



Level 2: Essentials of Sit-On-Top Kayaking (Sample Skills Course)

Course Overview: The **Essentials of Sit-On-Top Kayaking** course is designed as a short program emphasizing safety, enjoyment and skill acquisition for entry level individuals in the public, private and commercial setting.

* This course is designed specifically for Sit-On-Top Kayaks only

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: 6 to 8 hours

Course Location / Venue: Calm, protected water with constant access to safe landing and within .5 nm from shore:

- Winds less than 10 knots
- Waves less than 1 foot (0.3 meters)
- Current less than 1 knot
- No surf - shore break less than 1 ft (0.3 meters)

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

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Succeeding courses:

- Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring (decked boats) skills and/or assessment
- Level 3: Sit-On-Top Coastal Kayaking skills and/or assessment

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

Introduction, Expectations, and Logistics:

- Welcome, introductions, paperwork
- Student and instructor course expectations and limitations
- Course itinerary and 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 and 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 and confidence
- Fitness, conditioning, and warm up
- Safe paddle and boat handling
- Safety and rescue considerations
- Personal equipment (reviewed by Instructor)

Equipment

- Lifejackets (PFDs): types, fit
- Kayaks: types, parts, backbands and safety gear such as pumps
- Paddles: types, materials, parts, length, blade size, shape and offset, hand position
- Care of equipment
- Personal equipment: water, food, shoes, hat, sunscreen, insect 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, thigh braces



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Getting Started

- Warm-up and stretching
- How to pick up and carry a kayak safely
- Car topping: loading and unloading, racks, straps
- Launching and landing
- Boarding, three points of contact, weight kept low, etc.
- Posture, safety, comfort, effectiveness, rocking, balance
- Wet exits
- Water comfort and confidence
- Self-rescue
- 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

Safety and Rescue

- Exercising judgment, safety as a mind-set, etc.
- Hypothermia/ cold immersion shock: 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 (reach, throw, row, go)
- Rescue priorities: people, boats, gear
- Demonstrate/participate: Deep- water re-entries, assisted and solo
- Boat assisted rescue, assisting a tired swimmer (pushing or pulling to shore)
- T-X rescue (blown hatch rescue) w/ pump
- Towing or bulldozing a capsized boat

Strokes

- Forward
- Back (stopping)
- Draw
- Sweep (forward and reverse)
- Rudder (stern)
- Low brace

Maneuvers

- Paddling in a reasonably straight line
- Spins
- Stopping
- Moving abeam (sideways)



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Conclusion and Wrap Up:

- Group debrief / individual feedback
- Course limitations
- Importance of first aid and CPR
- Importance of additional instruction, practice, experience
- Importance of appropriate level of safety and rescue training
- Demonstrate advanced maneuvers
- Life sport / paddling options
- Local paddling groups / clubs
- Handouts / reference materials
- ACA membership forms
- Course evaluation
- Participation cards