



Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring (Sample Skills Course)

Course Overview: The **Essentials of Kayak Touring** course is designed to teach beginner paddlers to safely and enjoyably kayak on lakes, calm protected ocean environments, and other flatwater settings.

Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC):

ACA courses are open to all individuals who acknowledge the ability to perform the following essential eligibility criteria.

1. Breathe independently (i.e., not require medical devices to sustain breathing)
2. Independently maintain sealed airway passages while under water
3. Independently hold head upright without neck / head support
4. Manage personal care independently or with assistance of a companion
5. Manage personal mobility independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance
6. Follow instructions and effectively communicate independently or with assistance of a companion
7. Independently turn from face-down to face-up and remain floating face up while wearing a properly fitted life jacket*
8. Get on / off or in / out of a paddlecraft independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*
9. Independently get out and from under a capsized paddlecraft*
10. Remount or reenter the paddlecraft following deep water capsize independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*
11. Maintain a safe body position while attempting skills, activities and rescues listed in the appropriate Course Outline, and have the ability to recognize and identify to others when such efforts would be unsafe given your personal situation*

** To participate in adaptive programs, participants must acknowledge only the first six EEC listed above. Entry-level adaptive programs will involve teaching and practicing EEC #7-11.*

Course Prerequisites: None

Course Duration: 8 hours

Course Location / Venue: Protected water near shore with winds up to 10 knots, waves up to one foot (0.3 meters), and current up to one knot



Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring

(Sample Skills Course)

Class Ratio - 5 students : 1 Instructor; with an additional instructor or qualified assistant the ratio can be 10 : 2

Succeeding courses:

- Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring Skills Assessment
- Level 3: Coastal Kayak Basic Strokes & Rescues
- Level 3: Coastal Kayak Strokes and Maneuvers Refinement

The following is a general summary of course content for the **Essentials of Kayak Touring** course. The content and sequence of instruction should be adjusted to best fit the participant's needs, class location and time allowance.

Course Content

Introduction, Expectations, & Logistics:

- Welcome, introductions, paperwork
- Student & instructor course expectations and limitations
- Course itinerary & site logistics
- Review waiver, assumption of risk, challenge by choice, medical disclosure
- About the ACA
- Lifejacket (PFD) policy (always wear on water)
- Appropriate personal behavior
- No alcohol / substance abuse
- Proper etiquette on & off the water
- Respect private property
- Practice Leave No Trace ethics

The Paddling Environment:

- Wind
- Waves
- Weather
- Water

Personal Preparation:

- Personal ability
- Swimming ability
- Water comfort & confidence
- Fitness, conditioning, and warm up
- Safe paddle and boat handling
- Safety and rescue considerations

- Personal equipment (reviewed by Instructor)
- Learning judgment. Prudent behavior, being aware of what you don't know, can't handle, or should not risk
- Group Equipment: extra paddle, dry bags, first aid kit and rescue equipment (Depending on the environment and nature of the trip this may include cell phones, 2- way radios, paddle floats, rescue slings, etc).
- Guidebooks, maps/charts, local knowledge
- Assessing relevant existing and approaching environmental conditions including: tides, weather, time of day, water and air temperature, traffic, and accessibility
- Assessing personal and group dynamics (skills, equipment, group makeup, emotional concerns, logistics, and leadership).
- Filed Trip Plan

Getting Started:

- Warm-up and stretching
- How to pick up and carry a kayak safely
- Car topping: loading and unloading, racks, straps



Level 2: Essentials of Kayak

Touring

(Sample Skills Course)

- Launching and landing
- Boarding, three points of contact, weight kept low, etc
- Spray skirts (if applicable)
- Posture, safety, comfort, effectiveness, rocking, balance
- Wet exits
- Water comfort and confidence
- Self Rescue
- How to empty a kayak
- Basic Terminology
- Types of strokes (covered in this course): power, turning, support
- Stroke components: catch, propulsion, recovery (CPR), control, correction
- Safe and effective body usage

Equipment:

- Life Jackets (PFDs): types, fit
- Kayaks: types, materials, parts (including safety features such as flotation)
- Paddles: types, materials, parts, length, blade size, shape and offset, hand position
- Care of equipment
- Personal equipment: water, food, shoes, hat, sunscreen, bug repellent, sun glasses, eyeglass straps, protective clothing for heat or cold, sponge, bailer/pump, whistle (or other approved sounding device), knife, light
- Optional equipment and outfitting for improved control

Safety & Rescue:

- Exercising Judgment, Safety as a mind-set, etc
- Cold Water Shock / Hypothermia: HELP/Huddle, clothing
- Dehydration/ hyperthermia: hydration, clothing

- Hazards: wind, waves, weather, current, rocks, bridges, piers, dams, strainers, traffic
- Paddling as a group
- Signaling
- Interactions/ Sharing water with non powered and powered traffic
- Emergency procedures

Rescue

- Rescue sequence: RETHROG
- Rescue priorities: people, boats, gear
- Demonstrate/participate: T-X rescue
- Deep-water re-entries, assisted and solo, with and without sling, including scoop rescue
- Boat assisted rescue, assisting a tired swimmer (pushing or pulling to shore)
- Contact wowing and bulldozing a capsized boat

Maneuvers:

- Paddling in a reasonably straight line
- Spins
- Stopping
- Moving Abeam (Sideways)

Strokes:

- Forward
- Back (stopping)
- Draw
- Sculling draw
- Sweep (including Stern Draw)
- Reverse Sweep
- Stern Rudder
- Low Brace

Conclusion & Wrap Up:

- Group debrief / Individual feedback
- Course limitations
- Importance of First Aid & CPR



Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring (Sample Skills Course)

- Importance of additional instruction, practice, experience
- Importance of appropriate level of safety & rescue training
- Demo advanced maneuver
- Life sport / Paddling options
- Local paddling groups / Clubs
- Handouts / Reference materials
- ACA Membership forms
- Course evaluation
- Participation cards