



Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Trip Leader (CKTL) Assessment Course

Purpose: The purpose of the Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Trip Leader (L3: CKTL) assessment is to prepare individuals who intend to lead other paddlers, either recreationally or professionally, in coastal environments. The emphasis of the assessment is on leadership and group management. Successful completion of the assessment will provide evidence of the participant's technical skills and confirm their knowledge, understanding and ability to plan and implement trips appropriate for a group's abilities, in environments up to and including L3: CKTL conditions.

Assessment Overview: For successful completion of The L3: CKTL assessment an individual must demonstrate technical proficiency, trip planning, group management and leadership skills in the L3: CKTL venue. While this is not a teaching award, an L3: CKTL must also be able to provide basic tips to paddlers, as appropriate, to help them through the environment.

Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC):

ACA courses are open to all individuals who acknowledge the ability to perform the following essential eligibility criteria.

1. Breathe independently (i.e., not require medical devices to sustain breathing)
2. Independently maintain sealed airway passages while under water
3. Independently hold head upright without neck / head support
4. Manage personal care independently or with assistance of a companion
5. Manage personal mobility independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance
6. Follow instructions and effectively communicate independently or with assistance of a companion
7. Independently turn from face-down to face-up and remain floating face up while wearing a properly fitted life jacket*
8. Get in / out of a paddlecraft independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*
9. Independently get out and from under a capsized paddlecraft*
10. Reenter the paddlecraft following deep water capsize independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*
11. 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 adaptive programs, participants must acknowledge only the first six EEC listed above. Entry-level adaptive programs will involve teaching and practicing EEC #7-11.*

Prerequisites for Assessment:

- Be 18 years or older
- Be a current ACA member in good standing
- Complete a Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Trip Leader Training Course
- Provide a summary of previous trip experience including leadership roles



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Course Location / Venue: Lakes or coastal waters with potential areas of exposure to mild wind and wave conditions, with constant access to safe landing and within 1.5 nm from shore:

- 10 - 15 knot winds
- 1 - 2 foot waves (chop) (0.3 – 0.6 meters)
- 1 - 2 foot surf (0.3 – 0.6 meters)
- 1 - 2 knots of current

At least 3 of the above conditions must be present during some part of the assessment

Course Duration: A minimum of 2 days

Assessor:

- Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Instructor Trainer (or higher), or
- Level 4: Coastal Kayaking Instructor with the L3: Coastal Kayaking Trip Leader (CKTL) Endorsement, or
- Level 5: Advanced Open Water Coastal Kayaking Instructor

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

Succeeding courses: Level 4: Open Water Coastal Kayaking Skills Assessment

Equipment: Participants shall possess all the equipment appropriate for a trip leader in L3: CKTL conditions, and demonstrate the judgement to carry equipment that is appropriate and responsive to various venues, climates, trip durations, and group characteristics. Participants' gear selections shall cover the following categories:

- Kayak (single sit-on-top or sit-inside, or tandem sit-on-top or sit-inside with fixed flotation sufficient to allow deep-water self-rescue) and personal equipment appropriate for coastal paddling. If sit-on-top kayaks are used, at least some of the kayaks in the course must be sit-inside to allow demonstration of skills and knowledge of both types of boats. If tandem kayaks are used, at least some of the kayaks in the course must be singles to allow demonstration of skills and knowledge in both types of boats.
- Safety and emergency
- Signaling and communications
- First aid and equipment repair kits
- Navigation

Participants shall be able to explain why they selected/omitted certain items, for a particular venue. Participants may borrow equipment for assessment.

Skills: The following list of criteria are to be used in the assessment of L3: CKTL participants. The time spent on each skill and the sequence of evaluation should be adjusted to fit the participant's needs, class location, and time allowance with an emphasis on the application of each skill in a leadership context.



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Maneuvering: Participants shall demonstrate safe, effective and efficient maneuvering in L3: CKTL conditions. The focus of the assessment will be on desired results rather than on specific technique. The skills shall include:

- Forward and reverse paddling
- Turning with forward and reverse momentum
- Static turns and 360° rotation with forward and reverse strokes
- Sideways movement – static and with forward momentum
- Preventing capsizes with braces and sculling for support

Note: The assessment context shall include maneuvering for towing, quickly attaining the bow of a capsized boat, paddling on edge to maintain directional stability, using support strokes to prevent capsizes, reverse paddling to assist in rescue rather than turning, or similar practical applications of personal skills.

Rescues and Tows: Participants shall be able to perform a variety of assisted rescues and self-rescues, as well as tows, in L3: CKTL conditions, to include:

For sit inside kayaks, the following skills:

- T-rescue
- Scoop rescue
- Roll

If sit-on-top kayaks are available, the following optional skills:

- Side by side with stabilization assisted rescue
- Cross kayak PFD grab assisted rescue

For both sit inside and sit-on-top kayaks, the following skills:

- Unresponsive paddler, e.g. Hand-of-God
- Stirrup rescue
- Efficient self-rescue from a swimming start
- Swimmer carries (bow, stern, and back deck)
- Contact tow (forward and reverse)
- Tow – single boat and multiple boat inline
- Rafted tow

The assessor shall evaluate the participant's situational awareness and ability to maintain group control during the performance of rescues and towing exercises. A variety of touring, sit-on-top and tandem kayaks may be used at the assessor's discretion.

Technical: Participants shall demonstrate the following technical skills:

- Navigation – Participants shall demonstrate a knowledge of chart symbols, distance measurement, bearings, variation and transits. While on the water, participants shall be able to determine a position using bearings and/or transits, navigate using shoreline features, buoys and other visible references, and maintain a course using a compass heading, transits and time.



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- Basic boat repair – Participants shall demonstrate basic field repair/management of either a small hole, compromised/missing hatch cover or a damaged skeg/rudder. At the assessor's discretion, the repair may occur on the water.

Leadership: Leadership ability shall be assessed during a journey where each candidate is given the opportunity to make appropriate decisions, cognizant of conditions and the current performance capability of the group. Individual legs shall be debriefed to assess an understanding of leadership principles and to reveal the participant's decision-making process. Participants shall show leadership appropriate to the circumstances, the risk at hand, the individuals being led, and the environmental challenges encountered.

- Group abilities – Participants shall demonstrate the ability to assess individual and group performance capabilities (e.g. skills, experience, judgement, fitness, boats and equipment) and set goals appropriately.
- Environmental awareness – Participants shall demonstrate the ability to assess conditions based on weather forecasts, observed wind, tidal current and sea state. Participants shall also identify protected areas, potential hazards, early exit options, remoteness and rescue resources. Based on these observations, participants shall plan an appropriate journey and adapt their plan as conditions change.
- Group awareness – Participants shall demonstrate group awareness throughout a trip to include assessing a group's energy levels, hydration, confidence in conditions and readiness for upcoming challenges, and adjust their trip plans accordingly.
- Group management – Participants shall demonstrate group management and control appropriate to the conditions, environment and group readiness (e.g. spacing, pacing, formation and supporting roles) to include setting clear parameters and establishing emergency procedures.
- Risk assessment, incident avoidance and management – Participants shall demonstrate on-going risk assessment relative to the readiness of the group, implement proactive strategies to avoid potential incidents, and manage incidents effectively if they do occur.
- Communication – Participants shall demonstrate the use of effective and ongoing communication to manage the group, share plans, assess paddlers, adapt to environmental limitations (e.g. wind or swell) and proactively prepare for potential emergencies.
- Positioning – Participants are expected to use various positions as appropriate to the situation, environment and potential consequences. Leader positioning shall reflect an awareness of potential hazards, the need to maintain a line of sight, and preparedness to manage potential rescues/incidents.
- Launching and landing – Participants must demonstrate proficiency launching and landing themselves and a group in L3: CKTL conditions, including planning, communication and positioning to maintain group control.



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Knowledge: The topics and concepts below provide a framework of knowledge necessary for trip planning, implementation, and leadership. All will be covered and assessed in the context of the L3: CKTL environment and conditions. A candidate's knowledge can be assessed using a variety of methods which may include observation, self-assessment, feedback, written assessment, questioning, and pre-assigned and/or ad hoc presentations.

- Weather – Participants shall be familiar with the terminology typically found in marine forecasts and know multiple means of accessing appropriate forecasts. Participants shall possess basic field forecasting skills, such as recognition of cumulonimbus clouds and the factors that can produce fog.
- Tides and currents – Participants shall be familiar with tidal terms, timing, forecasts and rules for determining tide height, current speed and drift.
- Conditions – Participants shall be familiar with the terminology found in surf and sea state forecasts, know multiple sources for obtaining forecasts, know the upper limits of the L3: CKTL environment, and understand the importance of keeping their trips within those parameters.
- Trip planning – As a tabletop exercise, participants shall prepare a trip plan that demonstrates an understanding of chart data, simple course plots, weather, tides, currents, and group abilities.
- Communication and signaling – Participants shall demonstrate knowledge of communication and signaling tools and their appropriate use, including VHF radios, emergency signals, paddle and hand signals.
- Rules of the road – Participants shall understand the hazards posed by other boat traffic, know USCG night lighting requirements and basic rules of the road as they pertain to kayakers.
- Leave No Trace (LNT) skills and ethics – Participants shall have a general understanding of LNT best practices and follow LNT principles and practices at all times.
- Prevention and management of hypothermia and hyperthermia – Participants shall have knowledge of symptoms, prevention, and management of hypothermia and hyperthermia.



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

Location and venue: _____

Rating: ✓ = Passing N = Needs more practice

<i>Maneuvering</i>	P/N	Comments
Forward and reverse paddling		
Turning with forward and reverse momentum		
Static turns and 360° rotation with forward and reverse strokes		
Sideways movement – static and with forward momentum		
Preventing capsize with braces and sculling for support		

<i>Rescues and Towing</i>	P/N	Comments
T-rescue		
Scoop rescue		
Roll—demonstrate ability to roll within 3 consecutive attempts		
Side by side with stabilization (if sit-on-top)		
Cross kayak PFD grab (if sit-on-top)		
Unresponsive paddler, e.g. Hand-of-God		
Stirrup rescue		
Efficient self-rescue from a swimming start		



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<i>Rescues and Towing (continued)</i>	P/N	Comments
Swimmer carries (bow, stern and back deck)		
Contact tow (forward and reverse)		
Tow – single boat and multiple boat inline		
Rafted tow		

<i>Technical</i>	P/N	Comments
Navigation		
Basic boat repair		

<i>Leadership</i>	P/N	Comments
Group abilities		
Environmental awareness		
Group awareness		
Group management		
Risk assessment, incident avoidance, and management		
Communication		
Positioning		
Launching and landing		



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<i>Knowledge</i>	P/N	Comments
Weather		
Tides and currents		
Conditions		
Trip planning		
Communications and signaling		
Rules of the road		
Leave No Trace (LNT)		
Prevention and management of hypothermia and hyperthermia		



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FINAL ASSESSMENT		COMMENTS
PASS	NEEDS MORE WORK	
ASSESSOR		
Assessor: _____		
Signature: _____		
ACA #: _____ Date: _____		
Assisting: _____		
ACA #: _____		