



Coastal Kayak Traditional Skills

(Sample Skills Course)

Course Overview: The **Coastal Kayak Traditional Skills** course is designed to familiarize students with Inuit history, hunting implements, and the skills associated with Traditional paddling. This will include strokes, sculls, braces, and rolling techniques.

Course Objectives: Students will:

- Have a basic understanding of Arctic hunting techniques and tools.
- Have a general knowledge of Arctic kayak construction.
- Understand the theory behind a narrow-bladed paddle and its advantages and disadvantages.
- Learn strokes with a Traditional-style paddle, including the canted forward stroke and the sliding stroke.
- Work toward developing sculls, a balance brace and rolls.

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.*



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Course Prerequisites: None Completion of a Basic Coastal Kayak Course or ability to demonstrate proficiency and experience with wet exit, assisted, and self-rescues.

Course Duration: 1 Day (8 hours)

Course Location / Venue: To be determined. Choice spot would be calm water, minimal current, lunch and rest area, sandy or firm bottom on which to stand.

Course Ratio: 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 **Coastal Kayak Traditional Skills** 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)

History

- Definition and different spellings of Kayak in literature (Kyak, Kyack, Kaiak, Kajak, Qajaq, Qaannat)
- Importance of the kayak for survival
- Kayaks and paddle evolution
- How rolls and sculls are based on survival techniques

Implements

- Paddles: Double and single-bladed
- Throwing Stick, or Norsaq
- Harpoon
- Tuilik
- Bladder bag, or avataq
- Rope coil rack
-

Traditional Kayak Construction

- Frames
- Size



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- Skin
- Bow rescue
- Explain the philosophy of not coming out of the kayak and why

Narrow Blade Rationale

- Describe how the paddle is customized to fit your body measurements
- Paddles used for centuries in severest conditions
- Describe how the wide blade paddle used today came into use
- Describe hydrodynamics and aerodynamics of narrow paddles
- Dispel the common belief that paddles are narrow and unfeathered because the Inuit could not make them otherwise
- Discuss advantages and disadvantages of feathered vs. unfeathered blades
- Explain the philosophy of using the whole paddle for rolling, bracing and sculling
- Describe and demonstrate the canted and sliding strokes
- Describe and demonstrate bracing with the traditional paddle

Use of the Paddle

- Taking advantage of Traditional-style paddle design:
- How to hold the paddle: hand placement and canted position
- How to slide hands to extend the paddle
- On-water: strokes with the Traditional-style paddle
- Sweep and reverse sweep
- Sculling draws
- High brace and Low brace, braced turns, sculling braces
- Canted forward stroke
- Sliding stroke
- Demonstrate single-bladed paddle use

Rescues

Discussion and Demonstration of:

Workshop Practice

Instructor Giving Rolling Exhibition

Side Sculls and Balance Brace

- Discussion and Workshop practice
- Explain that the side scull sets the stage for further progress
- Explain the importance of body position
- Demonstrate a sculling motion from a near-upright position
- Explain and demonstrate the, side scull and chest scull
- Explain and demonstrate the balance brace
- On water practice

Rolling Discussion

- Emphasize the advantages of having a good rolling repertoire
- Describe the Greenland National Rolling Championship

Rolling Workshop

Students with no roll

- Teach extended paddle sweep roll. (also known as Greenland standard roll)

Students with a basic roll

- Teach how to set up underwater when capsized from a no set-up position

Students with a good roll

- Teach any of the advanced rolls
- Some advanced rolls for consideration

Note: Names are not standardized

Aft-Leaning (“Layback”), or High Brace Based Rolls

- **Elbow Crook Roll:** Same as the Greenland standard roll, except



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- forward arm is crooked underneath the paddle
- **Behind the Head Roll:** Paddle blade is held behind the head with one hand on loom and righted with the blade between the head and the rear deck
 - **Under Arm Roll:** Roll is performed with the paddle held in one arm (tip tucked beside armpit)
 - **Parallel Roll:** A one handed roll done by holding the paddle at mid shaft, capsizing, placing the paddle out to the side and rolling up using only one arm. Builds on balance brace
 - **Avataq Roll:** Attach the avataq (or a paddle float) to the aft perimeter line on the side opposite capsize. Roll up against the float
 - **Throwing Stick Roll:** A roll using only the Norsaq
 - **Hand Roll:** A roll using only the hand

Forward-Finishing, Low Brace Based

Rolls: Palms stay oriented down (toward the kayak) throughout

- **Reverse Sweep Roll:** Builds on chest scull. Set up with paddle extended, torso twisted toward hands, far blade hooked behind opposite side of stern (beginners can leave far blade on the same side and capsize onto it) Capsize by falling backward, head hits the water first. Sweep from stern forward, rotating kayak upright. Palms stay down, finish as chest scull, leaning forward
- **Storm Roll:** Rear hand stays in contact with the boat at all times.

Use a torso twist to sweep the paddle. Finish leaning forward. Palms stay down (toward boat) throughout the roll

- **Cross Arm Roll:** A storm roll with the arms crossed throughout the roll (Other options on rolls depending on what clients wish to learn)

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
- ACA Membership forms
- Course evaluation
- Participation cards

NOTES:

Equipment required or recommended:

- Properly outfitted and sized kayaks, preferably low volume, narrow, with low back deck.
- Proper safety gear (i.e. PFD, spray skirt, tuilik, akuilisaq)
- Greenland-style and other Traditional Arctic paddles
- Throwing Sticks
- Nose plugs