



Level 4: Surf Kayaking

Instructor Criteria

Overview:

Level 4: Surf Kayaking instructors should be able to coach students in all aspects of surf kayaking using sit-on-top kayaks (with thigh straps), whitewater kayaks, surf-specific kayaks, and wave-skis in significant surf.

Fundamentally, we expect that participants should have the paddling skills, technical knowledge, rescue ability, teaching ability, group management, and interpersonal skills commensurate with this level of certification prior to presenting themselves for evaluation as Instructor Candidates at an Instructor Certification Workshop (ICW).

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: L3: Surf Kayak Instructor and successful completion of a Level 4: Surf Kayaking Skills Assessment, or equivalent skills and experience.



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Course Duration: Combined IDW & ICE (ICW) - Minimum 3 days (24 hours)

Course Location / Venue: Sandy beach break with significant surf – a majority of steep (plunging) waves during sets; wave faces greater than 3ft (1 meter), less than 4ft (1.2 meters); wind, if cross-shore or off-shore less than 15 knots, if on-shore less than 20 knots (*wind not required for certification*); access to flat water.

NOTE: careful consideration should be given to hazards including other surfers, rip currents, long-shore drift, rocks and man-made structures when selecting a venue.

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

Succeeding Course: Level 5: Performance Surf Kayaking Instructor

General Requirements for all Instructor Certifications:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Meet the appropriate essential eligibility criteria
- Successfully complete an Instructor Certification Workshop (IDW & ICE)
- Be a full ACA member
- Upon successful completion, register with the Safety Education & Instruction Council
- Have and maintain First Aid and age appropriate CPR
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of paddlesports and the ACA
- Demonstrate the ability to appropriately perform and teach all of the following material unassisted in the appropriate venue

Maintenance Requirements:

- Teach at least two courses that meet ACA standards within the four-year certification period and report the results to the National Office
- Complete an Instructor Update, at the highest level of certification, during the four-year certification period
- Maintain ACA membership and SEIC registration annually

Instructor Competencies:

The following is the list of the criteria and competencies to be used to evaluate Instructor Candidates:

- 1) Demonstrate a knowledge of ACA Paperwork:
 - How to register and report a course (with and without insurance)
 - An understanding of the ACA Waiver & Release of Liability
- 2) Demonstrate a knowledge of:
 - Teaching theory
 - Learning theory
 - Effective methods of providing feedback including video analysis



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- 3) Demonstrate the following:
 - Positive interpersonal skills
 - Appropriate group management skills (including leadership and judgment)
 - Ability to choose an appropriate venue / class site

- 4) The ability to teach and model kayak paddle strokes and maneuvers effectively on flat water AND in moderate surf including:
 - High cadence forward stroke
 - Reverse/back stroke, to stop and reverse straight backward
 - Forward and reverse sweeps, to turn and or spin the kayak
 - Draw and sculling draw, to move the kayak sideways evenly
 - Low brace and high brace to avoid capsize
 - Stern rudder to glide straight and turn to paddle side (pry)
 - Low brace turn

- 5) Demonstrate the ability to perform and teach the following rescue techniques effectively in significant surf:
 - Capsize, wet exit and swim to shore
 - Popped skirt, flooded kayak and paddle to shore
 - Perform safe, reliable rolls, including one from non-setup position
 - Boat over boat – deep water reentry assisted rescue (outside of surf zone)
 - Bow rescue and variations
 - Swimmer tow, back-deck carry (if appropriate for craft type)
 - Unresponsive paddler rescue (*aka Hand-of-God*)

- 6) Demonstrate the ability to perform and teach the following surf kayaking skills and techniques effectively in significant surf:
 - Launch timing
 - Punching through waves
 - Bunny hop over foam pile
 - Take off positioning and timing
 - Angled and faded take offs
 - Diagonal run
 - Trimming to stay high (top half) of the wave
 - Changes in direction
 - Bottom turn
 - Top turn
 - Cut back
 - Controlled side surf – ability to move laterally

- 7) Demonstrate knowledge of, and ability to teach, the following information effectively:
 - Gathering swell, weather and tidal information and surf forecasting
 - Wave dynamics, beach characteristics and anatomy of surf zone
 - Beach breaks, reef breaks, point breaks



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- Surf etiquette and collision avoidance
 - Warm up exercises
 - Hypothermia and hyperthermia – prevention and treatment
 - Surf kayak design and outfitting (including SOT's and wave-skis)
 - Kayak paddle design, selection and hand placement
 - Fin design and placement
- 8) Demonstrate the necessary leadership, group management skills, judgment and experience necessary to be a safe, effective instructor, including:
- Establishing safe parameters and protocols for participant practice
 - Establishing an effective communication strategy for the surf zone
 - Effective observation, analysis and feedback
 - Differentiated instruction based on participant wants and needs