



## Level 2: Essentials of SOT Kayaking Trip Leader (ESOTKTL) Training Course

**Purpose:** The purpose of the Level 2: Essentials of SOT Kayak Touring Trip Leader (L2: ESOTKTL) training is to prepare individuals who intend to lead other paddlers, either recreationally or professionally, in protected waterways using Sit-on-Top (SOT) kayaks only. The emphasis of the training is on leadership.

**Training Overview:** The L2: ESOTKTL training is designed to expose candidates to the skill-set required for leading paddlers in protected waterways. While this is not a teaching award, a L2: ESOTKTL should also be able to provide basic tips to paddlers, as appropriate, to help them through the environment. This training course is intended to be followed by an assessment course.

### **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 Training:**

- Previously completed the L2: Essentials of SOT Kayak Touring Skills Assessment and/or demonstration of equivalent skills.



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**Course Location / Venue:** Calm, protected water with constant access to safe landing and within .5 nm from shore:

- Winds less than 10 knots
- Waves less than 1 foot (0.3 meters)
- Current less than 1 knot
- No surf - shore break less than 1 ft (0.3 meters)

**Course Duration:** A minimum of 1 day for training.

**Trainer:**

- Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring Instructor Trainer (or higher), or
- Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Instructor with the L2: Essentials of SOT Kayak Trip Leading (ESOTKTL) Endorsement, or
- 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 Course:** Level 2: Essentials of SOT Kayaking Trip Leader Assessment

**Equipment:** Candidates shall possess all the equipment appropriate for a trip leader in L2: ESOTKTL conditions, and demonstrate the judgement to carry equipment that is appropriate for day trips and various group characteristics. Candidates' gear selections shall cover the following categories:

- Kayak (single sit-on-top or tandem sit-on-top with fixed flotation sufficient to allow deep-water self-rescue) and personal equipment appropriate for kayak touring. 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

**Skills:** The following list of criteria are to be used in the training of L2: ESOTKTL candidates. The time spent on each skill and the sequence of evaluation should be adjusted to fit the candidate's needs, class location, and time allowance with an emphasis on the application of each skill in a leadership context.

**Maneuvering:** Candidates must be able to demonstrate safe, effective and efficient maneuvering in L2: ESOTKTL conditions. The focus of the training 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 capsize with braces



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Note: The training 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 capsize, reverse paddling to assist in rescue rather than turning, or similar practical applications of personal skills.

**Rescues and Tows:** Candidates must be able to perform a variety of assisted rescues and self-rescues, as well as tows in L2: ESOTKTL conditions to include:

- Side by side with stabilization assisted rescue
- Cross kayak PFD grab assisted rescue
- Injured or unresponsive paddler rescue, e.g., boat flip rescue
- 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 trainer shall evaluate the candidate's situational awareness and ability to maintain group control during the performance of rescues and towing exercises. A variety of single sit-on-top and tandem kayaks may be used at the trainer's discretion.

**Technical:** Candidates must demonstrate the following technical skills:

- Navigation – Candidates must demonstrate a knowledge of symbols, distance measurement, bearings and variation for inland and marine charts. While on the water, candidates must be able to determine a position using bearings, navigate using shoreline features and other visible references, and maintain a course using a compass heading and time.
- Basic boat repair – Candidates will demonstrate basic field repair/management of either a small hole, compromised/missing hatch cover or a damaged skeg/rudder. At the trainer's discretion, the repair may occur on the water.

**Leadership:** Leadership ability shall be evaluated 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 evaluate an understanding of leadership principles and to reveal the candidate's decision-making process. Candidates must show leadership appropriate to the circumstances, the risk at hand, the individuals being led, and the environmental challenges encountered.

- Group abilities – Candidates 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 – Candidates shall demonstrate the ability to assess conditions based on weather forecasts, observed wind, current and swell. Candidates shall also identify protected areas, potential hazards, early exit options, remoteness and rescue resources. Based on these observations, candidates shall plan an appropriate journey and adapt their plan as conditions change.
- Group awareness – Candidates 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.



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- Group management – Candidates 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 – Candidates 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 – Candidates 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 – Candidates 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 – Candidates must demonstrate proficiency launching and landing themselves and a group in L2: ESOTKTL conditions, including planning, communication and positioning to maintain group control.

**Knowledge:** The topics and concepts below provide a framework of knowledge necessary for trip planning, implementation, and leadership. All will be covered and evaluated in the context of the L2: ESOTKTL environment and conditions. A candidate's knowledge can be evaluated using a variety of methods which may include observation, self-assessment, feedback, written assessment, questioning and pre-assigned and/or ad hoc presentations.

- Weather – Candidates shall be familiar with the terminology typically found in inland and marine forecasts, know multiple sources for obtaining forecasts and be able to assess the impact of forecasts on trip plans.
- Tides and currents – Candidates shall be familiar with tidal terms, timing, forecast tables and the concept of drift.
- Conditions – Candidates shall be familiar with the terminology found in marine and weather forecasts, know multiple sources for obtaining forecasts, know the upper limits of the L2: ESOTKTL environment, and understand the importance of keeping their trips within those parameters.
- Trip planning – As a tabletop exercise, candidates must prepare a trip plan that demonstrates an understanding of chart data, simple course plots, weather, tides, currents, and group abilities.
- Communication and signaling – Candidates 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 – Candidates must 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 – Candidates will have a general understanding of LNT best practices and follow LNT principles and practices at all times.
- Prevention and management of hypothermia and hyperthermia – Candidates must have knowledge of symptoms, prevention, and management of hypothermia and hyperthermia.