



Level 2: Essentials of Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP) Skills Assessment

Course Overview

This ACA Assessment Course is designed to evaluate your ability to perform all of the skills listed and demonstrate an appropriate level of paddling knowledge. This assessment course provides the opportunity for you to receive documentation of having achieved this level of paddling ability.

Course Prerequisites:

- Acknowledgment of personal compliance with the [ACA Essential Eligibility Criteria \(EEC\)](#).
- Be a current ACA Member

Course Duration

One day (8 hours) minimum

Course Location / Accessible Venues

- Waterway with access to safe landing within 0.5 nautical miles/0.9 kilometers from shore
- 5 - 10 knot winds
- Note: conditions should not exceed 1 foot/0.3 meters waves or 2 knot currents

Course Size

5 Participants: 1 Instructor; with an additional qualified assistant, the ratio can be 10 : 2. The maximum number of participants permitted is 10.

Assessor

This assessment course may be offered by Level 2: Essentials of SUP (or higher) ACA Instructors, Instructor Trainers, or Instructor Trainer Educators.

Course Outline

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

Introduction, Expectations, and Logistics

- Welcome, introductions, paperwork

- Student and instructor course expectations and limitations
- Explain assessment procedure
- Course itinerary and 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 and off the water
 - Respect private property
 - Practice Leave No Trace ethics

Conclusion and Wrap-Up

- Group debrief/individual feedback
- Course Limitations
- Importance of first aid and CPR
- Importance of additional instruction, practice, experience
- Importance of appropriate level of safety and rescue training
- Life sport/paddling options
- Local paddling groups/clubs
- Reference materials
- ACA membership
- Course evaluations and Assessment cards

Assessment Criteria Checklist

Participant Name: _____

Participant ACA Membership #: _____

Course Venue: _____

Course Date(s): _____

Y = Meets Standard, N = Below Standard, DNO = Did Not Observe

Strokes and Maneuvers	Meets Standard? Y/N/DNO
How to Carry a SUP: 2-person, solo handle, solo overhead, or other effective means	
Launching and Landing: Beach, dock, and/or shoreline	
Paddle: proper grip / orientation while kneeling and standing	

Strokes and Maneuvers	Meets Standard? Y/N/DNO
Stances: prone / sitting / kneeling / neutral / offset variations	
Forward Stroke: Demonstrate at least two effective forward stroke techniques using efficient transfer of power at varying speeds in a variety of conditions including paddling 200 feet / 60 meters in a straight line without changing sides; must demonstrate on both the right and left side. (Ex: canted stroke or other effective means)	
Reverse Stroke: Paddle backwards 2 board lengths maintaining directional control without switching hands. (Ex: reverse stroke and cross nose draw combination or other effective means)	
Stop: Completely stop the SUP from a good speed in less than 2 board lengths	
Bracing: Allowing the body to recover and maintain balance using the paddle as a support when falling towards or away from the blade	
Rotate SUP 360 degrees using forward sweeps, reverse sweeps, draw to nose, and cross nose draws	
Draws (side, sculling, hanging draw, draw on the move) to travel sideways (20 feet/6 meters) on both sides	
Draws to nose/tail: modifying the path and the angle of the paddle for most efficiency	
Cross Nose Draws (Static and Dynamic): modifying the path and the angle of the paddle for most efficiency	
Turning on the Move: Sweep strokes and static draws while underway to turn board	
Board Trim: Transfer weight from nose to tail and rail to rail to affect momentum and maneuverability	
Side slip: Move board sideways while underway to avoid an obstacle (Ex: Draw on the move or Hanging Draw)	
Pivot Turn: pivot 180 degrees in place with weighted tail	
Moving Pivot Turn: Pivot 180 degrees while underway with weighted tail	
Paddle a course using a variety of L2 strokes & maneuvers with an emphasis on blended strokes, controlled tight turns, and efficient board control while maintaining momentum (Example: Figure of 8 Course or other effective means)	

Comment:

Rescues	Meets Standard? Y/N/DNO
Techniques for falling	
Board Remount (self-rescue)	
Assisted remounts: side-by-side, board flip rescue, or other effective means	
Methods for board and gear recovery	
Towing: a swimmer/board using various methods in conditions (contact tow, leash tow, tow line, or other effective means)	

Comment:

Interpersonal skills and group & risk management	Meets Standard? Y/N/DNO
Situational awareness, judgement, and proper paddling etiquette	
Interpersonal / human skills	
Trip planning (including Water, Weather, Wind, Waves and float plans)	
Trip planning: Show evidence of at least one day-trip of at least 3 miles	

Comment:

Technical Knowledge	Meets Standard? Y/N/DNO
General knowledge of paddlesports and the ACA, including history of the sport: indigenous roots to modern day SUP	
Safety Equipment - PFD and leash types and choices; additional venue specific items	
SUP design, materials, terminology and choice	
Paddle fit, materials, design, hand placement and choice	
Reading the paddling environments important to SUP (river gauges, tides, boat traffic, Navigational Rules of the Road, USCG regulations, hazards, etc.)	
Equipment selection, clothing, and packing including avoidance, assessment and management of hypo/hyperthermia	
Securing boards to rack	

Comment:

Final Assessment
Meets Standard or Below Standard (circle one)
Assessor Name:
Assessor Signature:
Assessor ACA Number:
Course Conclusion Date:
Comments:

Assessor Notes:

- *1 or more of "Below Standard" means candidate does not meet the standards of this assessment and should be given an action plan to continue progress.*
- *1 or more of "Did Not Observe" is acceptable if conditions and student learning dictate.*

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<https://americancanoe.org>

This curriculum is managed by the ACA SUP Committee. To connect with the leadership of this committee, please view the SEIC Committee rosters on [the ACA website](#).

Comment: