



Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP) Day Trip Leading Assessment

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.

Assessment Course Prerequisites

- Acknowledgment of personal compliance with the [ACA Essential Eligibility Criteria \(EEC\)](#).
- Be a current ACA Member
- Completion of an ACA Level 2: Essentials of SUP skills course or equivalent skills

Course Duration

2 days (16 hours) or more.

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.

Succeeding Courses

- Level 2: Essentials of SUP Certification Course
 - Level 3: River SUP Skills, Assessment, or Certification Course
 - Level 3: Surf SUP Skills, Assessment, or Certification Course
 - Level 3: Coastal SUP Skills, Assessment, or Certification Course
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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, Logistics, and Expectations

- Welcome! We're so glad that you've chosen to further your paddling experience and education by attending this course! Let's review a few highlights about the ACA
- Let's talk about the course itinerary, expectations, and limitations
- Lay of the land (and water): the logistics of this venue
- Explain the process of assessment and evaluation
- Review liability waiver (if applicable), assumption of risk, challenge by choice, and medical disclosure

Conclusion and Wrap Up

- This has been a great class! Let’s talk through what we’ve learned with a group debrief and/or Individual feedback
- Course limitations: there is always more to learn, and the skills and concepts we discussed require more practice and experience
- First aid and CPR training is a very valuable tool and could make the difference between a “near miss” and an emergency requiring outside rescue / first responders
- Paddling is a lifetime sport - there are local organizations, clubs, events, competitions, and classes through which you can continue your learning and build community. Get connected!
- Handouts and reference materials (if applicable)

Assessment Criteria Checklist

| Preparing to Depart | Pass? Y/N |
|---|------------------|
| Elements of a float plan (who, what, when, where, filing practices) | |
| Securing board for transport using proper tie downs, straps, or knots (figure 8 or bowline, truckers hitch, and 2 half hitches) | |
| Proper techniques to safely lift and carry the board on shore | |
| Put on and secure a life jacket appropriate for the individual's size and activity, assuring all others in the group are properly wearing their life jacket | |
| Explain safe paddling practices including behavior, substance abuse, on water and land etiquette, and Leave No Trace ethics | |
| Communication protocol ◦ Paddle, hand, and whistle signals ◦ Cell phone and radios when appropriate | |
| Federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to trip venue or route | |
| Self care and care of other group members ◦ Importance of fueling, hydration, clothing/insulation, and sun protection ◦ Cold shock, hypothermia, and hyperthermia: prevention and treatment | |
| Discuss paddling environments pertinent to paddlers ◦ Wind ◦ Waves ◦ Weather ◦ Water ▪ Water confidence and comfort including swimming ability | |
| Launching and landing: beach, low dock, or bank to enter and exit safely | |
| Strokes | Pass? Y/N |

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|--|------------------|
| SUP stances: prone / sitting / kneeling / neutral / offset variations | |
| Demonstrate how to hold the paddle in correct orientation and grip for effective paddling while standing and kneeling | |
| Forward | |
| Back | |
| Sweeps (forward, reverse) | |
| Draws to nose and tail and cross-nose | |
| Stern rudder | |
| Bracing: allowing the body to recover and maintain balance using the paddle as a support when falling towards or away from the blade | |
| | |
| Maneuvers | Pass? Y/N |
| Establish board trim: transfer weight from nose to tail and rail to rail to affect momentum and maneuverability | |
| Stop the board within 2 board lengths | |
| Move the board forwards and backwards in a reasonably straight line 3-4 board lengths without changing sides. Must be done on both the left and the right side | |
| Turning on the move: sweep strokes and static draws while underway to turn board | |
| Lateral movement: move the board sideways 20 feet (6 meters) to each side | |
| Rotate SUP 360 degrees using forward sweeps, reverse sweeps, draw to nose, and cross nose draws | |
| Propel the board in a figure of 8 course around markers 3-4 board lengths apart | |
| Turn the board while maintaining forward motion 90° to the right and left | |
| Side slip: move board sideways while underway to avoid an obstacle | |
| Pivot turn: pivot 180 degrees in place with weighted tail | |
| Moving pivot turn: Pivot 180 degrees while underway with weighted tail | |
| Paddle a figure of 8 course using a variety of strokes & maneuvers with an emphasis on blended strokes, controlled tight turns, and efficient board control while maintaining momentum | |

| Safety & Rescue | Pass? Y/N |
|--|-----------|
| Demonstrate and describe the principles of rescue: ◦ Use of safe rescue strategies such as T-RETHROG (Talk, Reach, Throw, Row, Go) ◦ Rescue priorities: people, board, paddle, gear ◦ Responsibilities of the group, rescuer, swimmers | |
| Identify and demonstrate the use of appropriate rescue and safety protocol for the board and planned activity: assessing objective hazards, choosing routes/lines, options for setting safety | |
| Group organization, trip planning, and travel strategies ◦ Number of paddlers, spacing, group members with repair kits, first aid kits, and first aid and CPR training | |
| Techniques for falling, self-rescue | |
| Board remount | |
| Assisted remounts: side-by-side, board flip rescue, or other effective means | |
| Methods for board and gear recovery | |
| Towing: contact tow, leash tow, tow line, or other effective means | |
| Unconscious paddler rescue | |

| Technical Knowledge | Pass? Y/N |
|--|-----------|
| • Life jackets: types, usage, fitting, regulations • Board: types, parts, materials, nomenclature, and design • Paddle: types, parts, materials, fit • Leashes: types and when to wear | |
| History of the sport: indigenous roots to modern day SUP | |
| Display awareness of the group and effective on-water management techniques | |
| Safety and rescue equipment | |
| Trip planning considerations | |

| Final Assessment |
|--------------------------------------|
| Pass or Needs More Work (circle one) |
| Assessor Name: |
| Assessor Signature: |
| Assessor ACA Number: |

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|-------------------------|
| Final Assessment |
| Course Conclusion Date: |
| Comments: |

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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](#).