



Level 2: Essentials of Sit-On-Top (SOT) Kayaking Trip Leader (ESOTKTL) Assessment Course

Purpose: The purpose of the Level 2: SOT Kayaking Trip Leader (L2: ESOTKTL) program is to an assessment process for individuals who intend to lead other paddlers, either recreationally or professionally, in protected waterways using Sit-on-Top (SOT) kayaks only. The emphasis of the Trip Leader program is on leadership. Successful completion of the assessment will provide evidence of the candidate's technical skills and confirm their knowledge, understanding and ability to plan and implement trips, for a wide variety of abilities, in environments up to and including L2: ESOTKTL conditions.

Overview: For successful completion of L2: ESOTKTL assessment, an individual must demonstrate technical proficiency, trip planning, group management and leadership skills in the L2: ESOTKTL venue. While this is not a teaching award, an L2: ESOTKTL must also be able to provide basic tips to paddlers, as appropriate, to help them through the environment.

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 in / out of a paddlecraft independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*
9. Independently get out and from under a capsized paddlecraft*
10. 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*

Prerequisites for Assessment:

- Be 18 years or older
- Be a current ACA member in good standing
- Completion of the L2: S ESOTKTL Training Course or the L2: ESOTKTL Training Course



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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)

Course Duration: A minimum of 1 day

Assessor:

- Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring Instructor Trainer (or higher), or
- Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Instructor with the L2: Essentials of SOT Kayak Trip Leading (ESOTKTL) Endorsement, or
- Level 4: Open Water Coastal Kayaking Instructor (or higher)

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

Succeeding courses: Level 3: SOT Coastal Kayaking Skills

Equipment: Candidates shall possess all the equipment appropriate for a trip leader in L2: ESOTKTL conditions, and demonstrate the judgement to carry equipment that is appropriate for day trips and various group characteristics. Candidates' gear selections shall cover the following categories:

- Kayak (single sit-on-top, or tandem sit-on-top with fixed flotation sufficient to allow deep-water self-rescue) and personal equipment appropriate for kayak touring. If tandem kayaks are used, at least some of the kayaks in the course must be singles to allow demonstration of skills and knowledge in both types of boats.
- Safety and emergency
- Signaling and communications
- First aid and equipment repair kits
- Navigation

Skills: The skills assessment is to focus on desired results rather than on specific technique. Candidates must be able to demonstrate safe, effective and efficient maneuvering. The assessment context shall include maneuvering for towing, quickly attaining the bow of a capsized kayak, paddling on edge to maintain directional stability, using support strokes to prevent capsize, reverse paddling to assist in rescue rather than turning, or similar practical applications of personal skills. The assessor shall evaluate the candidate's situational awareness and ability to maintain group control during the performance of rescues and towing exercises. A variety of sit-on-top single and tandem kayaks may be used at the assessor's discretion.

Leadership: Leadership ability shall be assessed during a journey where each candidate is given the opportunity to make appropriate decisions, cognizant of conditions and the current performance capability of the group. Individual legs shall be debriefed to assess an understanding of leadership principles and to reveal the candidate's decision-making process. Candidates must show leadership appropriate to the circumstances, the risk at hand, the individuals being led, and the environmental challenges encountered.



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Knowledge: The “knowledge” topics provide a framework of knowledge necessary for trip planning, implementation, and leadership. All are to be assessed in the context of the L2: ESOTKTL environment and conditions. A candidate’s knowledge can be assessed using a variety of methods which may include observation, self-assessment, feedback, written assessment, questioning and pre-assigned and/or ad hoc presentations.

For further detail on each of the assessment categories, refer to the L2: ESOTKTL training document.



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Participant: _____ **ACA #:** _____ **Date:** _____

Location and venue: _____

Rating: = *Passing* *N = Needs more practice*

<i>Maneuvering Skills</i>	P/N	Comments
Forward and reverse paddling		
Turning with forward and reverse momentum		
Static turns and 360° rotation with forward and reverse strokes		
Sideways movement—static		
Preventing capsize with low braces		

<i>Rescues and Tows</i>	P/N	Comments
Side by side with stabilization assisted rescue		
Cross kayak PFD grab assisted rescue		
Injured or unresponsive paddler rescue, e.g., Hand-of-God, boat flip rescue		
Stirrup rescue		
Efficient self-rescue from swimming start		
Swimmer carries (bow, stern and back deck)		
Contact tow (forward and reverse)		
Tow—single boat and multiple boat inline		
Rafted tow		



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<i>Technical</i>	P/N	Comments
Navigation		
Boat repair		

<i>Leadership</i>	P/N	Comments
Group abilities		
Environmental awareness		
Group awareness		
Group management		
Risk assessment		
Communications		
Positioning		
Launching and landing		



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<i>Knowledge</i>	P/N	Comments
Weather		
Tides and currents		
Conditions		
Trip planning		
Communication and signaling		
Rules of the road		
Leave No Trace skills and ethics		
Prevention and management of hypothermia and hyperthermia		



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FINAL ASSESSMENT		COMMENTS
PASS	NEEDS MORE WORK	
ASSESSOR		
Assessor: _____		
Signature: _____		
ACA #: _____ Date: _____		
Assisting: _____		
ACA #: _____		