



Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Trip Leader (CKTL) Training Course

Purpose: The purpose of the Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Trip Leader (L3: CKTL) training is to prepare individuals who intend to lead other paddlers, either recreationally or professionally, in coastal environments. The emphasis of the training is on leadership and group management.

Training Overview: The L3: CKTL training exposes an individual to the technical, trip planning, group management and leadership skills required to lead other paddlers in the L3: CKTL venue. While this is not a teaching award, an L3: CKTL should also be able to provide basic tips to paddlers, as appropriate, to help them through the environment. This training course is intended to be followed by an assessment course.

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 Training:

- Be a current ACA member in good standing
- Complete a Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Skills Assessment



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Course Location / Venue: During some period of the training two of the following conditions should be present:

- 10 - 15 knot winds
- 1 - 2 foot seas (0.3 – 0.6 meters)
- 1 - 2 foot breaking waves (0.3 – 0.6 meters)
- 1 - 2 knots of current

The training venue must provide accessible landing areas within 1/2 mile.

Course Duration: A minimum of 1 day

Trainer:

- Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Instructor Trainer (or higher), or
- Level 4: Coastal Kayaking Instructor with the L3: Coastal Kayaking Trip Leader (CKTL) Endorsement, or
- Level 5: Advanced Open Water Coastal Kayaking Instructor

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

Succeeding courses: Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Trip Leader Assessment

Equipment: Participants shall possess all the equipment appropriate for a trip leader in L3: CKTL conditions, and demonstrate the judgement to carry equipment that is appropriate and responsive to various venues, climates, trip durations, and group characteristics. Participants' gear selections shall cover the following categories:

- Kayak (single sit-on-top or sit-inside, or tandem sit-on-top or sit-inside with fixed flotation sufficient to allow deep-water self-rescue) and personal equipment appropriate for coastal paddling. If sit-on-top kayaks are used, at least some of the kayaks in the course must be sit-inside to allow demonstration of skills and knowledge of both types of boats. 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

Participants shall be able to explain why they selected/omitted certain items, for a particular venue. Participants may borrow equipment for training.

Skills: The following list of criteria are to be used in the training of L3: CKTL participants. The time spent on each skill and the sequence of evaluation should be adjusted to fit the participant's needs, class location, and time allowance with an emphasis on the application of each skill in a leadership context.



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Maneuvering: Participants shall demonstrate safe, effective and efficient maneuvering in L3: CKTL conditions. The focus of the training will be on desired results rather than on specific technique. The skills shall include:

- Forward and reverse paddling
- Turning with forward and reverse momentum
- Static turns and 360° rotation with forward and reverse strokes
- Sideways movement – static and with forward momentum
- Preventing capsizes with braces and sculling for support

Note: The training context shall include maneuvering for towing, quickly attaining the bow of a capsized boat, paddling on edge to maintain directional stability, using support strokes to prevent capsizes, reverse paddling to assist in rescue rather than turning, or similar practical applications of personal skills.

Rescues and Tows: Participants shall be able to perform a variety of assisted rescues and self-rescues, as well as tows, in L3: CKTL conditions, to include:

For sit inside kayaks, the following skills:

- T-rescue
- Scoop rescue
- Roll

If sit-on-top kayaks are available, the following optional skills:

- Side by side with stabilization assisted rescue
- Cross kayak PFD grab assisted rescue

For both sit inside and sit-on-top kayaks, the following skills:

- Unresponsive paddler, e.g. Hand-of-God
- Stirrup rescue
- Efficient self-rescue from a swimming start
- Swimmer carries (bow, stern, and back deck)
- Contact tow (forward and reverse)
- Tow – single boat and multiple boat inline
- Rafted tow

The trainer shall evaluate the participant's situational awareness and ability to maintain group control during the performance of rescues and towing exercises. A variety of touring, sit-on-top and tandem kayaks may be used at the trainer's discretion.

Technical: Participants shall demonstrate the following technical skills:

- Navigation – Participants shall demonstrate a knowledge of chart symbols, distance measurement, bearings, variation and transits. While on the water, participants shall be able to determine a position using bearings and/or transits, navigate using shoreline features, buoys and other visible references, and maintain a course using a compass heading, transits and time.



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- Basic boat repair – Participants shall demonstrate basic field repair/management of either a small hole, compromised/missing hatch cover or a damaged skeg/rudder. At the trainer’s discretion, the repair may occur on the water.

Leadership: Leadership ability shall be evaluated 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 evaluate an understanding of leadership principles and to reveal the participant’s decision-making process. Participants shall show leadership appropriate to the circumstances, the risk at hand, the individuals being led and the environmental challenges encountered.

- Group abilities – Participants shall demonstrate the ability to assess individual and group performance capabilities (e.g. skills, experience, judgement, fitness, boats and equipment) and set goals appropriately.
- Environmental awareness – Participants shall demonstrate the ability to assess conditions based on weather forecasts, observed wind, tidal current and sea state. Participants shall also identify protected areas, potential hazards, early exit options, remoteness and rescue resources. Based on these observations, participants shall plan an appropriate journey and adapt their plan as conditions change.
- Group awareness – Participants shall demonstrate group awareness throughout a trip to include assessing a group’s energy levels, hydration, confidence in conditions and readiness for upcoming challenges, and adjust their trip plans accordingly.
- Group management – Participants shall demonstrate group management and control appropriate to the conditions, environment and group readiness (e.g. spacing, pacing, formation and supporting roles) to include setting clear parameters and establishing emergency procedures.
- Risk assessment, incident avoidance and management – Participants shall demonstrate on-going risk assessment relative to the readiness of the group, implement proactive strategies to avoid potential incidents, and manage incidents effectively if they do occur.
- Communication – Participants shall demonstrate the use of effective and ongoing communication to manage the group, share plans, assess paddlers, adapt to environmental limitations (e.g. wind or swell) and proactively prepare for potential emergencies.
- Positioning – Participants are expected to use various positions as appropriate to the situation, environment and potential consequences. Leader positioning shall reflect an awareness of potential hazards, the need to maintain a line of sight, and preparedness to manage potential rescues/incidents.
- Launching and landing – Participants must demonstrate proficiency launching and landing themselves and a group in L3: CKTL conditions, including planning, communication and positioning to maintain group control.



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Knowledge: The topics and concepts below provide a framework of knowledge necessary for trip planning, implementation, and leadership. All will be covered in the context of the L3: CKTL environment and conditions. A candidate's knowledge can be evaluated using a variety of methods which may include observation, self-assessment, feedback, written assessment, questioning, and pre-assigned and/or ad hoc presentations.

- Weather – Participants shall be familiar with the terminology typically found in marine forecasts and know multiple means of accessing appropriate forecasts. Participants shall possess basic field forecasting skills, such as recognition of cumulonimbus clouds and the factors that can produce fog.
- Tides and currents – Participants shall be familiar with tidal terms, timing, forecasts and rules for determining tide height, current speed and drift.
- Conditions – Participants shall be familiar with the terminology found in surf and sea state forecasts, know multiple sources for obtaining forecasts, know the upper limits of the L3: CKTL environment, and understand the importance of keeping their trips within those parameters.
- Trip planning – As a tabletop exercise, Participants shall prepare a trip plan that demonstrates an understanding of chart data, simple course plots, weather, tides, currents, and group abilities.
- Communication and signaling – Participants shall demonstrate knowledge of communication and signaling tools and their appropriate use, including VHF radios, emergency signals, paddle and hand signals.
- Rules of the road – Participants shall understand the hazards posed by other boat traffic, know USCG night lighting requirements and basic rules of the road as they pertain to kayakers.
- Leave No Trace (LNT) skills and ethics – Participants shall have a general understanding of LNT best practices and follow LNT principles and practices at all times.
- Prevention and management of hypothermia and hyperthermia – Participants shall have knowledge of symptoms, prevention, and management of hypothermia and hyperthermia.