



## AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION QuickStart Your Kayak

### Course Overview:

This workshop is a brief introduction to paddling a kayak. Students are presented with basic information on dressing to paddle safely and potential hazards and simple rescues. A minimal paddle skill set is presented and practiced, allowing students to safely and comfortably maneuver on still water.

### Course Objectives:

To make available a short program emphasizing safety, enjoyment and skill acquisition for entry level paddlers

**Course Duration:** Three hours or more at Instructor's discretion

**Loaction:** Quietwater

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

**Successive Courses:** Intro to Kayak, Essentials of Kayak Touring, Essentials of River Kayak

The following is a summary of course content for the Quickstart Paddling program. The content and sequence of instruction should be arranged to best fit the students' needs, classroom location and time allowances.

### Introduction & Logistics (10 minutes)

- Welcome
- Introduction of instructors and participants
- Course overview with expectations and limitations, and time frame
- Waiver, assumption of risk, and medical form
- PFD policy (wear at all times on water)
- Site specifics: sequence, regrouping, toilet facilities, and alternate possibilities

### Personal Preparation (5 minutes)

Personal Behavior:

- No alcohol/ substance abuse

- Private property rights
- Litter
- Etiquette (at put-in & take-out, on water, noise)

Personal Skills:

- Swimming ability (identify non-swimmers in class)
- Physical fitness and warm ups (see handout)
- Paddling and boat handling
- Safety and rescue
- (Optional) first aid and CPR
- Personal Equipment

### Safety & Rescue (40 minutes)

- Life jackets (PFD): types, materials, correct fit
- Possible Hazards:
  - Current
  - Strainers
  - 3 W's- wind, waves, weather
- Hypothermia-Help & Huddle, appropriate clothing
- Hyperthermia-hydrate often and early, appropriate clothing
- Rescue:
  - Rescue Sequence: RETHROG
  - Rescue Priorities: people, boats, gear
- Demonstrate or Discuss:
  - Water confidence and comfort test
  - Effective rescue techniques

### Equipment (15 minutes)

- Kayak: types, parts, materials
- Paddles: types, parts, hand positions, sizing

**Getting Started** (30 minutes)

- Car Topping: racks, tie downs, loading and unloading
- Kayak Carries
- Launching: from land or docks
- Trim
- Positions of paddle and posture
- Terminology: onside, offside, etc.

**Maneuvers** (1 hour 45 minutes)

- Forward: Hull moves forward in a straight line.
- Forward Stopping: boat stops within a reasonable distance.
- Spin: (onside & offside) Hull pivots from standstill.
- Turn: Hull turns while underway
- Abeam: Hull moves sideways from standstill

**Conclusion / Wrap-up** (15 minutes)

- Course Review
- Course Limitations (not advanced)
- Need for further instructions, practice, and experience
- ACA membership/participation cards
- Local paddle clubs or groups

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