



American Canoe Association Basic Surf Kayak Course Outline

Purpose: The ACA Basic Surf Kayak course is designed for paddlers wishing to explore kayak surfing. The course introduces paddlers to the essentials of surf kayak technique and ocean safety considerations with an emphasis on fun.

Objectives: To expose students to the essentials of surf kayaking to include: strokes, surf etiquette, surf zone safety and self/assisted rescues.

To promote the inherent enjoyment and rewards of paddling in the surf zone.

Pre-requisites: None

Instructor Qualifications:

ACA Basic Surf Kayak Instructor – or higher

Duration of Course:

8 hours

Staffing: 4:1 with certified instructor, 8:2 with certified instructor and competent aid.

Location: Flat water venue and Ocean beach with surf less than 3ft., off shore winds less than 10 knots.

Statement of Risk:

Paddlesports, including surf kayaking, possess inherent risks; attempting to eliminate these risks would jeopardize the essential elements of the activity.

Course content

PART I: Introduction and logistics (30 minutes, optional Video)

Waivers/Assumption of Risk

Welcome

Introduction of instructors and participants

Overview of course expectations and limitations

Logistics: Class times, locations, regroup spots: site specifics procedures, helmets, PFD fit and usage, proper clothing and equipment, surf kayak and/or sit-on-top surf kayaks with thigh straps,

PART II: Safety (30 minutes)

Weather, Environmental Considerations, Site Specific Considerations, Hypo/Hyperthermia, Dehydration, Alcohol, Substance abuse. Regulations: access, private property, litter, etc.

On Water: Signals (whistle, hand, paddle), Spotters, First Aid Kit. Cell Phone/Radio.

Information Gathering

PART III: Equipment

Personal gear and fit, kayak carry and transportation, surf kayaks, outfitting and nomenclature, paddles, PFD styles and fit, helmets.

PART IV: Essential Paddling Skills: (2 hours, on Flat water)

Warm-up, wet exit, forward, backward and stopping strokes, forward and reverse sweeps, edging, low brace, turning & steering – low brace turn, stern rudder, deep water re-entry, power acceleration stroke

PART V: Surf Zone Safety (1 hour, At Beach)

Checking out the beach:

Assessing surf conditions-surf zone dangers, rips, beach suitability, other users, Break- type, height, wind effect, tide effect, Sets- estimating height, and counting, Paddler / boat / paddling dangers at the beach and in the surf, Safety boater, throw rope, control of free boat and use of grab loops, swimming in the surf. Rescuing another swimmer, swimmer to swimmer, **T** (talk) **R** (reach) **T** (throw) **R** (row) **G** (go)

PART VI: Surfing Skills/Techniques (2 hours, on the water)

Surf area, beach positioning, setting boundaries,

Launching – using a rip, punching through waves, timing, outside the break, managing the soup and

dumping surf when paddling out, comfort.

In the soup – bracing, side surfing, rolling with the soup
Capsize and wet exit – swimming in the surf, towed rescue
Catching and takeoff – straight, angled, position, late take offs
Riding the wave – Straight in, diagonal run, bottom turn, top turn, using the top half of the wave
Etiquette

PART VII: Conclusion (30 minutes)

Wrap-up

Debrief – personal feedback – possible goals
Further training /practice opportunities
Knowing your limitations, need for experience
Need for CPR and first aid training
Paddling options
ACA membership forms
Join local paddling groups/clubs, volunteer for events
Where to obtain surf beach/condition information

RESOURCES/ MATERIALS: to be passed out during course

Handouts, Brochures
Conservation, local club brochures, etc.
First Aid and PFD brochures