR training from a recognized training agency.
 - B At least one must be over 21 and all must have completed BSA Safe Swim Defense.
 - C All must be over 18 and have completed BSA Safety Afloat training.
 - D All of the above are true statements.

13. Safety Afloat qualifications for "Supervisor" also require that the adult:
 - A Has completed American Red Cross FOC instructor training.
 - B Has completed American Red Cross Advanced First Aid training.
 - C Has completed rescue training for the watercraft to be used in the activity.
 - D Must be at the "expert skill level" in handling the craft used in the activity.

14. Swim skills checks that were done in the Summer Camp Swimming Pool are acceptable evidence of swimming ability for afloat activities.
 - A Yes, If Scouts have demonstrated skills proficiency in the Pool, they will be OK in a lake or river.
 - B No, Many Scouts and adults are OK in a pool but have difficulty in "dark" water.
 - C Yes, Even if they have a problem with dark water, they will be wearing a PFD and will be safe.
 - D Yes, You must never "retest" the Scouts swimming skills.

15. You are planning a flat-water canoe trip. You are required to file a float plan with:
 - A All parents of youth participants in the activity and one member of the Troop Committee.
 - B The Council "Camping Services" department and your Chartered Organization Representative.
 - C Your District Health and Safety and your Council Canoe Committee Chairmen.
 - D All of the above are required for flat-water activities.

16. Your PLC wants to invite your “bridging” WEBELOS to a unit swim and canoe outing. Your WEBELOS guests...
- A Are not permitted to participate in any Troop aquatic activity.
 - B May swim provided the supervision ratio is adjusted to 1:5 for the cubs.
 - C May canoe if they meet the minimum swimming requirements.
 - D May participate in the swimming activity but unit canoe activities are not permitted for Cubs.
17. Most aquatic accidents...
- A Involve failure to follow one or more points of BSA Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat.
 - B Could be prevented by following BSA Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat procedures.
 - C Result from conditions over which the supervisor has or could have control.
 - D All of the above are correct answers.
18. In addition to Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat, other guidelines that will apply to every unit afloat aquatic activity include:
- A Guide to Safe Scouting, Youth Protection Training, and The “Sweet 16” of BSA Safety.
 - B Climb On Safely, The Outdoor Code and Liquid Fuels Safety
 - C American Canoe Club “Guide to Paddling Skills Perfection”
 - D All of the above will apply to every unit aquatic activity.
19. What is the minimum number of qualified Scouts and Scouters needed to conduct a unit swim for 25 participants?
- A Three, (1) Supervisor, (1) Lifeguard and (1) Lookout
 - B Four, (1) Supervisor, (2) Lifeguards and (1) Lookout
 - C Two, (1) Supervisor and (1) Lifeguard
 - D Four, (1) Supervisor/Lookout (3) Lifeguards
20. What is the minimum number of qualified Scouts and Scouters needed to conduct a patrol swim for 8 participants?
- A Three, (1) Supervisor, (1) Lifeguard and (1) Lookout
 - B One, (1) Supervisor
 - C Two, (1) Supervisor/Lookout and (1) Lifeguard
 - D Four, (1) Supervisor/Lookout (3) Lifeguards
21. All equipment used in a Troop afloat activity, whether owned by the unit or rented for the outing, must...
- A Be suited to the type of activity planned and the anticipated water and weather conditions.
 - B Be in good repair and comply with all applicable local, state and federal laws.
 - C Have appropriate rescue equipment in working order and readily accessible
 - D All of the above are correct answers.
22. Your unit has just returned from a canoe outing. You are on schedule and everyone had a great time. What should you do “first” now that the activity is over?
- A Plan a steak dinner for your Junior Leaders and your ASM staff.
 - B Try to return all of the lost and found items.
 - C Explain to Billy that he cannot take the snake home with him.
 - D Close your float plan with the parents and your Troop Committee contact.
23. Why is it very important to get written permission to cross private property in Texas
- A Texas landowners sometimes shoot trespassers.
 - B Except in an emergency, it is against the law to trespass in Texas.
 - C Many Texas landowners will permit access to their property if ask in advance.
 - D All of the above are correct, especially A and C.

24. What are the elements covered in Safety Afloat “Planning”?
- A Throw, Row and then Go.
 - B Airway, Breathing, and Circulation
 - C Float Plan, Local Rules, Notification, Weather, Contingencies
 - D Road Conditions, Weather, Water Level, Equipment, and Food
25. You are on a three-day wilderness paddle. It is a beautiful, clear day. You notice that the weather is beginning to change and, even though the sky is presently clear, you definitely hear thunder...
- A Continue your trip. The storm is obviously a long way away and may not be a factor for a while.
 - B Wait until the thunderclaps are about 15 seconds apart then get off the water.
 - C Plan immediately to stop and locate suitable shelter. Remain off the water for at least 20 minutes.
 - D Continue your trip. Watch the weather and get off the water when you actually see the lightning.
26. You are planning a flat-water canoe activity. Members of your venture patrol have completed approved kayak training. They want to bring kayaks on the outing....
- A This is not permitted. You can not mix canoes and kayaks.
 - B Sure, but they must stay together and they may not be a “buddy boat” for a canoe.
 - C Sure, but they can only be a “buddy boat” for a solo canoe.
 - D Sure, provided they have been trained in rescue procedures for both canoes and kayaks.
27. Tenderfoot Scout Tommy just cannot pass the swim test. He wants to go on the planned flat-water canoe outing...
- A Sorry, Tommy cannot come along until he passes the “swimmer” test.
 - B Sure, no problem. Put Tommy in a Type III PFD and let him paddle.
 - C Tommy can ride in a canoe with an adult that has current BSA or equivalent Lifeguard training.
 - D Tommy can ride as the “third man” with Scouts that have completed Lifesaving Merit Badge
28. You are planning an aquatic activity at local lake just a few miles from your regular meeting location. You will be swimming and canoeing. Your Troop owns a rack of canoes that you plan to use. One of your members also plans to bring a sailboat. He, as well as many of your Scouts, are trained to sail...
- A No way! Sailing and canoeing are not permitted on the same water.
 - B Sure. Make sure that you keep the sailing activity well away from the canoe and swimming area.
 - C Sure. You must close the waterfront to all other activities while the sailboat is “under sail”.
 - D Sure. Canoes, Swimmers and even kayakers can safely share the same area with a sailboat.
29. Same activity as above... “A Local Tour Permit” is....
- A Required for this activity since you have aquatic activities planned.
 - B Is not required since this activity is held less than 25 miles from your meeting place.
 - C Is not required since you are not renting canoes from the Council.
 - D Is required only if your Unit Commissioner requests it.
30. Same activity as above... You have one qualified “supervisor”, four BSA trained “Lifeguards” and one adult that is qualified to be a “Lookout” but not a lifeguard. How many members can swim at one time?
- A 50 or more.
 - B No more than 20.
 - C No more than 35 would be permitted.
 - D 40 swimmers can be properly supervised

Beware of Lightning

The summits of mountains, crests of ridges, slopes above timberline, and large meadows are extremely hazardous places to be during lightning storms. If you are caught in such an exposed place, quickly descend to a lower elevation, away from the direction of the approaching storm, and squat down, keeping your head low. A dense forest located in a depression provides the best protection. Avoid taking shelter under isolated trees or trees much taller than adjacent trees. Stay away from water, metal objects, and other substances that will conduct electricity long distances.

By squatting with your feet close together, you have minimal contact with the ground, thus reducing danger from ground currents. If the threat of lightning strikes is great, your group should not huddle together but spread out at least 15 feet apart. If one member of your group is jolted, the rest of you can tend to him. Whenever lightning is nearby, take off backpacks with either external or internal metal frames. In tents, stay at least a few inches from metal tent poles.

Lightning Safety Rules

Stay away from open doors and windows, fireplaces, radiators, stoves, metal pipes, sinks, and plug-in electrical appliances.

- DO NOT use hair dryers, electric toothbrushes, or electric razors.
- DO NOT use the telephone; lightning may strike telephone wires outside.
- DO NOT take laundry off the clothesline.
- DO NOT work on fences, telephone lines, power lines, pipelines, or structural steel fabrications.
- DO NOT handle flammable materials in open containers.
- DO NOT use metal objects, such as fishing rods and golf clubs. Golfers wearing cleated shoes are particularly good lightning rods.
- DO Stop tractor work, especially when the tractor is pulling metal equipment, and dismount. Tractors and other implements in metallic contact with the ground are often struck by lightning.
- DO Get out of the water and off small boats. (Follow the "20 minute" rule)
- DO Stay in the car if you are traveling. Automobiles offer excellent lightning protection.
- When no shelter is available, avoid the highest object in the area. If only isolated trees are nearby, the best protection is to crouch in the open, keeping twice as far away from isolated trees as the trees are high.
- Avoid hilltops, open spaces, wire fences, metal clotheslines, exposed sheds, and any electrically conducted elevated objects.

Boats

In national parks and some other areas of the country, special boat and canoe regulations are in force, and special boat permits are required for cruising or recreation. Follow these safety precautions:

1. **All tour leaders must have current training in the BSA Safety Afloat program.**
2. **U.S. Coast Guard recommends and BSA regulations require that an approved USCG personal flotation device (PFD) be worn by each participant using watercraft in an aquatics activity. Types II and III are recommended for Scout activity afloat.**

A capsized boat is never anticipated. So always be prepared. Be sure each individual wears a PFD.
3. **Rowboats or canoes carrying passengers should not be towed behind motorboats or sailboats.**
4. **Use of canoes should be restricted to swimmers who have satisfactorily demonstrated their ability in launching, landing, and paddling a canoe and in handling a swamped canoe. Canoeists should be taught the proper procedure for staying afloat if the canoe capsizes or is swamped.**
5. **Small boats, whether under sail or power, used for pleasure or ferry purposes, must have a minimum capacity of 10 cubic feet per person.**

Boats propelled by hand power—such as rowboats—and used for pleasure purposes only must provide a minimum of 7 cubic feet per person. (Lifeboats on passenger-carrying vessels propelled by power must comply with the 10-cubic-foot law.)

6. **Provision also should be made by all boats under sail or power for a sufficient quantity or supply of oars and rowlocks or paddles to be used in case of emergency. Fire-fighting equipment and lights must also be carried aboard.**
7. **Bilges of gasoline-powered boats should be kept free from gasoline and oil at all times. Thorough ventilation, either natural or by blower, is necessary to dispel gasoline vapor.**
8. **Motorized personal watercraft, such as jet-skis, are not authorized for use in Scouting activities, and their use should not be permitted in or near BSA program areas.**
9. **To prevent ignition by static electricity during refueling, establish complete metallic contact between the nozzle of the filling hose and the tank opening or filling pipe, and maintain contact until gasoline has ceased to flow. If a funnel is used, establish contact with the funnel and the opening in the tank. All passengers should be ashore during refueling.**

For regulations that govern cruises by private powerboat or sailboat, refer to Motorboat Regulations published by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Classification of Swimming Ability

Swimmer Test

The swimmer test demonstrates the minimum level of swimming ability required for safe deep-water swimming. The various components of the test evaluate the several skills essential to this minimum level of swimming ability:

Jump feet first into water over the head in depth, level off, and begin swimming. Swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy, resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be swum continuously and include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating.

The test administrator must objectively evaluate the individual performance of the test, and in so doing should keep in mind the purpose of each test element.

1. "Jump feet first into water over the head in depth, level off, and begin swimming..." The swimmer must be able to make an abrupt entry into deep water and begin swimming without any aids. Walking in from shallow water, easing in from the edge or down a ladder, pushing off from side or bottom, or gaining forward momentum by diving do not satisfy this requirement.

2. "... Swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl..."

The swimmer must be able to cover distance with a strong, confident stroke. The 75 yards must not be the outer limit of the swimmer's ability; completion of the distance should give evidence of sufficient stamina to avoid undue risks. Dog-paddling and strokes repeatedly interrupted and restarted are not sufficient; underwater swimming is not permitted. The itemized strokes are inclusive. Any strong side or breaststroke or any strong overarm stroke (including the back crawl) is acceptable.

3. "...Swim 25 yards using an easy, resting backstroke..." The swimmer must indicate the ability to execute a restful, free-breathing backstroke that can be used to avoid exhaustion during swimming activity. This element of the test necessarily follows the more strenuous swimming activity to show that the swimmer is, in fact, able to use the backstroke as a relief from exertion. The change of stroke must be accomplished in deep water without any push-off or other aid. Any variation of the elementary backstroke may suffice if it clearly provides opportunity for the swimmer to rest and regain wind.

4. "The 100 yards must be swum continuously and include at least one sharp turn..." The total distance is to be covered without rest stops. The sharp turn simply demonstrates the swimmer's ability to reverse direction in deep water without assistance or push-off from side or bottom.

5. "...After completing the swim, rest by floating..." This critically important component of the test evaluates the swimmer's ability to maintain in the water indefinitely even though exhausted or otherwise unable to continue swimming. Treading water or swimming in place will further tire the swimmer and are therefore unacceptable. The duration of the float test is not significant, except that it must be long enough for the test administrator to determine that the swimmer is, in fact, resting and could likely continue to do so for a prolonged time. The drownproofing technique may be sufficient if clearly restful, but it is not preferred. If the test is completed except for the floating requirement, the swimmer may be retested on the floating only (after instruction) provided that the test administrator is confident that the swimmer can initiate the float when exhausted.

Reference. *Swimming* and *Lifesaving* merit badge pamphlets

Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco Use and Abuse

The Boy Scouts of America prohibits the use of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances at encampments or activities on property owned and/or operated by the Boy Scouts of America, or at any activity involving participation of youth members.

Adult leaders should support the attitude that young adults are better off without tobacco and **may not allow the use of tobacco products at any BSA activity involving youth participants.**

All Scouting functions meetings, and activities should be conducted on a smoke-free basis, with smoking areas located away from all participants.

Safe Swim Defense

Safe Swim Defense is the recommended procedure for conducting group swims at the beach, private or public pool, wilderness pond, stream, or wherever the water looks inviting enough to take a dip.

1. Qualified supervision. All swimming activity must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult 21 years of age or older who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of the children in his or her care, who is experienced in the water and confident of being able to respond in the event of an emergency, and who is trained in and committed to compliance with the eight points of BSA Safe Swim Defense. (It is strongly recommended that all units have at least one adult or older youth member currently certified as a BSA Lifeguard to assist in the planning and conduct of all swimming activity.

2. Physical fitness. Require evidence of fitness for swimming activity with a complete health history from a physician, parent, or legal guardian. The adult supervisor should adjust all supervision, discipline, and protection to anticipate any potential risks associated with individual health conditions. In the event of any significant health conditions, the adult supervisor should require an examination by a physician.

3. Safe area. When swimming in areas not regularly maintained and used for swimming activity, have lifeguards and swimmers systematically examine the swimming area to determine varying depths, currents, deep holes, rocks, and stumps. Mark the area for three groups: not more than 3-1/2 feet deep for non-swimmers; from shallow water to just over the head for beginners; deep water not over 12 feet for swimmers. A participant should not be permitted to swim in an area where he cannot readily recover and maintain his footing, or cannot maintain his position on the water, because of swimming ability or water flow. When setting up a safe swimming area in natural waters, use poles stuck in the bottom, or plastic bottles, balloons, or sticks attached to rock anchors with twine for boundary markers. Enclose non-swimmer and beginner areas with buoy lines (twine and floats between markers. Mark the outer bounds of the swimmer area with floats. Be sure that clear-water depth is at least 7 feet before allowing anyone to dive into the water. Diving is prohibited from any height more than 40 inches above the water surface. Feet first entry is prohibited from more than 60 inches above the water. For any entry from more than 18 inches above the water surface, clear-water depth must be 10 to 12 feet. Only surface swimming is permitted in turbid water. Swimming is not permitted in water over 12 feet deep, in turbid water where poor visibility and depth would interfere with emergency recognition or prompt rescue, or in white

water, unless all participants wear appropriate personal flotation devices and the supervisor determines that swimming with personal flotation equipment is safe under the circumstances.

4. Lifeguards on duty. Swim only where there are lifeguards on duty. For unit swims in areas where others do not provide lifeguards, the supervisor should designate two capable swimmers as lifeguards. Station them ashore, equipped with a lifeline (a 100-foot length of 3/8 inch nylon cord. In an emergency, one carries out the line; the other feeds it out from shore, then pulls in his partner and the person being helped. In addition, if a boat is available, have two people, preferably capable swimmers, take it out-one rowing and the other equipped with a 10-foot pole or extra oar. Provide one guard for every ten people in the water, and adjust the number and positioning of guards as needed to protect the particular area and activity.

5. Lookout. Station a lookout on the shore where he can see and hear everything in all areas. He may be the adult in charge of the swim and may give the buddy signals.

6. Ability groups. Divide into three ability groups: non-swimmers, beginners, and swimmers. Keep each group in its own area. *Non-swimmers* have not passed a swimming test. *Beginners* must pass this test: jump feet first into water over the head in depth, level off, swim 25 feet on the surface. Stop, turn sharply, resume swimming as before and return to the starting place. *Swimmers* pass this test: jump feet first into water over the head in depth. Level off and swim 75 yards in a *strong* manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be swum continuously and include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating. *These classification tests should be renewed annually preferably at the beginning of the season.*

7. Buddy system. Pair every boy with another in the same ability group. Buddies check in and out of the swimming area together. Emphasize that each buddy lifeguards his buddy. Check everyone in the water about every ten minutes, or as needed to keep the buddies together. The adult in charge signals for a buddy check with a single blast of a whistle or a ring of a bell, and calls, “Buddies!” He counts slowly to ten while buddies join and raise hands and remain still and silent. Guards check all areas, count the pairs, and compare the total with the number known to be in the water. Signal two blasts or bells to resume swimming. Signal three blasts or bells for checkout.

8. Discipline. Be sure everyone understands and agrees that swimming is allowed only with proper supervision and use of the complete Safe Swim Defense. The applicable rules should be presented and learned prior to the outing, and should

be reviewed for all participants at the water’s edge just before the swimming activity begins. Scouts should respect and follow all directions and rules of the adult supervisor. When people know the reason for rules and procedures they are more likely to follow them. Be strict and fair, showing no favoritism.

Setting Up a Safe Swim Area

Here is an easy, quick way to make a swimming area safe. Take with you most of the equipment and material needed to conduct a swim during a day hike or overnight or short-term camp. The rest of it you can pick up at the campsite. Minimum equipment includes: 100 feet of 1/2-inch nylon cord, 2 dozen balloons, 200 feet of binder twine, a hand ax, a pocketknife, and a pencil.

Organize the swimmers in a line holding hands to check the bottom of the area to be used for beginners (less than 6 feet in depth). Use a strong swimmer to scout the swimmers’ area (up to 12 feet deep) by looking for deep holes, rocks, stumps, or dangerous debris. He should work at the end of a lifeline around his shoulder, with a buddy tending the line at shore side.

Use binder twine to mark off and enclose an area for non-swimmers (with a maximum depth of 3-1/2 feet) and one for beginners (maximum depth of 6 feet). Support the line with deadwood floats cut by the hand ax. Large rocks tied with twine make good anchors at the outside corners where buoys (plastic jugs or balloons) should be placed. Do not use glass bottles because of possible breakage.

Swimmers use deep water beyond these areas with a maximum depth of 12 feet. Mark other outside limits with buoys only. To improvise these buoys, use yellow, orange, or white balloons tied to a rock anchor on the bottom.

Many units that swim regularly carry some type of portable check board and use official BSA buddy tags, No.01595. This is a great idea, but protection is equally effective with an improvised buddy check system: For each participant, whittle a short, pointed peg flat on one side. Write the person’s name with a pencil on the flat part. Buddies stick their pegs into the ground at a marked place as they check in by buddy pairs. When a buddy pair checks out of swimming, they remove their pegs.

Customarily, a qualified adult supervises swimming, also serves as lookout, and gives buddy calls. This person should be located at a vantage point where everything in all areas can be seen and heard. At water’s edge a two-person lifeguard team keeps close watch on all swimmers and stands ready with 100 feet of rescue line to help anyone in trouble. The rescuer ties a bowline on his end of the line and places it over his shoulder and around his chest. As he swims to a rescue, his buddy pays out the line from a hand-held coil, a chain-knotted line, or a “pineapple ball.” Either the victim grasps the line, or

the rescuer grasps the victim, and the line tender pulls both victim and rescuer back to shore.

Lookouts and Lifeguards

Lifeguards and lookouts must not take their eyes off the water and the swimmers. Keep all swimmers clearly in view and avoid talking to others while on duty. The time may come when your attention and alertness will save a life. Be alert. Be serious about your responsibility.

Who Can Instruct This Training?

Any person authorized by the council, including a BSA Aquatics Instructor, a unit leader with aquatics skill, or any other person with aquatics knowledge or experience who has been approved by the local council can give this training.

Safely Afloat

1. Qualified supervision. All activity afloat must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult age 21 or older who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of the children in his or her care, who is experienced and qualified in the particular watercraft skills and equipment involved in the activity, and who is committed to compliance with the nine points of BSA Safety Afloat. One such supervisor is required for each ten people, with a minimum of two adults for any one group. At least one supervisor must be age 21 or older, and the remaining supervisors must be age 18 or older. **All supervisors must complete BSA Safety Afloat and Safe Swim Defense training and rescue training for the type of watercraft to be used in the activity, and at least one must be trained in CPR.** It is strongly recommended that all units have at least one adult or older youth member currently certified as a BSA Lifeguard to assist in the planning and conducting of all activity afloat.

For Cub Scouts: The ratio of adult supervisors to participants is one to five.

2. Physical fitness. All persons must present evidence of fitness by a complete health history from a physician, parent, or legal guardian. Adjust all supervision, discipline, and protection to anticipate any risks associated with individual health conditions. In the event of any significant health conditions, the adult leader should require a medical evaluation by a physician.

3. Swimming ability. A person who has not been classified as a “swimmer” may ride as a passenger in a rowboat or motorboat with an adult swimmer, or in a canoe, raft, or sailboat with an adult who is certified as a lifeguard or a lifesaver by a recognized agency. In all other circumstances,

the person must be a swimmer to participate in an activity afloat. Swimmers must pass this test:

Jump feet first into water over the head in depth, level off, and begin swimming. Swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: side-stroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be completed in one swim without stops and must include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating. This qualification test should be renewed annually.

4. Personal flotation equipment. Properly fitted U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices (PFDs) must be worn by all persons engaged in activity on the open water (rowing, canoeing, sailing, boardsailing, motor boating, water-skiing, rafting, tubing, kayaking, and surfboarding). Type II and III PFDs are recommended.

5. Buddy system. All activity afloat necessitates using the buddy system. Not only must every individual have a buddy, but also every craft should have a buddy boat when on the water.

6. Skill proficiency. All participants in activity afloat must be trained and experienced in watercraft handling kills, safety, and emergency procedures.

(a) For unit activity on white water, all participants must complete special training by a BSA Aquatics Instructor or qualified whitewater specialist.

(b) Powerboat operators must be able to meet requirements for the Motorboating merit badge or equivalent.

(c) Except for whitewater and powerboat operation as noted above, either a minimum of three hours training and supervised practice or meeting requirements for “basic handling tests” is required for all float trips or open-water excursions using un-powered craft.

For Cub Scouts: Canoeing and rafting for Cub Scouts (including WEBELOS Scouts) is to be limited to council/district events on *flat-water* ponds or controlled lake areas free of powerboats and sailboats. Prior to recreational canoeing, Cub Scouts are to be instructed in basic handling skills and safety practices.

7. Planning.

Float plan. Obtain current maps and information about the waterway to be traveled. Know exactly where the unit will “put in” and “pull out” and what course will be followed. Travel time should be estimated generously. Review the plan with others who have traveled the course recently.

Local rules. Determine which state and local regulations are applicable, and follow them. Get written permission to use or cross private property.

Notification. File the float plan with parents of participants and a member of the unit committee. File the float plan with the local council service center when traveling on running water. Check in with all those who should be notified when returning.

Weather Check the weather forecast just before setting out, and keep an alert weather eye. Bring all craft ashore when rough weather threatens.

Contingencies. Planning must identify possible emergencies and other circumstances that could force a change of plans. Appropriate alternative plans must be developed for each.

For Cub Scouts: Cub Scout canoeing and rafting does not include “trips” or “expeditions” and is not to be conducted on running water (i.e., rivers or streams); therefore, some procedures are inapplicable. Suitable weather requires clear skies, no appreciable wind, and warm air and water.

8. Equipment. All equipment must be suited to the craft, to water conditions, and to the individual; must be in good repair; and must satisfy all state and federal requirements. Spare equipment or repair materials must be carried. Appropriate rescue equipment must be available for immediate use.

9. Discipline. All participants should know, understand, and respect the rules and procedures for safe unit activity afloat. The applicable rules should be presented and learned prior to the outing, and should be reviewed for all participants at the water’s edge just before the activity begins. When Scouts know and understand the reasons for the rules, they will observe them. When fairly and impartially applied, rules do not interfere with the fun. Rules for safety, plus common sense and good judgment, keep the fun from being interrupted by tragedy.

Note: For cruising vessels (excluding rowboats, canoes, kayaks, and rafts, but including sailboats and powerboats greater than 20 feet long) used in adult-supervised unit activities by a venturing crew specializing in water-craft operations, or used in adult-supervised program activity in connection with any high-adventure program or other activity under the direct sponsorship and control of the National Council, the standards and procedures in the *Sea Exploring Manual*, No. 33239A, may be substituted for the Safety Afloat standards.

BSA Aquatics Safety Safe Swim Defense Safety Afloat

Adult Leader Training

Northern Branch Office Scout Training Team

Deer Lake Canoe Clinic

The source of this information is

The Scoutmaster Handbook

1998 Edition

Safe Swim Defense Safety Afloat Review

Instructor key... “correct” answers are bold

1. The first and last point of both Safety Afloat and Safe Swim Defense are the same.
 - A Yes, Qualified Supervision is first, Discipline is last.
 - B Yes, Discipline is last and Qualified Supervision is first.
 - C Yes, However different information is presented for each defense.
 - D All of the above are correct statements.**

2. Part of the required qualifications for “Supervisor” for Safe Swim Defense include:
 - A Is a mature conscientious adult 18 years of age or older....
 - B Has completed BSA Lifeguard Training or holds an equivalent recognized certification.
 - C Has completed BSA Safe Swim Defense**
 - D All of the above

3. Your Troop is planning your first aquatic activity of the year. Who should take the BSA “Swimmer” test?
 - A Only the new Scouts that have not completed the Swimming Merit Badge.
 - B Only the adults and youth that will be part of the Qualified Supervision for the activity.
 - C Everyone; Scouts, Scouters and guests, who plan to participate.**
 - D Those Scouts that are not sure of their swimming skills and want to take the test.

4. You are planning a Troop Swim during your week at your favorite Summer Camp. The “swimming hole” is a natural spring with a high bluff on one side. The water is clear and cold. Your Troop has used this area “every summer” for the last 5 years.
 - A This location may not meet the requirements for a “Safe Area”.**
 - B You do not need to check the swim area since you have used it before.
 - C Diving will be permitted from the bluff but only from 12 feet or more above the water.
 - D It will be OK to jump feet first from the bluff at any height since the water is over 20 feet deep.

5. You are on an approved canoe trip on a flat-water river. Your Troop has reached the planned evening campsite. Your Scouts want to swim in a calm area of the river near the campsite.
 - A This activity can not permitted.
 - B The activity may be permitted if all participants wear PFD’s and all other conditions are met.**
 - C The activity will be permitted but only if additional trained lifeguards are available.
 - D The activity will be permitted but only for Scouts who have completed Lifesaving Merit Badge.

6. You check the planned swimming area and find that all requirements of “Safe Area” are met. You determine, however, that you can not see your Troops twelve inch diameter, white “flying disk” when it is in about three foot deep water.
 - A The swimming activity cannot be permitted in this area.
 - B The activity must be restricted to surface swimming only.**
 - C Swimming will be unrestricted but diving will not be permitted.
 - D Swimming and diving are permitted.

7. BSA Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat Training:
 - A May only be taught by a person authorized by the local BSA Council.**
 - B Must be taught to all Scouts and Scouters participating in aquatic activities.
 - C Must never be taught to Scouts under 18. This is an adult class only
 - D May be taught by anyone with aquatic knowledge and skills

8. Personal flotation devices, PFD's
- A Must be worn by all persons engaged in open water activities
 - B Must be properly fitted and U.S. Coast Guard-approved for the intended use.
 - C Must be rated for the size and weight of the wearer.
 - D All of the above are correct statements.**
9. Canadian rules for PFD use by U.S. citizens in Canada...
- A All PFD's approved by the U.S. Coast Guard for the intended use are acceptable.
 - B PFD's must be Red, Yellow or Orange in color.
 - C The Canadian Government seldom imposes the \$200.00 fine for PFD violations.
 - D None of the above are true.**
10. All Scouts and Scouters planning to participate in an activity afloat must:
- A Have completed American Red Cross Fundamentals of Canoeing or Kayaking.
 - B Have passed an approved "basic handling test".
 - C Have completed a minimum of three hours of instruction in the type of craft to be used.
 - D Either B or C meet the minimum "Skills Proficiency" requirement for Safety Afloat**
11. Part of the required qualifications for "Qualified Supervision" for Safe Swim Defense include:
- A Must have current CPR training from a recognized training agency.
 - B Must be a currently certified BSA Lifeguard or hold an equivalent certification.
 - C Must be over 18 and committed to compliance with the 8 points of BSA Safe Swim Defense.
 - D Must have completed "Safe Swim Defense"**
12. Part of the required qualifications for "Qualified Supervision" for Safety Afloat include:
- A At least one must have current CPR training from a recognized training agency.
 - B At least one must be over 21 and all must have completed BSA Safe Swim Defense.
 - C All must be over 18 and have completed BSA Safety Afloat training.
 - D All of the above are true statements.**
13. Safety Afloat qualifications for "Supervisor" also require that the adult:
- A Has completed American Red Cross FOC instructor training.
 - B Has completed American Red Cross Advanced First Aid training.
 - C Has completed rescue training for the watercraft to be used in the activity.**
 - D Must be at the "expert skill level" in handling the craft used in the activity.
14. Swim skills checks that were done in the Summer Camp Swimming Pool are acceptable evidence of swimming ability for afloat activities.
- A Yes, If Scouts have demonstrated skills proficiency in the Pool, they will be OK in a lake or river.
 - B No, Many Scouts and adults are OK in a pool but have difficulty in "dark" water.**
 - C Yes, Even if they have a problem with dark water, they will be wearing a PFD and will be safe.
 - D Yes, You must never "retest" the Scouts swimming skills.
15. You are planning a flat-water canoe trip. You are required to file a float plan with:
- A All parents of youth participants in the activity and one member of the Troop Committee.**
 - B The Council "Camping Services" department and your Chartered Organization Representative.
 - C Your District Health and Safety and your Council Canoe Committee Chairmen.
 - D All of the above are required for flat-water activities.

16. Your PLC wants to invite your “bridging” WEBELOS to a unit swim and canoe outing. Your WEBELOS guests...
- A Are not permitted to participate in any Troop aquatic activity.
 - B May swim provided the supervision ratio is adjusted to 1:5 for the cubs.
 - C May canoe if they meet the minimum swimming requirements.
 - D May participate in the swimming activity but unit canoe activities are not permitted for Cubs.**
17. Most aquatic accidents...
- A Involve failure to follow one or more points of BSA Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat.
 - B Could be prevented by following BSA Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat procedures.
 - C Result from conditions over which the supervisor has or could have control.
 - D All of the above are correct answers.**
18. In addition to Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat, other guidelines that will apply to every unit afloat aquatic activity include:
- A Guide to Safe Scouting, Youth Protection Training, and The “Sweet 16” of BSA Safety.**
 - B Climb On Safely, The Outdoor Code and Liquid Fuels Safety
 - C American Canoe Club “Guide to Paddling Skills Perfection”
 - D All of the above will apply to every unit aquatic activity.
19. What is the minimum number of qualified Scouts and Scouters needed to conduct a unit swim for 25 participants?
- A Three, (1) Supervisor, (1) Lifeguard and (1) Lookout
 - B Four, (1) Supervisor, (2) Lifeguards and (1) Lookout
 - C Two, (1) Supervisor and (1) Lifeguard
 - D Four, (1) Supervisor/Lookout (3) Lifeguards**
20. What is the minimum number of qualified Scouts and Scouters needed to conduct a patrol swim for 8 participants?
- A Three, (1) Supervisor, (1) Lifeguard and (1) Lookout
 - B One, (1) Supervisor
 - C Two, (1) Supervisor/Lookout and (1) Lifeguard**
 - D Four, (1) Supervisor/Lookout (3) Lifeguards
21. All equipment used in a Troop afloat activity, weather owned by the unit or rented for the outing, must...
- A Be suited to the type of activity planned and the anticipated water and weather conditions.
 - B Be in good repair and comply with all applicable local, state and federal laws.
 - C Have appropriate rescue equipment in working order and readily accessible
 - D All of the above are correct answers.**
22. Your unit has just returned from a canoe outing. You are on schedule and everyone had a great time. What should you do “first” now that the activity is over?
- A Plan a steak dinner for your Junior Leaders and your ASM staff.
 - B Try to return all of the lost and found items.
 - C Explain to Billy that he cannot take the snake home with him.
 - D Close your float plan with the parents and your Troop Committee contact.**
23. Why is it very important to get written permission to cross private property in Texas
- A Texas landowners sometimes shoot trespassers.
 - B Except in an emergency, it is against the law to trespass in Texas.
 - C Many Texas landowners will permit access to their property if ask in advance.
 - D All of the above are correct, especially A and C.**

24. What are the elements covered in Safety Afloat “Planning”?
- A Throw, Row and then Go.
 - B Airway, Breathing, and Circulation
 - C Float Plan, Local Rules, Notification, Weather, Contingencies**
 - D Road Conditions, Weather, Water Level, Equipment, and Food
25. You are on a three-day wilderness paddle. It is a beautiful, clear day. You notice that the weather is beginning to change and, even though the sky is presently clear, you definitely hear thunder...
- A Continue your trip. The storm is obviously a long way away and may not be a factor for a while.
 - B Wait until the thunderclaps are about 15 seconds apart then get off the water.
 - C Plan immediately to stop and locate suitable shelter. Remain off the water for at least 20 minutes.**
 - D Continue your trip. Watch the weather and get off the water when you actually see the lightning.
26. You are planning a flat-water canoe activity. Members of your venture patrol have completed approved kayak training. They want to bring kayaks on the outing....
- A This is not permitted. You can not mix canoes and kayaks.
 - B Sure, but they must stay together and they may not be a “buddy boat” for a canoe.
 - C Sure, but they can only be a “buddy boat” for a solo canoe.
 - D Sure, provided they have been trained in rescue procedures for both canoes and kayaks.**
27. Tenderfoot Scout Tommy just cannot pass the swim test. He wants to go on the planned flat-water canoe outing...
- A Sorry, Tommy cannot come along until he passes the “swimmer” test.
 - B Sure, no problem. Put Tommy in a Type III PFD and let him paddle.
 - C Tommy can ride in a canoe with an adult that has current BSA or equivalent Lifeguard training.**
 - D Tommy can ride as the “third man” with Scouts that have completed Lifesaving Merit Badge
28. You are planning an aquatic activity at local lake just a few miles from your regular meeting location. You will be swimming and canoeing. Your Troop owns a rack of canoes that you plan to use. One of your members also plans to bring a sailboat. He, as well as many of your Scouts, are trained to sail...
- A No way! Sailing and canoeing are not permitted on the same water.
 - B Sure. Make sure that you keep the sailing activity well away from the canoe and swimming area.**
 - C Sure. You must close the waterfront to all other activities while the sailboat is “under sail”.
 - D Sure. Canoes, Swimmers and even kayakers can safely share the same area with a sailboat.
29. Same activity as above... “A Local Tour Permit” is....
- A Required for this activity since you have aquatic activities planned.**
 - B Is not required since this activity is held less than 25 miles from your meeting place.
 - C Is not required since you are not renting canoes from the Council.
 - D Is required only if your Unit Commissioner requests it.
30. Same activity as above... You have one qualified “supervisor”, four BSA trained “Lifeguards” and one adult that is qualified to be a “Lookout” but not a lifeguard. How many members can swim at one time?
- A 50 or more.
 - B No more than 20.
 - C No more than 35 would be permitted.
 - D 40 swimmers can be properly supervised**

Safe Swim Defense Safety Afloat Review Self-Test

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | 16 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 2 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | 17 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 3 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | 18 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 4 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | 19 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 5 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | 20 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 6 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | 21 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 7 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | 22 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 8 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | 23 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 9 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | 24 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 10 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | 25 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 11 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | 26 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 12 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | 27 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 13 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | 28 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 14 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | 29 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 15 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | 30 | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] |

Comments:

Safe Swim Defense Safety Afloat Review Self-Test

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | [A] | [B] | [C] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | 16 | [A] | [B] | [C] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| 2 | [A] | [B] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [D] | 17 | [A] | [B] | [C] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| 3 | [A] | [B] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [D] | 18 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 4 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [B] | [C] | [D] | 19 | [A] | [B] | [C] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| 5 | [A] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [C] | [D] | 20 | [A] | [B] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [D] |
| 6 | [A] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [C] | [D] | 21 | [A] | [B] | [C] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| 7 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [B] | [C] | [D] | 22 | [A] | [B] | [C] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| 8 | [A] | [B] | [C] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | 23 | [A] | [B] | [C] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| 9 | [A] | [B] | [C] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | 24 | [A] | [B] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [D] |
| 10 | [A] | [B] | [C] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | 25 | [A] | [B] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [D] |
| 11 | [A] | [B] | [C] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | 26 | [A] | [B] | [C] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| 12 | [A] | [B] | [C] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | 27 | [A] | [B] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [D] |
| 13 | [A] | [B] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [D] | 28 | [A] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [C] | [D] |
| 14 | [A] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [C] | [D] | 29 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [B] | [C] | [D] |
| 15 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | [B] | [C] | [D] | 30 | [A] | [B] | [C] | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |

Comments:

- Q5 Sort of a trick question and is based on previous information but B is still the best answer
- Q6 A is OK too but, if the area is otherwise known to be safe, B is the best answer.
- Q9 Canadian laws have changed and a USCG Type III is “probably” OK but D is still the best answer. Canadian PFD’s no longer must be red, yellow or orange but those are the best color choices for visibility and are less likely to be challenged. Check for the most current regulations. Canada strictly enforces the PFD requirements.
- Q12 Trick question but read it carefully. D is the correct answer.
- Q23 Texans are famous for protecting their property. Unfortunately, many have had very bad experiences with boaters and have been know to take drastic action with trespassers. Crossing private property in Texas is not a good idea with out permission. On the other hand, many will still grant permission if ask.
- Q25 C is the best answer but good common sense goes a long way here.
- Q29 In many Councils including the SHAC, local permits are required for all aquatic activities. Special adult training is required to obtain permits for canoeing activities.