



AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION LEVEL 5: ADVANCED OPEN WATER COASTAL KAYAKING Instructor Criteria

To be eligible for Level 5: Advanced Open Water Coastal Kayaking Instructor Certification, an individual must be a currently certified Level 4: Open Water Coastal Kayaking Instructor in good standing for a minimum of 2 years.

The primary difference between L5: AOWCK and L4: OWCK is this:

The L4: OWCK Instructor has to be personally proficient in rough water but is not expected nor certified to teach and manage a group in those conditions. The L5: AOWCK Instructor must be more experienced and have the necessary training to conduct the approved ACA courses that fall within their certification.

General Requirements for all Certifications:

- Be at least 18 years old.
- Successfully complete an Instructor Certification Workshop (IDW & ICE).
- ACA membership including the Safety Education & Instruction Council (SEIC).
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of Paddlesports and the ACA.

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.
- Attend for IT signature (within the four-year certification period) at least one of the following: Instructor Methods Workshop, Instructor Development Workshop, Instructor Certification Workshop
- Maintain ACA membership and SEIC registration annually.

Proficiency Requirements for Level 5: Open Water Coastal Kayaking Instructors:

L5: AOWCK certification cannot be completed unless during some period each of the conditions necessary for rough water assessment are present during some portion of the certification course.

Conditions appropriate for rough water skill assessment (*All of the conditions above must take place for L5: AOWCK certification*):

- 3 - 5 foot seas
- 15-25 knots wind
- 3-4 foot surf break
- 4-5 knots current.
- Area of escape from rough conditions must be accessible.

Level 5: Advanced Open Water Coastal Kayaking Instructor Skill / Knowledge Requirements:

Fundamentally, we expect that paddlers should be experienced sea kayakers in mild to moderate conditions, before presenting themselves for evaluation as instructor candidates at Level 3: Coastal Kayaking.

- 1) Demonstrate the ability to teach and model the basic paddle strokes:
 - Forward (Touring & Power)
 - Reverse & Stopping
 - Forward and reverse sweeps
 - Draw (In-water / Out-of-water / Sculling)

- High and low braces
 - Sculling brace
 - Rudder
- 2) Demonstrate the ability to teach and model the following maneuvers:
 - Low Brace Turn
 - High Brace Turn
 - Bow Rudder
 - Side-Slip
 - 3) Demonstrate the ability to teach and model basic rescue techniques:
 - T-rescue
 - Side-by-Side
 - Rafted-T
 - Paddle Float
 - Contact rescue (tow / push another kayaker w/o use of towline)
 - Solo & Assisted Towing
 - Eskimo Rescue (Bow / Stern / Paddle)
 - Eskimo Roll
 - Re-enter & Roll
 - 4) Also have working knowledge of other rescues
 - Scramble
 - All-In
 - Scoop
 - Sling
 - 5) Demonstrate ability to perform a reliable Eskimo roll.
 - 3 rolls w/i 1 minute (one must be from a non-set-up position)
 - 6) Demonstrate knowledge of, and ability to teach, the following:
 - Safety issues and hazards of coastal kayaking
 - Basic chart reading and use
 - Weather conditions important to the kayaker
 - Hypothermia and hyperthermia; prevention and treatment
 - Signaling devices and safety equipment
 - Boat traffic, Rules of the Road
 - Kayak design and equipment
 - Kayak towing technique
 - 7) Demonstrate the ability to teach and model launching and landing in surf.
 - 8) Demonstrate the ability to teach and model strokes in rough water.
 - 9) Demonstrate the ability to teach and model rough water towing.
 - 10) Demonstrate the ability to teach and model rough water rescue techniques including; Back deck rescue, bow and paddle shaft rescue, self rescues, T-rescue variations, loaded boat rescues, etc.
 - 11) Demonstrate ability to consistently roll in very rough water, wind and surf.
 - 12) Demonstrate ability to paddle comfortably with grace and style in surf, tide rips, and rough water.
 - 13) Demonstrate leadership and group management skills in rough water and have the experience and judgment necessary to be a safe, effective instructor.