



AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION Essentials of Kayak Touring

Course Objectives: To teach beginner paddlers to safely and enjoyably kayak on lakes, calm protected ocean environments, and other flatwater settings.

Course Duration: Eight hours

Course Location: Calm, protected flatwater, within swimming distance of shore.

Course Ratio: 1 Instructor to every 5 students (1:5) / 2:10 with an additional instructor or qualified assistant

Successive Courses: Coastal Kayaking Basic Strokes & Rescues, Stroke and Maneuver Refinement, Open Water Skills
The following is a general summary of the course content for Essentials of Kayak Touring. The content and sequence of instruction should be arranged to best fit the students' needs, class location and time allowances.

Introduction & Logistics

- Welcome
- Course expectations, limitations and schedule
- Review waiver/assumptions of risk and medical disclosure
- PFD Policy (always worn on the water)
- No alcohol/ dangerous drug use
- Respect private property, litter, noise, etc
- Proper etiquette on and off the water site-specific procedures, regulations, and times

Personal Preparation

- 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

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

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
- 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
- Stroke components: catch, propulsion, recovery (CPR), control, correction
- Safe and effective body usage

Safety & 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

Rescue priorities: people, boats, gear

Demonstrate/participate: T-X rescue

Deep-water re-entries, assisted and solo, with sling, scooping

Boat assisted rescue, assisting a tired swimmer (pushing or pulling to shore)

Towing or bulldozing a capsized boat

Strokes

- Forward
- Back (stopping)
- Draw
- Sculling draw/brace
- Sweep (including Stern Draw)
- Reverse Sweep
- Rudder

- Low Brace

Maneuvers

- Paddling in a reasonably straight line
- Spins
- Stopping
- Moving Abeam

Conclusion / Wrap-up

- Course review
- Course limitations (not a river or exposed open water course)
- Need for more instruction, practice, and experience
- Demo an advanced maneuver or skill
- Trip planning - 6P's: prior, proper planning prevents poor performance
- Homeland Security Awareness
- Life sport/paddling options
- Local paddling groups/clubs
- ACA membership forms/participation cards

