



STRAIGHT SHAFT CANOE PADDLE TEMPLATES

SCALE
1 inch = 1 inch

SIZING A PADDLE

LENGTH

To determine length of a straight blade paddle, sit upright in a chair and measure the distance between the seat and the bridge of your nose; this equals the length of your shaft.
Add the length of the blade and you've got your total length. If you're a solo paddler you may wish to add an inch or two. If you sit low in your boat, subtract an inch or two.

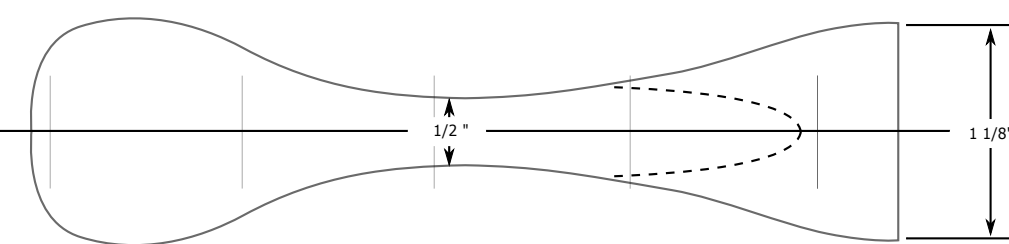
BLADE VOLUME

The paddle templates on these drawings are for average folks with average strength. Strong paddlers may wish to lengthen the blade by an inch - you will move more water, but you may fatigue earlier. Smaller paddlers and children may wish to remove an inch of length - it will be a tad more forgiving at the end of a long day.

THICKNESS

I like a 1/4" thick blade with a sharpish edge for my everyday paddle. It enters the water quietly and I like that. A thin blade has some flex too; it makes long days more tolerable; it does however give up power. If getting somewhere quickly matters to you, or strong and quick maneuvers are essential, stick to a thicker blade; 3/8's of an inch will work.

Unless you are a beast, a paddle shaft of 1 inch x 1 1/8 inch is sufficient.



OTTERTAIL

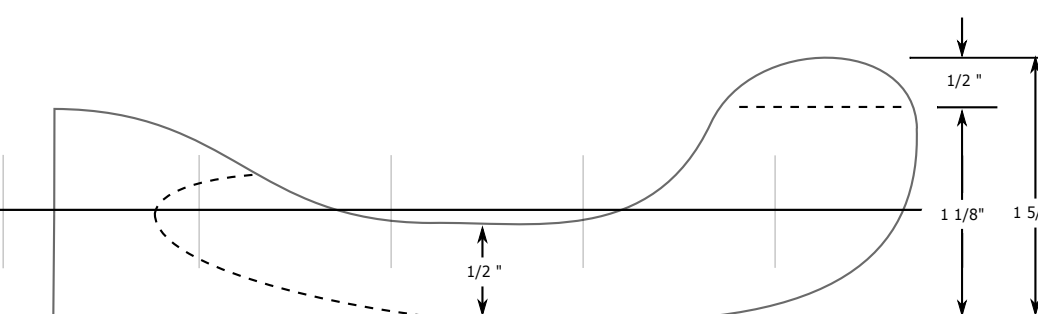
For precise control and a meditative pace. The ottertail enters the water quietly and is adaptable to a wide variety of strokes. It's longer reach makes it a friend of solo paddlers.

Blade - 29" x 5 3/4" x 1/4"
Shaft - 1 1/8" x 1"
Grip - 3" x 1 1/8"
130 sq"

GUIDE

A powerful workhorse. Designed to move lots of water on demand. Suited for strong paddlers or those who find themselves in moving and/or shallow water, or who simply want to get from here to there, fast.

Blade - 23" x 7 1/2" x 5/16"
Shaft - 1 1/8" x 1"
Grip - 3" x 1 1/8"
140 sq"



BEAVERTAIL

A traditional all-rounder. Allows for a day long steady pace, and when built with a fine edge still allows for finesse strokes and subtle boat control. If a paddler were to insist on having just one paddle, this should be it.

Blade - 28" x 6" x 1/4"
Shaft - 1 1/8" x 1"
Grip - 3" x 1 1/8"
130 sq"



MATERIALS GUIDE

Ashes builds paddles from Canadian hardwoods. I use cherry, ash, basswood, walnut, maple and from time to time I've used chestnut, oak, butternut, and whatever else is lying around the back-fourty.

I'd say use what looks good, but keep in mind, a tight grained wood has a nicer feel on the hand. And, if given a choice, build from a lighter wood rather than a heavier one. Also, look for straight, strong grain, especially for paddle shafts.

As for glue, I use a two part epoxy for laminating the shafts and blades. That said, many paddle builders have had success with wood glues such as Titebond II or Titebond III.

If you know you're going to be hard on your paddle, or if you absolutely completely totally need to know that it will never delaminate at the absolutely wrong time, sandwich the blade in 4 ounce fibreglass. It won't add a lot of weight but it will add a great deal to your peace of mind.

For my part I like to finish a paddle with boiled linseed oil; it smells like an old boar house and has a wonderful soft touch. Most folks however will use 4 or so coats of spar varnish.