



Level 4: Coastal 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 (EEC):

All water-based programming participants (including all paddlesport programs) must acknowledge the ability to perform the following EEC:

- Breathe independently (i.e. not require medical devices to sustain breathing)
- Independently maintain sealed airway passages while under water
- Independently hold head upright without head / neck support
- Manage personal care independently or with assistance of a companion
- Manage personal mobility independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance
- Follow instructions and effectively communicate independently or with the assistance of a companion

Paddlesports program participants must also acknowledge the ability to perform the following EEC:

- Independently turn from face-down to face-up and remain floating face-up while wearing a properly fitted life jacket
- Get in / out of a paddlecraft independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance
- Independently get out from under a capsized paddlecraft
- Reenter the paddlecraft following deep water capsize independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance
- Maintain a safe body position while attempting skills, activities, and rescues listed in the appropriate course outline, and have the ability to recognize and identify to others when such efforts would be unsafe given your personal situation

**To participate in an adaptive paddling program, a participant must meet only the first six EEC listed above. The adaptive paddling program will include teaching and practicing the last five EEC listed above.*

Course Prerequisites: Must be an ACA Member

Course Duration: 1 day

Course Location / Venue: Open water, wind to 11-16 knots, surf to 3 feet (1 Meter), current to 3 knots

Assessor: Level 4: Open Water Coastal Kayaking Instructor (or higher)

Class Ratio: 5 students : 1 Instructor; with an additional instructor or qualified assistant the ratio can be 10 : 2

Succeeding courses:

Coastal Kayak Day-Trip Leading Assessment

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



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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
- 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: 500 yards in a reasonably straight line		
Stop: Stop the kayak from a good speed, forward and reverse		
Reverse: efficient reverse paddling over a figure of 8 course with good boat control, using correct strokes and edging		
Rotate 360° on the spot using forward & reverse sweeps		
Edging / Boat Tilt: edging to assist turning in a circle. Forward & reverse		
Turning on the move: turn with minimum speed loss, initiate with a forward sweep <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low brace with onside tilt - High brace turn with onside tilt - Bow rudder with tilt 		
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 15 feet (both sides) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draw to hip - Sculling draw - Draw on the move (forward & rev) - Side-slip (forward & reverse) 		
Ruddering		
Preventing capsize: Low & High brace		
Negotiate Moderate Wind & Sea Conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paddling comfort in moderate seas - Ability to paddle in a head sea / beam sea / quartering sea / following sea - Ability to turn up and down wind efficiently - Ability to hold position 		
Negotiate Moderate Surf		



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Launch & land forward - Launch & land backward - Hold position - Surf, broach and side surf 		
Negotiate Moderate Current <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish ferry-angle (forward & reverse) - Control peeling out / eddy turns 		
Kayak Tripping: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Day Trips: show evidence of at least three or more day-trips of at least 12-15 nautical miles in various conditions - Multi-Day Trips: Show evidence of at least one multi-day journey involving overnight camping 		

RESCUE/SAFETY	P / N	COMMENTS
Wet-exit w/ sprayskirt		
Self-Rescue: using technique such as re-enter & roll / paddlefloat re-entry / cowboy - scramble		
Boat over Boat rescue & deep water re-entry		
Towing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solo - Assisted 		
Contact rescues: tow / push another kayaker without the use of a towline		
Swimmer Rescue: Stern toggle tow / bow push / back-deck		
Bow, Stern & Paddle Recovery		
Kayak Roll		
Re-enter & Roll		
Leadership		

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		
Group Leadership		



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Marine Environment: effects of wind, tide, land masses and current		
Knots: bowline / figure 8 / clove hitch / round turn / two-half-hitches / trucker's hitch		
Repairs in the Field		
Packing / Trimming of the boat		
Navigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Charts - Compass use 		
Rescue Aides <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visual - Auditory 		
Nautical Rules of the Road		
Securing boats to rack		

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