



# **Reach, Throw, Row, and Go**

**The four techniques used for water rescue.**

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# ***Understanding the Risks***

**"Reach-Throw-Row-Go" is a sequence of water rescue techniques used to help someone in distress in the water. These steps are designed to prioritize the safety of both the rescuer and the person in need, minimizing risk by using the least dangerous method first.**

**\*\*"Reach-Throw-Row-Go" via the Scouting America website.**



# 1. Reach



- **What to Do:** If the person in distress is close enough, reach out to them with an object to grab onto, such as a pole, stick, towel, or even a branch. Extend the object toward them while keeping yourself on stable ground.
- **Why:** This is the safest and quickest way to assist without putting yourself in danger. It minimizes the chance of being pulled into the water by the panicking person.



## 2. Throw



- **What to Do:** If the person is too far away to reach, throw something that floats, such as a life jacket, buoy, or even a cooler. Ensure the object has a rope attached if possible, so you can pull the person to safety.
- **Why:** Throwing a floating object provides the person with something to hold onto, keeping them above water while reducing the risk to the rescuer.



### 3. Row



- **What to Do:** If reaching and throwing are not viable, use a boat or another type of watercraft to get closer to the person in distress. Approach them carefully and either hand them a floating device or assist them into the boat.
- **Why:** Rowing to the person keeps the rescuer at a safe distance while still allowing them to assist. It's safer than swimming directly to the person, especially in open or rough water.



## 4. Go (Swim)



- **What to Do:** If the previous methods are not possible or have failed, and you are a strong swimmer trained in water rescue techniques, you may need to enter the water and swim to the person. Approach with caution, offer a flotation device if possible, and maintain a safe distance to avoid being grabbed or pulled under by the panicking person.
- **Why:** Swimming to a person is the last resort because it poses the greatest risk to the rescuer. Only trained individuals should attempt this, as the rescuer could easily become a second victim.



## Important Safety Tips:

- **Prioritize Your Safety:** The safety of the rescuer is paramount. Never put yourself at undue risk when attempting a rescue.
- **Call for Help:** Before attempting any rescue, call 911 or emergency services to ensure professional help is on the way.
- **Use Flotation Devices:** Always try to provide the person with something that floats before making contact, and use flotation devices yourself if you must enter the water.
- **Stay Calm:** In any rescue situation, it's important to stay calm and think through your actions carefully.



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