



Level 1: Introduction to Kayaking

Skills Assessment

Assessment Overview: This ACA Assessment Course is designed to evaluate a participant's ability to perform all of the skills listed along with demonstrating an appropriate level of knowledge. This assessment course provides the participant with the opportunity to receive documentation of having achieved a certain level of paddling ability.

Essential Eligibility Criteria: In order to participate in an ACA Skills Assessment Course, each participant must satisfy the following essential eligibility criteria:

- Be able to independently participate in all individual skills and activities listed in the course outline while also maintaining an appropriate and safe body position
- Be able to hold their breath while under water and, while in the water wearing a properly fitted lifejacket, be able to independently turn from a face down to a face up position keeping their head above water
- Be able to effectively communicate with the instructor and other course participants
- Be able to manage all personal care independently, or with the assistance of a companion
- Be able to manage all personal mobility independently, or with the assistance of a companion

Course Prerequisites: Must be an ACA Member

Course Duration: 1 day

Course Location / Venue: Calm, flat water, protected from wind, waves and outside boat traffic, with no apparent current and within swimming distance of shore.

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

Assessor: Level 1: Introduction to Kayaking Instructor (or higher)

Succeeding courses:

Level 2: Coastal Kayaking Skills Assessment
Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Skills Assessment
Level 4: Coastal Kayaking Skills Assessment
Coastal Kayak Day-Trip Leading Assessment
River Kayaking Day-Trip Leading Assessment

Level 2: River Kayaking Skills Assessment
Level 3: River Kayaking Skills Assessment
Level 4: River Kayaking Skills Assessment
Level 5: River Kayaking Skills Assessment

The sequence of assessment should be adjusted to best fit the participant's needs, class location and time allowance.

Introduction, Expectations, & Logistics:

- Welcome, introductions, paperwork
- Student & instructor course expectations and limitations
- Explain assessment procedure
- Course itinerary & site logistics
- Review waiver, assumption of risk,
- challenge by choice, medical disclosure
- About the ACA
- PFD policy (always wear on water)
- Appropriate personal behavior
- No alcohol / substance abuse
- Proper etiquette on & off the water



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- Respect private property
- Practice Leave No Trace ethics

Conclusion & Wrap Up:

- Group debrief / Individual feedback
- Course limitations
- Importance of First Aid & CPR
- Importance of additional instruction, practice, experience
- Importance of appropriate level of safety &

- rescue training
- Life sport / Paddling options
- Local paddling groups / Clubs
- Handouts / Reference materials
- ACA Membership forms
- Course evaluation
- Assessment cards (if applicable)



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Participant: _____ **ACA #** _____ **Date:** _____

Location and venue: _____

Rating: ✓ - *Passing* N - *Needs more practice.*

Participant must be able to perform all strokes, maneuvers, rescues and skills in the appropriate venue. In addition, the participant must demonstrate the appropriate level of knowledge for this skill assessment level.

| STROKES & MANEUVERS | P / N | COMMENTS |
|---|-------|----------|
| Lifting & Carrying: Good, safe technique | | |
| Launching: Low dock or bank for entering boat in a safe manner | | |
| Efficient Forward Paddling: 50 yards in a reasonably straight line | | |
| Stop: Stop the kayak from a good speed, forward and reverse | | |
| Reverse: 10 yard paddle with reasonable control | | |
| Rotate 360° on the spot using forward & reverse sweeps | | |
| Turning on the move: sweep strokes while underway | | |
| Figure of 8: paddle a figure of 8 course using a variety of strokes | | |
| Landing: return to dock / shore and exit boat in a safe manner | | |
| Draw sideways: Move the boat sideways 10 feet (both sides) | | |
| Ruddering | | |
| Preventing capsizes: Low brace | | |
| Kayak Tripping: experience paddling at least a short duration (1 hr) and distance (1 mi) day trip | | |

| RESCUE/SAFETY | P / N | COMMENTS |
|--|-------|----------|
| Wet-exit | | |
| Boat over boat rescue and reentry | | |
| Scoop Rescue | | |
| Swim Rescue: swim self and boat to shore for 50 feet | | |
| Bulldoze boat to shore | | |



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| TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE | P / N | COMMENTS |
|---|-------|----------|
| Equipment: working knowledge of paddling equipment | | |
| Safety: understand the dangers of kayaking and how to avoid trouble | | |
| Cold Water Shock | | |
| Hypo /Hyperthermia | | |
| Environmental Issues | | |
| Trip Planning | | |
| Group Awareness | | |
| Securing boats to rack | | |

| FINAL ASSESSMENT | | COMMENTS |
|--|-----------------|----------|
| PASS | NEEDS MORE WORK | |
| ASSESSOR | | |
| <i>Assessor must be a currently certified ACA Instructor at or above this level.</i> | | |
| IT or Instructor: _____ | | |
| Signature: _____ | | |
| ACA #: _____ Date: _____ | | |
| Assisting IT or Instructor: _____ | | |
| ACA #: _____ | | |