



AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION Coastal Kayak Rough Water Maneuvering, Towing & Rescue

Course Overview: To develop knowledge and skills necessary to paddle safely in rough water (strong winds, breaking waves and/or current).

Course Objectives: Participants will be asked to:

- Plan a rough water outing
- Practice decision-making process to manage risk
- Determine proper equipment
- Practice group formations and communicate in rough water
- Perform advanced strokes in rough water
- Perform towing exercises in rough water
- Perform self and assisted rescues in rough water with loaded boats
- Launch and land through moderate surf, if available
- Transit through areas of moderate current or tidal rip where necessary, if available

Participant Qualifications: Completion of an open water course and proficiency and experience in executing all strokes, maneuvers and techniques in open water. A reliable roll and the ability to aggressively self-rescue required

Minimum Personal Equipment for the Course:

Properly sized and outfitted sea kayaks with front and rear flotation and related paddling and safety equipment (I.e. paddle & spare, PFD, spray skirt, tow rig, paddle float, bilge pump, wet/dry suit & hypothermia kit if necessary, helmet, first aid kit, repair kit, emergency signaling devices appropriate for the time and area of travel, extra clothes, food and water).

Course Duration: 8 hours

Course Location: Areas where escape from rough conditions is reasonably accessible. Course should not be taught in flat calm, but conditions such as wind up to 20 knots, or seas to 4 feet, or surf break to 3 feet, or currents up to 4 knots, with standing waves. Some combination of 2-3 of these conditions may exist but all 4 together are not recommended in the same course. Instructors should reduce student to instructor ratio recommended by Insurance Guidelines when conditions warrant.

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

Course Content:

The following is a general summary of course content for this workshop. The content and sequence of instruction should be arranged to best fit the student's needs, class location and time allowance.

Introduction & Expectations (15 Minutes)

- Enrollment/ registration/ liability
- Introductions/expectations (group assessment)
- Overview of course content

Dry-Land Presentations (60 Minutes)

- Trip planning and risk assessment (wind, weather, waves, tides, currents, group gear).
- Equipment check/orientation, (boat, clothing, gear, first aid, repair, navigation, communication, hypothermia kits)
- Group formations and communication

Launching Through Mild Surf (15 Minutes)

- Boat positioning and alignment.
- Sequence and spacing.
- Powering through the break.

- If all goes wrong, where to meet on the other side

Note: Assisted rescues should not be attempted in shore break

Strokes in Rough Water (120 Minutes)

- Sweeps from a static position (looking through the turn, edging, and driving with the pegs)
- Using the tops of waves to turn
- Turning into the wind (sweeps with edge control to increase weather cocking, bow draws and static brace turns)
- Turning down wind (use of edge control to free the bow, stern rudders, reverse strokes and skeg use to assist in lee cocking)
- Surfing wind waves and swell (when to accelerate, use of correction strokes and stern rudders)

Rough Water Towing (60 Minutes)

- The Single tow, In-Line tow, Contact tow and Rafted tow
- Towing a rescue in progress, and releasing under tow

Landing in Mild Surf (30 Minutes)

- Sequence and spacing
- Wave selection
- To ride or not to ride
- Landing on the top or riding the face
- Wave dynamics and boat control

Rough Water Rescues (120 Minutes)

- The swimmer bow rescue
- Back deck rescue
- The bow and paddle shaft rescues.
- Rolling in waves and current.
- Self-rescues (re-entries):
- Re-Enter and roll
- Re-Enter and roll w/ paddle float
- Paddle float self rescue (back deck)
- Cowboy (scramble) self rescue
- Assisted Rescues:
- T-Rescue with back deck re-entry
- T-Rescue with crab re -entry
- T-Rescue with swimmer at bow
- Loaded boat options for assisted rescues:
 - Assisted T

- Hull down method of crossing the “T”
- Re-Enter and pump
- Curl (swamped hatch recovery)

Note: These are suggested exercises. Instructors must weigh time, safety and logistical concerns in deciding which if not all exercises are to be covered

Additional Land / Water Exercises (60 Minutes)

- Review weak spots or move on to take advantage of local conditions
- May include current and tidal rip training if conditions, skill and energy permit
- Predicting tides/current
- Crossing eddy lines
- Surfing standing waves
- Calculating ferry angles

Conclusion & Wrap-up (30 Minutes)

- Group debrief
- Course evaluation

References:

2001 Lull, John *Sea Kayaking Safety & Rescue*
 Johnson, Shelly *Woman's Guide to Sea Kayaking and Complete Guide to Sea Kayaking*
 2001 Schumann, R. and Shriner, J. *Sea Kayak Rescue*
 2001 *The BCU Handbook (November, 2001)*

NOTES:

Reviewed by the CKC 2006.

It is understood that regional differences will influence the way this outline is used. Courses taught in regions dominated by tidal current will have a different emphasis than those taught in areas dominated by wind or surf. Timeframe, order and emphasis may be altered at the discretion of the instructor. To assist in mastering the skills outlined here, students may wish to take this course more than once, and in more than one region. This course is not a substitute for the ACA Coastal Kayak Surf or Tidal Currents courses.