



AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION Introduction to Kayak

Course Overview:

The Introduction to Kayak Course is designed as a short program emphasizing safety, enjoyment and skill acquisition for entry level individuals in the public, private and commercial setting.

* This course is appropriate for all kayak craft, including traditional decked kayaks, inflatables and sit on tops. It is assumed the boats will be paddled solo. The instructor may want to limit this program to one type of craft but should announce this prior to the start of the course.

Prerequisite: None

Course Duration: 6 to 8 hours

Location: Flatwater

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

Successive Courses: Essentials of Kayak Touring, Essentials of River Kayaking

The following is a general summary of course content for Introduction to Kayaking. The content and sequence of instruction should be arranged to best fit the students' needs, class location and time allowances.

Introduction & Logistics

- Welcome
- Introduction of instructors and participants
- Logistics: Overview of the course with expectations and limitations. Sequence, class times, regrouping, alternate plans.
- Site specifics/procedures, including toilet facilities
- Waiver/Assumption of Risk/Medical Form
- Life Jackets (PFD) usage (wear at all times while on the water)
- Regulations: Life jackets (PFDs), other equipment, litter, access, private property, etc.
- Alcohol/Chemical Substance abuse
- Signals

Equipment

- Personal Equipment:
- Kayak: types, parts, materials and flotation
- Paddle: types, parts, length and hand position
- Life jackets (PFDs): types, materials, fit and regulations Appropriate clothing: comfortable/protective
- Care of equipment
- Additional Personal and Group Equipment:
- Extra paddle, dry bags, maps, water, food, sponge, hat, eyeglass strap,

Safety

- 3 Ws - wind, waves & weather,
- Local Environment; tide, current, traffic, etc
- Hypothermia: discussion on HELP, HUDDLE brochure

whistle, foot protections, bug spray, sunscreen, first aid kit and location of equipment.

- Handout Optional.
- Instructor inspects any participant-owned gear

Getting Started

- Stretching and warm up to reduce injury
- Kayak carries
- Car Topping:
- Loading and unloading, racks, tie down
- Demo using straps or line and knots to secure craft to vehicle
- Launching/landing from land or docks
- Kayak Trim
- Posture, rocking and balance
- Basic Terminology
- Outfitting
- Land & water etiquette

Rescue

- Water confidence and comfort test
- Self Rescue - HELP/HUDDLE
- Rescue Sequence: Reach, Throw, Row & Go (RETHROG)
- Rescue Priorities: People, boats & gear
- Controlled capsize drills
- How to empty a kayak
- Hand paddling swamped kayak
- Demos: Kayak over Kayak rescues
- Deep water exits and re-entry

- All participants are to be asked to demonstrate a controlled capsize and an appropriate rescue.

Strokes

- Forward
- Back (stopping)
- Draw
- Sculling draw/brace
- Sweep (including Stern Draw)
- Reverse Sweep
- Rudder

Maneuvers

- Spin: boat pivots in place
- Abeam: boat moves sideways without headway
- Forward: boat goes forward in a reasonably straight line
- Stopping: boat stops within a reasonable distance

Conclusion / Wrap-up

- Wrap up
- Course limitations (not a river course)
- Need for further instruction, practice and experience
- Guidebooks and Videos
- Need for First Aid and CPR training
- Trip planning - 6P's: prior, proper planning prevents poor performance
- Lifesport/Paddling options
- Local paddling groups/clubs
- ACA Membership and Participation cards