



River Canoeing Camping Course

(Sample Skills Course)

Course Overview: The **River Canoeing Camping Course** is designed to be delivered by (L2 through L4) Instructors who have completed Camping Endorsement. The Course can be delivered as a separate course or in conjunction with another skills course. Participants learn the basic skills required to plan and prepare short overnight trips on rivers and near shore lakes. Learn to catch eddies, perform peel outs, ferries and perform rescues in canoes loaded with camping gear. The participants will learn about proper equipment and how it is used, how to select a camp location, food transportation and preparation, and to follow leave no trace procedures throughout the trip. This course requires the appropriate equipment, tandem and/or solo canoes for the course venue.

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.*

Course Prerequisites: Previously completed the appropriate River Canoeing Discipline skills course and/or demonstration of equivalent skills.

Course Duration: 1 or more days

Course Location / Venue: Not to exceed Instructors level of certification



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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

Succeeding courses:

Level 3: River Canoeing

Level 4: Whitewater Canoeing

The following is a general summary of course content for the **River Canoe Camping 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)

Canoe camping and touring

- What is canoe camping?
- What is touring?
- Advantages and disadvantages of traveling by canoe

The Paddling Environment:

- 4 W's: Wind, Waves, Weather, Water
- River Classifications

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)

Trip planning and leadership

- Selecting appropriate locations, route, and equipment, shuttling, assessing group and individual paddling capabilities, lead and sweep concept



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- leader's responsibilities, permits, use fees, reservations, registered guides or licensed trip leaders and other state requirements

Equipment:

- Canoe: types, parts, materials
- Paddle: types, parts, materials, sizing, hand position (straight and bent shafts)
- Gear: portage packs, dry bags, gear bags
- Camping Gear: -tarps, tent, sleeping gear, stove, cooking and food prep items, Illumination, sunscreen, insect repellent, tools, repair kit, water filter
- Lifejacket (PFD): types, materials, fit
- Safety equipment: First aid kit, painters, tow rope, throw bag
- Optional equipment & outfitting

Wilderness repairs and maintenance

- Boat, paddle, tent, other essential equipment (tools, wire, duct tape, etc.)

Loading and trimming

- Packing packs and gear bags
- Securing gear, balancing
- Trim: (upwind, downwind, upstream, downstream)

Getting Started:

- Warm up and stretching
- Personal clothing & equipment
- Canoe carries: overhead and suitcase
- Launching / landing from shore or dock

River Running:

- River etiquette
- Strategies in river running
- How to paddle canoe in current
- Scouting (Boat / Shore)
- Use of good judgment
- Total awareness of environment
- Group organization on the river
- River Signals / Communication
- Emergency Procedures

Paddling on large bodies of water

- Group management
- Paddling in wind and waves
- Weather considerations: lightning, strong winds, rain, severe weather, weather interpretation
- Improvising a sail
- Switch positions in the canoe

Safety & Rescue:

- Responsibility:
 - Group; Individual, Rescuer; Victim
- Rescue Priorities: People, Boats & Gear
- Signals: Whistle, Paddle and Hand
- Group Management / Communication
- Cold Shock, Hypothermia: HELP/HUDDLE, clothing
- Hyperthermia: hydration, clothing
- Rescue Sequence: (RETHROG)
- Deep water exits: vaulting and slide, no diving
- Controlled capsizing
- Swimming a boat to shore
- How to empty a loaded boat full of water

- Canoe over Canoe rescue
- Side by Side (or parallel) rescue
- Re-entry
 - Self & Assisted
 - Heel Hook
 - Rescue Sling
- Towing a swimmer/canoe
- Swimming in current:
 - defensive & aggressive
- Throw rope use

Dealing with Hazards:

- River features
- Currents
- Broaching (lean into obstacle)
- Pins and entrapments
- Strainers
- Hydraulics



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- Undercut rocks/Ice
- Dams/Flow diversion structures
- Portage
- Lining
- ACA Membership forms
- Course evaluation
- Participation cards

River Maneuvers:

- Ferries
- Eddy Turns
- Peel-Outs
- C-Turns
- S-Turns

Map and compass use

- Map reading
- Compass
- Basic Navigation

Making Camp:

- Selecting a campsite, tent pitching, tarp rigging
- Stove use, fire pans, fire building, wood gathering
- Waste disposal
- Wilderness food storage, and water purification

Menu Planning, Packing, and Preparation

Environmental concerns and practices

- Pack in, pack out, waste disposal, local practices/expectations, LNT concepts

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
- Demo advanced maneuver
- Life sport / Paddling options
- Local paddling groups / Clubs
- Handouts / Reference materials