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INTRODUCTIONS
Welcome to Tamarindo!

• We aim to get you familiarized with the ocean, its patterns and the safe way to approach surfing.

• Surfing is not just about standing on a surfboard. It is about knowledge of the sea and weather patterns, understanding waves and learning to ride the surfboard with control.

• Through this course you will gain a respect for the ocean and the people and creatures that use it.
What to expect

• During your first couple of sessions an instructor will teach you about the equipment that you are using and the importance of it all.

• The instructor will give you personalized instructions to help you progress and keep you safe. Your instructor will take you to where ever the conditions are good for learning. With your Instructors knowledge of the local breaks he or she will take you to where there are nice clean small waves that break gently and away from lots of other surfers.

• Be prepared because, this might involve walking for up to 20 minutes and possibly paddling across the river mouth to find the best conditions. Your instructor will surf with you most days you do not have a surf class. This allows for observation and immediate feedback in the water.

• Once again safety is our first priority, but we will take you to the best spots to give you the most memorable experience.

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Mental Preparation

• Your instructor will give you all the instructions and information you need to learn to surf. However, you must surf for yourself. Your mental preparation should include getting the board out there, paddling hard for waves and eventually standing up on them.

• Your progression depends on you and how willing you are to learn from each session. Surfing is fun but it takes focus and determination. Just remember it is all about having fun and progressing. Please ask your instructor for help at any time, tell them your thoughts, feelings, and fears so they can help you overcome them.
ETTIQUETE LESSONS
Rule #1 “Don’t Drop in on Someone”

(RIGHT OF WAY)

• Arguably the most important rule of surfing, avoiding dropping in on someone simply means knowing who has the right of way and respecting it.

• The general rule is whoever is closer to the curl (or break) has the right of way and therefore has rights to the wave.

• Another way of thinking of this is, whoever is going to get the longer ride off of the wave has the right of way.

• If you don’t have the right of way, and you see a surfer in better positions than you, you should pull off of the wave (or not drop in to begin with)

• See the examples on the next page and the quiz to check your understanding
Examples

The surfer on the left has right-of-way here.

The surfer on the right has right-of-way here.
Quiz – Who has the right of way here?

A) Surfer #1
B) Surfer #2
C) Neither
Rule #2 “Paddle out of the way”

(Avoid other surfers when paddling out)

• When paddling out (swimming on your board out past the breaking waves), avoid other surfers by paddling behind them.
• Paddle towards the whitewater, not the face of the wave they are on, to avoid ruining their ride.
Rule #3 “Don’t ditch your board”

- When paddling out, don’t let go of your board to dive under waves.
- Loose boards are a major hazard in the water to yourself and other surfers.
- Instead, **turtle roll** (with a longer board), or **duck dive** (for shorter boards).
- Your instructor will teach you these maneuvers and they will be covered later in this presentation.
BASIC TIPS AND SKILLS
Tip #1 - Keep your hands off the rails!

• When popping up, your natural inclination will be to grab the rails to steady yourself. Don’t!
• Keep your hands in the middle of the board like you are going to do a pushup.
Tip #2 – Eyes up

- Once you pop up, resist the urge to look down at the board or the water
- Look ahead to where you want to go (down the wave), and your board and body will follow
Tip #3 – Stay Loose

- Most beginning surfers get so excited to get up on a wave that they stiffen up and forget what to do next.
- Stay loose, but not sloppy, keep a slight bend in your knees, hips strong and forward and upper body loose.
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How to Turtle Roll (Longboards)

1. As the wave approaches, paddle towards it and roll your board over on top of you just before it reaches you.
2. Pull the board down towards you, trying to stay upright/vertical in the water with the board on top of you. This should form a "T" shape and allow you to act like an anchor.
3. Pull down and thrust your board forward through the wave by kicking against the water.
4. Once the wave has passed over you, flip your board back over, climb aboard and resume paddling!
How to duck dive (shorter boards)

**DUCK DIVING:** Though it looks easy, duck diving is in fact, pretty tricky. The goal is to get the board and your body, under the breaking wave. Start in smaller waves before you try it in the big ones.

**Steps:**

1. Put your hands on the rails out in front of you and push down, as if you were doing a push up. This should sink the nose of your board underwater.
2. Keep your arms straight and lean forward to help get more of the board under the water.
3. Place a foot or a knee on the board and take a breath as you submerge your entire board underwater, just as the wave is about to roll over you. Keep your board angled downwards and lay flat. 'Scoop' or arch your board and your body under the wave.
4. Aim your head and the top of your board at the surface just behind the wave.
5. As you emerge from the water you should be in position to start paddling again.

[Click for video]
Common Surf Lingo

- **Barrel**: The breaking motion of a perfect wave; a hollow channel formed inside a good wave when it breaks and curls over.

- **Breaker**: Any wave that breaks on the way to the beach.

- **Crest**: The top portion of a wave.

- **Glassy**: A smooth water surface condition caused by absence of local winds.

- **Goofy-Foot**: Riding a surfboard with the right foot forward (left foot forward is the more common stance).

- **Grommet**: A young hodad; a beginning surfer (also see "Gremlin").

- **Outside Break**: The area farthest from shore where the waves are breaking.

- **Over the Falls**: To wipe out, or to get dragged over as the wave breaks.

- **Rails**: The rounded edges of the surfboard.

- Check out more terms in the [CRSI Surf Dictionary](#)
Rights, lefts, goofies and regs

• Every wave that "peels" (runs sideways down the beach for a distance before shutting down) goes either left or right. The way to tell the difference between the two is simple - when you are lying down on your surfboard, paddling into a wave, you're going to drop into the wave and angle either towards your right or your left. When seen from the beach, someone going left will be going towards your right.

• Everyone has their preference as to which foot goes forward - if you put your left foot in front and your right foot on the tail, you're a regular foot. Right foot forward and you're a goofy foot.

• So, if you're a regular foot, and you drop into a wave and go right, you'll be going frontside - facing the wave. Drop into a left, and you're going backside. For goofies, it's left - frontside, and right - backside. Confused yet? Of course - who wouldn't be? You might as well be doing the hokey-pokey! But don't fret; it'll all become obvious the minute you see it for yourself.
Reefs, pointbreaks, beachbreaks

- The types of waves that can be surfed are called **beachbreaks**, **pointbreaks** and **reefbreaks**. These waves all have their own characteristics.

- **Beachbreaks** *(Tamarindo)* tend to be common and consistent, with nice sand bottoms. **Pointbreaks** can offer perfectly shaped waves and some of the longest rides of your life.

- **Reefbreaks** are where advanced surfers go in search of the best barrels. Each wave also has it’s drawbacks, though. **Reefbreaks** usually have uneven and/or sharp bottoms composed of rock or coral.

- **Pointbreaks** can get a little too crowded sometimes, and are generally not very consistent. **Beachbreaks** can be unforgiving, with difficult paddle-outs. But drawbacks aside, all these types of waves can offer excellent surf, and as any long-time surfer will tell you, the rewards of surfing far outweigh the hazards.
Parts of the board

Rails

- Rails are the edge of a surfboard, where the deck and the bottom meet. Rails are a critical part of surfboard design as the shape affects how water flows over the rails. The softer the rail the more the surfboard will hold its "track" in the wave and reduce turning ability - you'll find softer rails on more traditional longboards. The harder the rail will produce a board that produces quicker, tighter turns and increased acceleration.

Rocker

- The Rocker is the curve of the surfboard from nose to tail when viewed from the side. It looks like the shape of a banana. The Less Rocker a board has the flatter it will be. A board with a flatter rocker will have more surface area and will give more stability and drive. It is less maneuverable that a board with more Rocker. A board with more Rocker has a greater curve and gives the board more maneuverability. These boards are for the more experienced surfer and tend not to perform too well in poor to average surf.

Nose Rocker

- Refers specifically to the curve of the board at the nose section. The greater the curve of the Nose Rocker, the less likely the nose of the board is to dig in to the face of the wave. Big wave boards tend to have more nose rocker than smaller wave boards.
Where to surf outside of Tamarindo

Playa Grande
• Grande is 30 minutes drive north of Tamarindo, or an hours walk from the school. It is the most consistent beach break in the area, the waves are often overhead when Tamarindo is knee high. Its also famous as a Leatherback turtle nesting beach, though only a fraction of turtles nest here now.

Langosta
• Langosta is a few minutes south of the school in Tamarindo, It offers great waves at the river mouth and fast hollow waves further south at the beach break. It is often not crowded and is a beautiful beach with no developments south of the river.

Avellanas
• Avellanas is 30 minutes drive south of Tamarindo, it has great beach breaks at high tide, a river mouth which can have good barrels at low tide, and the infamous Little Hawaii reef break at the far north of the beach. It also has “Lolas”, the best beach bar in the area with huge King Palms, and very comfortable chairs and hammocks for relaxing in. its named alter Lola the giant pig who is often wading in the surf infront.
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Surfing Resources: Forecasts and reports

**SURF Forecasts**
- [How to read a surf forecast](#)
- [Surfline](#)
- [Swell-Info](#)
- [WannaSurf](#)
- [Magic Seaweed](#)

These are ranked in order of our favorite forecasting tools. Sometimes the accuracy of weather reports, swell forecasts and cams depends on your geographic location, so try them all and see what you prefer for your home break.
Other great surfing resources

• Surfer magazine
• Surf magazine
• Pray for Barrels
• CRSI Website
• CRSI Facebook
• CR Surf – Everything about surfing in Costa Rica
FITNESS AND TRAINING
Off-season training

• Many students want to know how to get into surfing shape when they are inland, preparing for a surf trip, or in the off-season for their home break.

• It is important to employ a combination of endurance training, swim strength, breath training, balance, flexibility and strength training.

• If you want some serious inspiration, check out legendary big-wave surfer Laird Hamilton’s insane surf workout
Weight training

• Muscle and skeletal strength are very important to surfing, like all sports.
• Any total body weight training or plan will help maintain strength (standard splits, cross fit, circuit training etc.)
• High-rep core and arm exercises should also be added, especially if you can’t hit a pool, lake, river or ocean to swim often
Yoga

• Yoga and surfing have become strongly intertwined ever since pro and amateur surfers realized how much the ancient practice can improve breathing techniques, mental focus, flexibility, strength and balance

• Use powerful poses to build your body into a surfing machine, and restorative practice to unwind and stretch out

• New to yoga or interested in practicing while at CRSI? Talk to Hugh to get started!
Swimming

• If you can’t get out and paddle around on a board, swimming is your next best option
• While it won’t mimic the action of paddling on a board exactly, it the best form of exercise for controlling your breathing, and building your paddle endurance
• Swim hard and swim often.
Stand Up Paddle boarding (SUP)

- Stand-up paddle boarding is a fast growing sport that shares many of the characteristics and challenges of surfing.
- SUPers ride a longer (10-12’), wider, and more buoyant board and remain in a standing position while paddling through the water like a kayak.
- The best part is, SUP can be ridden in waves, or in calm water and it will help build back and core strength, as well as training the small stabilizing muscles used to balance when surfing.
- Interested in trying SUP while at CRSI? The Institute has 6 boards, so just ask for a lesson!
And of course, if you can....

SURF!