



## **Introduction to Canoeing – Tandem (Level 1)**

**COURSE OVERVIEW/PURPOSE:** To give the participant a good foundation in the skill and knowledge needed to paddle a canoe tandem on flat water. This course is the first in a progression of paddling a tandem canoe whether the final goal is flat water, whitewater or Freestyle.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** Participants will learn:

- To carry a canoe
- To load a canoe on a car and tie it down
- The boat designs, building materials and parts of the canoe
- The types, materials and parts of the paddle
- How to fit and wear a Life Jacket/PFD
- How to properly warm up
- How launch and land a canoe
- How to hold a paddle
- The biomechanics of paddling a canoe (sitting up straight, paddling in unison, paddling with vertical paddles etc.)
- Boat trim and stability
- How to swim a boat to shore (a very short distance)
- How to empty a canoe
- How to tow a canoe
- How to tow a swimmer
- How to do a canoe over canoe and side by side rescue
- How to use a rescue sling
- Signals using the paddle, whistle and hands (Handout)
- How to paddle straight efficiently
- How to stop efficiently
- How to do wide turns
- How to move the boat sideways when it is sitting still (abeam)
- How to spin the boat while it is sitting still (spin)
- About the Rule of the Navigable Road (Handout)
- About Leave no Trace (Handout)
- About Paddling Ethics (Handout)
- About Hypothermia/Hyperthermia (Handout)
- About Wind and Waves (Handout)

**PARTICIPANT'S QUALIFICATIONS:** Be able to physically perform the above task and be in good health. Be able to keep head above water when wearing a properly fitted PFD. No prior canoe or paddling skills or courses are required.

**MINIMUM PERSONAL EQUIPMENT FOR THE CLASS:** Properly fitted PFD, canoe paddle, tandem canoe, appropriate clothing for weather and immersion.

**COURSE DURATION:** 1 Day (6-8 hours)

**LOCATION/VENUE:** This class is taught on flat water, protected from wind, waves and out side boat traffic.

**INSTRUCTOR:** ACA Introduction to Canoeing - Tandem Instructor or higher

**PARTICIPANT/INSTRUCTOR RATIO:** 6:1 With a qualified assistant the ratio can be 12 participants

**SUCCESSIVE COURSES:** Essentials of Canoeing, Essentials of Canoe Touring, Moving Water or Freestyle.



## Introduction to Canoeing - Tandem Course Outline (Level 1)

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

### COURSE OUTLINE

#### 1) Introduction and Expectations

(30 minutes)

- Enrollment/registration/liability
- Welcome and Introductions
- Student and Instructor expectations
- Course Itinerary and sight logistics
- No alcohol/dangerous drugs
- Proper etiquette on and off the water
- Respect private property, litter, noise and Leave No Trace

#### 2) On Shore Presentations

( 60 minutes)

- Personal clothing, wetsuits and gear
- PFD's,
- Safety equipment
- Basic boat design, building material and canoe terminology
- Paddle types and parts
- Correct hand placement/relaxed grip
- Proper warm up techniques and stretching

#### 3) LAUNCHING and LANDING

(30 minutes)

- Carrying the canoe to and from the water
- Entry/exit from the shore or dock
- Boat stability, "boat wiggle"
- Allow student to get comfortable in the boat

#### 4) RESCUES and EMPTYING

(60 minutes)

- Responsibility of the group
- Responsibility of the individual
- Responsibility of the rescuer

- Responsibility of the victim
- Water comfort and confidence
- Controlled capsizes
- Deep water exit – vaulting/slide, no diving
- Swim the boat to shore (short distance)
- Emptying a canoe
- Canoe over Canoe Rescue
- Side-by-Side Rescue
- Use of sling
- Towing a swimmer
- Towing a canoe

#### 5) BASIC STROKES and MANUEVERS

(120 minutes)

- Concepts of paddling
  - Basic Terminology – on side/offside etc.
  - Types of strokes – Power, turning, bracing
  - Parts of strokes- Catch, propulsion, recover (CPR)
  - Linkage, rotations, arms as struts, safe and effective body usage.
  - Paddler's Box
  - Paddling in unison, on opposite sides, vertical paddles

Strokes:

Bow

stroke)

- Forward (Basic forward

- Back
- Draw
- Bow Draw
- Cross Bow Draw
- Forward Sweep

- Push Away
  - Pry
  - Sweeps
- Stern  
stroke)
- Forward (Basic forward
  - Back
  - Stern Draw
  - Stern Pry
  - Rudder
  - J Stroke
  - Push Away
  - Pry
  - Sweeps

**Maneuvers:**

- Paddle in a straight line efficiently
- Stop in a short distance efficiently
- Spin the boat in place
- Move the boat to one side without going forward (abeam)
- Do gradual, wide turns

**6) SAFETY**

(60 minutes – can be given during lunch)

- Emergency and Group signals
- Staying together (i.e. lead/sweep, triangle)
- What to do in an emergency
- Dealing with boat traffic

**7) CONCLUSION and WRAPUP**

(45 minutes)

- Loading boats showing proper tie-down technique
- Reinforce paddling in a group
- Explain what is next in the learning progression
- Individual feedback
- Group debriefing
- Course evaluations

**American Canoe Association**  
**Introduction to Canoeing – Tandem (Level 1)**  
**Skills Checklist**

After completing the Introduction to Tandem Canoeing Course, the participant should know or be able to demonstrate:

- Carry a canoe, solo, two person and 4 person
- Load a canoe on a car and tie it down with cam straps and safety lines
- Identify typical boat designs and building materials and the advantages and disadvantages of each
- Identify the parts of a canoe – seats, gunnels, bow, stern, chine, rocker, hull, thwarts, carry yoke
- Properly fit and properly wear a PFD
- Properly warm up with appropriate stretching exercises
- Launch a canoe for a dock or shore, both parallel to the shore and “end on the shore” method
- Demonstrate how to hold a paddle
- Identify the parts of a paddle – grip, shaft, throat, blade, power face and back face
- Explain the concepts of paddling – vertical paddles, paddling in unison, nose over tailbone,
- Demonstrate how to trim a boat
- Demonstrate how to swim a boat a short distance to shore, full of water, up right and up side down
- Demonstrate how to empty a boat alone and with a partner
- Demonstrate how to tow a boat a short distance
- Demonstrate how to tow a swimmer on a stern line, on the bow and on the stern
- Demonstrate how to do a canoe over canoe rescue
- Demonstrate how to do a side by side canoe rescue
- Demonstrate how to use a sling, on a paddle, on a thwart
- Demonstrate the signals for – help, OK, heads up, come ahead, stop (hand, whistle and paddle)
- Paddle in a straight line for a 100 yards (a football field), in unison, vertical paddles.
- Stop in a straight line in one boat length
- Perform a wide turn while maintaining hull speed, paddling in unison, vertical paddles.
- Spin the boat while sitting in one spot (spin)
- Move the boat sideways (abeam)
- Explain how to dress for trip
- Explain the Rules of the Navigable Road
- Explain the concepts of Leave No Trace as they apply to paddling canoes
- Explain Paddling Ethics
- Explain the terms Hypothermia/Hyperthermia and how they relate to paddling and how they can be prevented and treated
- Explain the importance of Wind and Waves and what to do about them while paddling a canoe
- Explain the need for CPR and First Aid training