



# Level 1: Introduction to Packrafting

## Skills Assessment

### Course Overview:

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.

### Course Prerequisites:

- All participants must acknowledge personal compliance with the [ACA Essential Eligibility Criteria \(EEC\)](#)
- Be a current ACA Member

**Course Duration:** 1 day (8 hours)

**Course Location / Accessible Venues:** Flat water, protected from waves and outside boat traffic, with current less than 1 knot, wind less than 10 knots, and within swimming distance of shore.

**Course Ratios:** 5 Participants : 1 Instructor; with an additional instructor or qualified assistant the ratio can be 10 : 2.

**Assessor:** ACA Level 1: Introduction to Packrafting Instructor (or higher)

### Succeeding courses:

- Level 2: Essentials of River Packrafting Assessment
- Level 3: River Packrafting Assessment

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

### 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



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### 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

**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. For the full rubric on Level 1 maneuvers, see the [National On Water Standards for Human Powered Craft](#), pages 17-65.

PREPARING TO DEPART	P / N	COMMENTS
Use proper techniques to safely carry both inflated and deflated packrafts		
Best practices for storing, packing, inflating, tempering, deflating and transporting a packraft		
Obtain (recite), weather conditions, forecasts, and evaluate hazards to navigation and other environmental factors		
Put on a life jacket appropriate for the operator's size, craft, and activity; confirm all others in the group are properly wearing their life jacket		
Inspect the packraft and all safety equipment to meet state, federal, and local requirements for the vessel and activity		



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Recognize, describe and follow safe boating practices (behavior, substance abuse, on water and land etiquette, leave no trace ethics)		
Prepare packraft for departure, stowing gear securely, ensuring it is balanced		
Demonstrate knowledge of a float plan (components and filing)		
Hold the paddle in correct orientation and grip for effective paddling		

<b>MANEUVERS to be performed with appropriate and efficient strokes, while maintaining the trim and balance of the craft</b>	<b>P / N</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Enter and launch packraft from shore in a controlled manner, checking for clear departure		
Propel the packraft forward in a straight line 15-20 boat lengths		
Stop the packraft within two boat lengths		
Move the packraft backwards 3-4 boat lengths		
Move the packraft sideways to each side 10 feet (3 meters)		
Turn the packraft from a stationary position 180° to the right and left		
Turn the packraft while maintaining forward motion 90° to the right and left		
Propel the packraft in a figure of 8 course around markers 3-4 boat lengths apart		
Tripping: experience paddling at least a short duration (1 hour) and distance (1 mile/1.6 km) day trip		
Arrive at destination point, checking for clear approach, and exit the packraft in a controlled and safe manner		



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Secure the packraft and equipment before leaving unattended, with attention paid to environment and conditions		
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SAFETY AND RESCUE	P / N	COMMENTS
Demonstrate awareness of rescue priorities and uses safe progressions (T-RETHROG including throwable floating aid or throw bag use)		
Identify and demonstrate the use of appropriate rescue and safety gear for the craft and planned activity		
Exit the packraft after a capsize (may include wet exit)		
Rescue self and the packraft using an effective self-rescue technique (e.g., swim self and boat to shore, or deep-water reentry)		
Rescue a person in the water and capsized packraft using appropriate techniques and equipment for the craft (bailers, pumps, paddle floats, tow lines, rescue slings, etc)		
Assisted rescues: boat over boat/side by side/T-Rescue/others appropriate to conditions		
Bulldoze or tow packraft or swimmer to shore		

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE	P / N	COMMENTS
Equipment: working knowledge of paddling equipment and terminology		
Safety: understand the dangers of packrafting and how to plan an appropriate course to avoid potential hazardous situations		
Avoid cold water shock, hypothermia and hyperthermia by choosing proper clothing and other safety gear		



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Recognize and appropriately use communication (paddle, hand and whistle) signals		
Follow basic navigational rules for inland waterways		
Display awareness of the group and employ effective on water management techniques		

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>		