



Overview of the Approach and Concepts for ACA Canoeing Courses and Instructor Certifications

The canoeing curriculum of the American Canoe Association is organized into a series of distinct, well defined stages or levels of progression, each with its own measurable objectives. This program of instruction is based on three supporting assumptions:

1. Participants at the introductory or first level of entry do not need any prior knowledge or experience in canoeing.
2. Each student who successfully completes the objectives of any given level will have acquired the knowledge and skills that pertain to that level. This may be achieved in a single class or may require additional training and instruction. The final objective of each level of instruction is the acquisition of skills, not simply an exposure to them.
3. Admission to the next level of training must be preceded by successful completion of the course at the previous level. As an alternative, a candidate may satisfactorily demonstrate the skills and knowledge from the previous course as a prerequisite to the next level of training.

Other important aspects of this curriculum include:

- Levels of progression with prerequisites for each level.
- Clear descriptions of each level including definable goals and objectives
- A skills check list for each level
- An instructor guide for each level
- An instructor certification course outline for each level of certification with accompanying prerequisites, goals and objectives and skills check list.

As a student progresses through the different levels of instruction, recurring subjects are covered in greater depth with each successive course. For instance, the instructional outlines commonly include the topics of Parts of the Canoe, Parts of the Paddle, Concepts of Biomechanics, Forward Stroke, etc. It may appear that the same information for each topic is covered to the same degree in each course. However, as in school where there are recurring subjects such as language, math and history, the content of recurring topics in the canoeing curriculum is not only different but builds on the prior courses as new information and skills are added. For example at the entry level, an instructor may only teach two or three parts of the canoe, a few parts of the paddle and a couple of basic concepts of paddling. At the next level, these concepts and information would be reviewed and additional information given on these topics such as all the parts of the paddle, more parts of the canoe, and additional concepts of paddling. The new Instructors Guide will provide helpful direction in this regard.

The course outlines cover **all** the material for each level. They include all of the objectives and a check list of skills that are required to pass each course. Instructors may choose to customize the outline by breaking it up into several

outlines, modules or courses to fit the needs of their location, market and students. For example, a Moving Water Instructor may choose to offer a three-day course. On Day 1, material from Level I, Introduction to Canoeing, would be presented followed on Days 2 and 3 with the materials from Levels 2 and 3. At the conclusion of the third day, the student should have the skills and knowledge to pass the Level 3 Skills Check List. Alternatively, the instructor may choose to take 4-5 days to cover the same material. Another option would be to give the students just enough information and skills so they could be chaperoned down a moving water river (including Class I). Students in this last example would not have all the skills or knowledge to pass the Level 3 Skills Check List or go on to a White Water Course. Instructors can adapt the course materials in many different ways but they must always stay within the scope of their certification. However the course is delivered, the student must be able to pass the course skills check list prior to going on to the next level.



Canoe Instructor Certification Overview

ACA Instructor Certification is characterized by quality and safety. To maintain this standard, all instructors must have demonstration quality paddling skills, in depth knowledge of canoeing, group management skills and a reserve of rescue skills.

Some subject areas are common to all certifications and are presented the same for all courses. Examples are:

- History of the ACA and the ACA today
- How to fill out paper work
- Insurance information
- General organizational flow the ACA (SEIC, Home Office, BOD etc.)

However, some common subjects are covered in varying degrees of depth and require that instructors know each topics to the level needed for the course for which they wish to become certified. Examples are:

- Wearing a PFD
- Etiquette
- What to do in event of a capsized
- What to do in event of an emergency
- Leave No Trace

Level 1 - Introduction to Canoeing Instructor Certification-Solo or Tandem is the most important and sought after certification in the ACA canoeing curriculum. As the entry level for most instructors, it has greatest demand in the canoeing discipline and affects the largest number of people. With this instructor certification, a qualified paddler can teach the Introduction to Canoe and Quick Start type outlines. This is the backbone of canoeing. This is a two-day certification for tandem and a two-day for solo. If tandem and solo are combined, it is a 2 ½-day certification. (Minimum)

Level 2 - Essentials of Canoeing Instructor Certification-Solo or Tandem takes paddle and boat control to the next skill level. The Essentials of Canoeing Instructor can teach the more advanced strokes and maneuvers as well as boat heeling and boat control. Essentials of Canoeing lays the foundation for the other courses that follow whether they be Freestyle or White Water. An ACA Essentials of Canoeing Instructor is one that possesses a depth of knowledge of boat design, materials, safety, group management as well as the finer skills of paddling. This is a three-day certification for tandem and a three day for solo. If tandem and solo are combined, it is a 3 1/2 day certification. (Minimum)

Level 3 - Moving Water Canoeing Instructor Certification-Solo and Tandem takes flatwater canoeing skills and applies them to the moving river up to Class I. For safety reasons, a Moving Water Instructor must be comfortable and confident on Class II whitewater, even though Moving Water Canoeing courses will be held on Class I and below. This is a four day certification for tandem and four days for solo. If tandem and solo are combined it is a 4 ½-day certification. (Minimum)

Level 4 - Whitewater Canoeing Instructor Certification-Solo and Tandem builds on the skills acquired in Moving Water Canoeing Instructor Certification and uses them on Class II rivers. For safety reasons, instructors at

this level must be able to demonstrate their ability to paddle effectively on Class III rivers, even though their classes will be held on Class II and below. This is a five day certification for tandem and five days for solo. If tandem and solo are combined it is a 5 ½-day certification. (Minimum)

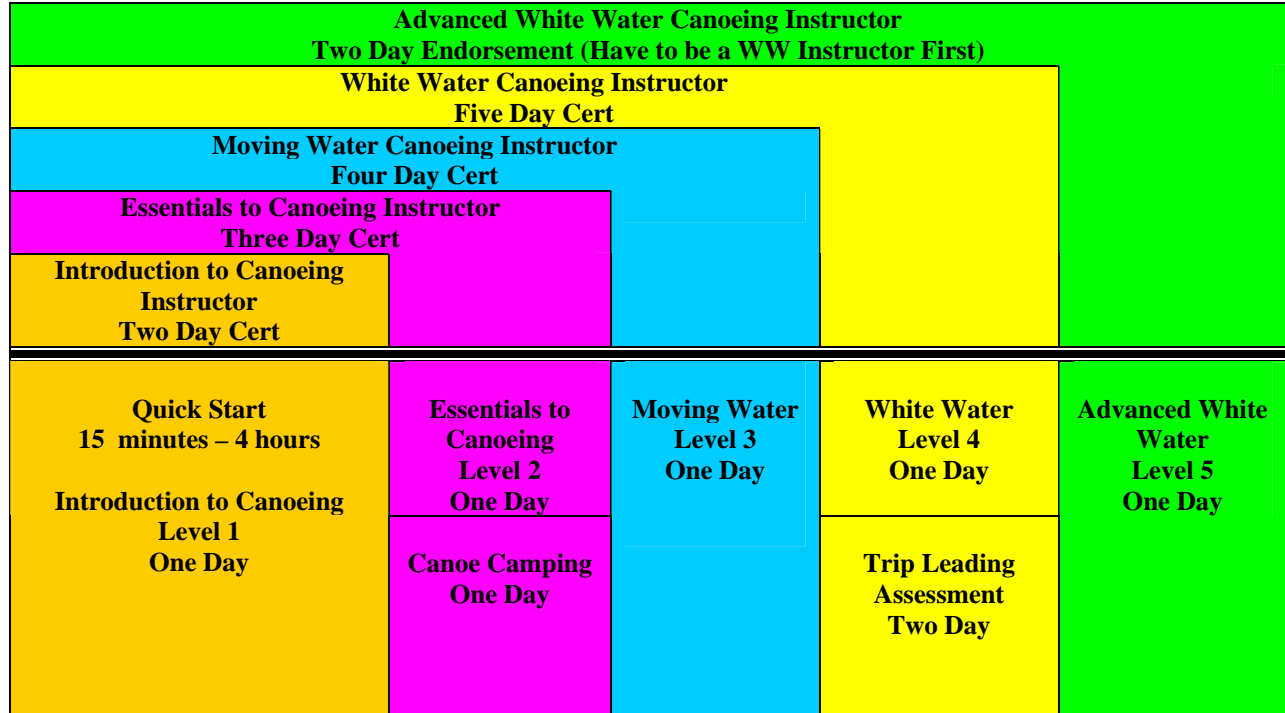
Level 5 - Advanced Whitewater Instructor Certification-Solo and Tandem is reserved for those instructors with sufficient knowledge and skills to comfortably paddle on Class III and III+ rivers. The instructors, for safety reasons, should be able to paddle proficiently on Class III+ and IV, even though their classes will be held on Class III+ and below. This is a 2-day certification. The prerequisites for this instructor certification include two years of experience as a White Water Instructor, experience in teaching at least two Whitewater Canoeing Courses and successful completion of the ACA Swift Water Rescue Course.

IDW/ICE Program Overview for Canoe

Certification	Total Duration IDW/ICE	IDW	ICE	Prerequisite	ICE Venue	Course Venue
Level 1 Introduction to Canoeing Instructor	2 Days 16 hours	1 Day	1 Day	Introduction to Canoeing Course or Equivalent Skills (Level 1 Skills Check List)	Protected flatwater	Protected flatwater
Level 2 Essentials of Canoeing Instructor	3 Days 24 hours	2 Days	1 Day	Essentials to Canoeing Course or Equivalent Skills (Level 2 Skills Check List)	Protected placid water	Protected placid water
Level 3 Moving Water Canoeing Instructor	4 Days 32 hours	3 Days	1 Day	Moving Water Canoeing Course or Equivalent Skills (Level 3 Skills Check List)	Class II	Class I
Level 4 Whitewater Canoeing Instructor	5 Days 40 hours	3 Days	2 Days	Whitewater Canoeing Course or Equivalent Skills (Level 4 Skills Check List)	Class III	Class II
Level 5 Advance Whitewater Canoe Instructor	2 Days 16 hours	There is not split in the IDW/ICE- done as one unit		Two years experience as Whitewater Instructor	Class III+	Class III
Trip Leading Assessment	2 Days 16 hours	There is not split in the IDW/ICE- done as one unit		Moving Water Skills (Level 3 Skills Check List)	Class II	Class I
Canoe Rolling	6-8 hours	This is an endorsement		Canoeing Instructor at any level	n/a	n/a

Note: The ICE venue indicates the level at which the Instructor candidate must be able to paddle with grace and control. The majority of the ICE course will be facilitated at the course venue level.

Flow Chart of Courses and Level of Instructor Certification Quick Start to Advance White Water in Canoeing



The public offerings are **under** the heavy black line. The Instructor Certifications are **above** the heavy dark line.

The Instructor can teach any course that is **under** their heading, no matter the color. The Flat Water Instructor could teach the Quick Start to Canoeing, Intro to Canoeing, Advance Flat Water and Canoe Camping. They could not teach the Moving Water. It is outside there area.

This flow allows us to have a two day certification that would give us an Intro Instructor that could teach to the largest need.

The Canoe Instructor would be certified in either Tandem Canoe or Solo Canoe at each of the levels or they can be certified in both.

**River Canoe
Instructor and IT Cross Over
from Old System to New**

For **Instructors** already certified, their certification will cross over as follows:

Old Certification	New Certification
Introduction to Canoeing Instructor	Introduction to Canoeing Instructor
Essentials of River Canoeing Instructor*	Moving Water Canoeing Instructor
Basic River (Moving Water) Canoe Instructor	Moving Water Canoeing Instructor
White Water Canoe Instructor	White Water Canoeing Instructor
Advanced White Water Canoe Instructor	Advanced White Water Canoeing Instructor

*Note- Any Essentials Instructor will become a Moving Water Instructor until their next update. At which time they will be recertified at the level they are able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge.

For **Instructor Trainers and ITEs** already certified, their certification will cross over as follows:

Old Certification	New Certification
Introduction to Canoeing Instructor Trainer	Introduction to Canoeing Instructor Trainer
Essentials of Canoe Instructor Trainer*	Essentials of Canoeing Instructor Trainer
Basic to Canoe or Moving Water Instructor Trainer	Moving Water Canoeing Instructor Trainer
White Water Instructor Trainer	White Water Canoeing Instructor Trainer
Advanced White Water Instructor Trainer	Advanced White Water Canoeing Instructor Trainer

* Essentials to River Canoe Instructor Trainers and ITE can become Moving Water IT or ITE by being checked off on Class II and demonstrate the skills on the new outline, by an ITE in Basic River / Moving Water Canoe or higher or on an individual bases and approved by the standards committee.