



Level 3: Freestyle Canoeing

(Sample Skills Course)

Course Overview: The **Freestyle Canoeing** course is a five part program emphasizing the acquisition of advanced techniques for technical quiet water paddling.

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 on / off or in / out of a paddlecraft independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*
9. Independently get out and from under a capsized paddlecraft*
10. Remount or 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.*

Goal: The student will be exposed to sound fundamentals of paddling designed to expand the perception of the use of the quiet water open canoe as a vehicle of play, entertainment, and expression.

Course Progression: Levels 2 through 5 are based on a progression of maneuvers that use the four quadrants of the canoe: Forward, Reverse, Cross Forward, and Cross Reverse.

Course Prerequisites: ACA Essentials of Canoe Touring / Essentials of River Canoe or equivalent knowledge and skills.

Course Duration: 6 hours per level (minimum)



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Course Location / Venue: Quiet water

Class Ratio - Tandem: 6 Students : 1 Instructor; with an additional instructor or qualified assistant the ratio can be 12 : 2

Solo: 5 Students : 1 Instructor; with an additional instructor or qualified assistant the ratio can be 10 : 2

The following is a general summary of course content for the **Freestyle Canoeing** course. The content covered and sequence of instruction should be adjusted to best fit the participant's needs, class location and time allowance.

Course Content

Introduction, Expectations, & Logistics:

- Welcome, introductions, paperwork
- Student & instructor course expectations and limitations
- 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

The Paddling Environment:

- Wind
- Waves
- Weather
- Water

Personal Preparation:

- Personal ability
- Swimming ability
- Water comfort & confidence
- Fitness, conditioning, and warm up
- Safe paddle and boat handling
- Safety and rescue considerations
- Personal equipment (reviewed by Instructor)

Level One: (6 hours)

I: Introduction, logistics and safety

- Welcome and introductions of instructors and participants
- Overview of the course/expectations and limitations
- Sign waivers/assumption of risk/medical forms
- PFD usage--worn at all times on the water, correct fit
- Review of ACA flatwater safety procedures specific to use for this course

II: FreeStyle concepts

What is FreeStyle--current and history
Discussion of equipment--paddles, hulls, pads

It is suggested that the following topics be taught on water:

- Review forward and reverse travel in a straight line, draws, push-aways from flatwater course
- Proper use of biokinetics--use of the body in paddling
- Proper use of the hull--why heel and pitch the canoe



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- Types of heeling--muscle control (J-lean) and weight control (both knees to one side)
- Types of kneeling--three point, high kneel, Canadian, transverse
- Palm roll--keep one blade face force loaded
- Parts of FreeStyle maneuvers--initiation, heel, placement, pitch, conclusion
- Demonstrate Axle, Christie, Post, and Wedge and explain course progression will apply all four to each quadrant of the canoe
- Teach Axle, Christie for solo, Axle for tandem

III: Course wrap-up

- Review terminology--informal oral quiz
- Suggestions for practice drills
- Suggest learning materials--books, tapes, local clubs
- Advise of level 2 content
- ACA membership forms/Participation cards

Level Two: (6 hours)

I: Review level one as necessary

II: Maneuvers

- Solo
 - Post
 - Wedge
 - Offside slip (from onside)
 - Onside slip (from onside)
 - Onside & offside Gimbal
- Tandem
 - Post
 - Wedge
 - Offside sideslip
 - Onside sideslip
 - Onside & offside Gimbal

III: Course wrap-up

- Review terminology (levels one & two)

- Advise of level 3 content
- Suggest learning materials
- ACA membership forms / participation cards

Level Three: (6 hours)

I: Review level 2 as necessary

II: Maneuvers

- Solo
 - Reverse Axle
 - Reverse Post
 - Reverse Wedge
 - Reverse Christie
 - Reverse offside sideslip (from onside)
 - Reverse onside sideslip (from onside)
- Tandem
 - Stern Axle
 - Stern Post
 - Stern Wedge
 - Stern offside sideslip
 - Stern inside sideslip

III: Course wrap up as in previous level

- Discussion of linking maneuvers together, suggestions for practice drills

Level Four: (6 hours)

I: Review previous levels (1-3)

II: Maneuvers

- Solo
 - Cross Axle
 - Cross Post
 - Cross Wedge
 - Cross onside sideslip
 - Cross offside sideslip
 - Cross Christie
 - Cross onside & offside Gimbal
- Tandem
 - Cross Axle
 - Cross Post



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- Cross Wedge
- Cross onside sideslip
- Cross offside sideslip
- Cross onside & offside Gimbal

III: Course wrap-up as in previous level

Level Five: (6 hours)

I: Review previous levels (1-4)

II: Maneuvers

- Solo
 - Cross reverse Axle
 - Cross reverse Post
 - Cross reverse Wedge

- Cross reverse Christie
- Cross reverse onside sideslip
- Cross reverse offside sideslip
- Tandem
 - Stern Cross Axle
 - Stern Cross Post
 - Stern Cross Wedge
 - Stern Cross onside sideslip
 - Stern Cross offside sideslip

III: Course wrap up as in previous levels, add discussion of interpretive paddling.