



## Level 3: Sit-On-Top Coastal Kayaking (Sample Skills Course)

**Course Overview:** The Sit on Top Coastal Kayaking course is designed as a short program emphasizing safety, enjoyment and skill acquisition covering basic coastal kayaking skills and safety.

\* This course is designed specifically for Sit-On-Top Kayaks only

### **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:** None

### **Minimum Personal Equipment for the course:**

- Properly sized and outfitted kayak with deck lines and adequate puncture proof flotation.
- Standard gear and safety equipment (paddles, PFD's, and appropriate clothing for weather and immersion). Thigh straps are optional but recommended.

**Course Duration:** 8 hours



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**Course Location / Venue:** Lakes or coastal waters with potential areas of exposure to mild wind and wave conditions, with constant access to safe landing and within 1.5 nm from shore:

- Waves (chop) less than 2 foot (0.6 meters)
- Surf less than 2 foot (0.6 meters)
- Current less than 2 knots

**Class Ratio** - 5 Students : 1 Instructor; with an additional instructor or qualified assistant the ratio can be 10 : 2

**Succeeding courses:**

Level 3: Coastal Kayaking (decked boats) skills course and/or assessment

*The following is a general summary of course content for the S-O-T Coastal Kayaking course. The content and sequence of instruction should be adjusted to best fit the participant's needs, class location and time allowance.*

**Course Objectives:** Participants will be introduced to:

- Proper fit and adjustment of their kayak for effective control and comfort
- Safely mounting and dismounting a kayak, including a controlled dismount in deep water
- Effective use and control of the paddle
- Performing basic strokes efficiently
- Performing self-rescue and assisted rescue and use of an assisting device, i.e., paddle float, stirrup, counter balance, etc.
- The importance and influence of weather and tides on the coastal kayaker
- Dealing with marine hazards and other safety issues
- Understanding personal limitations and skill level

**Introduction, Expectations, and Logistics:**

- Welcome, introductions, paperwork
- Student and instructor course expectations and limitations
- Course itinerary and 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 and off the water
- Respect private property
- Practice Leave No Trace ethics

**The Paddling Environment:**

- Wind
- Waves
- Weather
- Water



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### Personal

#### Preparation:

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

#### On Shore Presentations

- Equipment orientation
- Personal clothing and gear
- Lifejackets (PFDs), wetsuits
- Safety equipment
- Basic boat design and kayak terminology
- Boat fit and adjustment
- Boat/body weld, backband and optional thigh straps
- Foot brace adjustment
- Paddle orientation and use
- Correct hand placement
- Control hand/relaxed grip
- Torso rotation and paddler's box
- Use of kayak anchors and trolley systems

#### Launching and Landing / Wet-exit practice and Kayak Orientation

- Carrying kayak to and from water
- Mount/dis-mount of kayak from shore or dock
- Boat stability, "hip wiggle," edging
- Capsize / "exit" techniques (to be supervised by instructor)
- Allow students a few minutes to paddle around and get oriented with their kayak

#### Basic Strokes and Skills

- Rafting up
- Sweep stroke (forward/reverse/pivot in place)
- Forward stroke
- Reverse stroke and stopping
- Draw stroke(s)
- High and low braces (hip snap/boat lean/lower body control – thigh braces highly suggested)
- Sculling for support

#### Safety and Rescue

- Exercising judgment, safety as a mind-set, etc.
- Hypothermia/ cold immersion shock: help/huddle, clothing
- Dehydration/ hyperthermia: hydration, clothing
- Hazards: wind, waves, weather, current, rocks, bridges, piers, dams, strainers, traffic
- Paddling as a group
- Signaling
- Interactions/ sharing water with non- powered and powered traffic
- Emergency procedures

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- Rescue sequence: reach, throw, row, go (RETHROG)
- Rescue priorities: people, boats, gear
- Demonstrate/participate: Deep- water re-mounts, assisted and solo
- Boat assisted rescue, assisting a tired swimmer (carrying, pushing or pulling/towing to shore)
- Rescue with a flooded hatch rescue w/ pump or water displacement
- Towing and bulldozing a capsized kayak, to include contact tows, rafted tows, and inline tows

### **Deep Water Rescues**

*Note: Use float if necessary*

- Demonstrate and practice side-by-side (flooded hatch)
- Demonstrate and practice BBL (body, butt, leg) or scramble self-rescue
- Consider fishing rods and other gear hazards

### **On Land Discussion Items**

- Weather conditions
- Chart use
- Tides and currents (if applicable)
- Signaling and safety devices

### **Group Safety Discussion**

- Group signals
- Staying together (i.e. lead/sweep)
- What to do in an emergency
- Dealing with boat traffic

### **Short Skills Development Tour**

- Continue to develop efficient stroke technique
- Practice course corrections
- Have fun

### **Conclusion and Wrap Up:**

- Load boats showing proper deck placement and tie downs
- Group debrief / individual feedback
- Course limitations
- Importance of first aid and CPR
- Importance of additional instruction, practice, experience, and paddling in a group/with a partner
- Importance of appropriate level of safety and rescue training
- Demo advanced maneuver
- Life sport / paddling options
- Local paddling groups / clubs
- Handouts / reference materials
- ACA membership forms
- Course evaluation
- Participation cards