

Level 2 Skills Course

To provide the skills and knowledge for proficient kayaking in moderate conditions, on overnight trips along a moderately exposed shore with frequent easy-landing opportunities.

Prerequisites	Paddle Canada Level-1 Skills certification or equivalent skill and knowledge At least 3, one-day-long kayaking trips in different locations Wilderness first aid (16 hours) with CPR strongly recommended
Course Length	4 days, including 1 overnight
Class Ratio	1 instructor : 4 participants 1 instructor + 1 assistant: 6 participants
Minimum Staff & Certification	Instructor: one Level-2 Instructor Optional assistant(s): one Level-1 Instructor
Location	Moderately exposed coastline with frequent easy-landing opportunities
Conditions	Winds moderate (12–19 knots) Combined sea state less than 1 metre Surf < 1 metre Current < 3 knots

Overview

Rescue Skills	Paddling Skills	Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bow Rescue • Assisted Rescue • Unassisted rescue • Towing • Rolling • All in rescue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward Stroke • Reverse Stroke • Sweep Strokes • Draw/sculling draw • Low/high brace • Edge control • Stern rudder • Bow Rudder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment • Kayaking resources • Journeying & Seamanship • Navigation/Ded Reckoning

Rescue Skills

Unassisted and assisted rescue skills should be well developed. Rescue exercises must require the participant to demonstrate control, confidence and sufficient skill to complete exercises in a timely manner.

Exercises can extend to include returning an incapacitated paddler to shore and remediation of simulated hypothermia and calling for external assistance.

Exercises should include typical, yet uncommon difficulties such as seasickness, shoulder injuries, repetitive strain injuries, hypothermia, and leaky boats.

Exercises should include responses to problems that occur in camp or during launching or landing on shore.

Bow rescue — perform a bow rescue on demand. The victim should capsize apparently spontaneously and a nearby rescuer will respond as needed.

Unassisted re-entries — the paddler will demonstrate techniques to re-enter the kayak. The paddler must show confidence and control throughout the exercises. The capsize must be natural with spray skirt in place and simulate an unexpected incident — either while paddling or in an attempted brace or sculling for support. Rescue is complete when the victim is back in the boat with the spray skirt attached, the cockpit pumped, and the paddler is competent to continue.

All in rescue — the paddler will participate in an all-in rescue whereby two (or more) paddlers capsize and assist each other in emptying and re-entering the kayaks. Rescue is complete when all the paddlers are back in the kayaks, water is pumped out, spray skirts are attached, and all paddlers are able to continue paddling

Rolling — the paddler will be introduced to rolling in calm conditions. A roll on only one side will be taught and the participant may set up before rolling. Completing a roll is not a prerequisite for passing Level-2, but since it is the most efficient method of self-rescue, it is an important skill to develop. Failure to roll at this level requires that the paddler must demonstrate a higher than average competence in other rescue skills within the course.

Towing — Towing techniques should include use of a variety of tow systems such as long and short lines, pig-tails, and deck mounted equipment. It is necessary to be aware of the inherent dangers of towing and the towline must be easy to released quickly with one hand.

Paddling Skills

Paddling skills in Level-2 must show development of techniques effective for control in moderate sea conditions.

Launching and landing — demonstrate a variety of boat launchings and landings.

Forward paddling — Show efficient and sustained forward paddling during a journey of 10 kilometres in 2 hours.

Turning strokes — turn the kayak in both directions while in motion (with little loss of forward momentum) by means of (a) a sweep stroke, (b) a low brace turn, (c) a high brace turn and (d) a bow rudder. Demonstrate good edge control that assists turning.

Low brace — with the elbows up, forearms near the vertical and the wrists straight, the back face of the paddle will make contact with the water. Some slapping of the paddle blade may occur, however a primary means of recovery is with the hip flick and proper torso and head motion.

High brace — with the elbows low and near the body, forearms near the vertical and wrists straight, the power face of the paddle will make contact with the water. Some slapping of the paddle blade may occur, however a primary means of recovery is with the hip flick and proper torso and head motion.

Draw — Move the kayak directly sideways. The body should be rotated and the paddle shaft vertical with the blade fully immersed in the water. Move the kayak directly sideways while it is moving forward.

Bow rudder — the bow rudder should be executed under forward momentum and initiated with a sweep stroke on the outside of the turn. The blade is placed in the water just ahead of the pivot point with the power face towards the boat and opened towards the bow. The top hand crosses the centreline of the kayak to support the paddle shaft. Effective torso rotation toward the inside of the turn and lifting of the inside edge should be evident throughout the turn. The turn can be extended using a bow draw and completed with a forward stroke.

Stern rudder — Paddle straight downwind on small waves, with the paddle kept on one side of the boat. Demonstrate good torso rotation while looking forward.

Knowledge

The knowledge and skill required for safe paddling at this level is governed by the conditions along a moderately exposed shore with frequent landing opportunities. The content listed in this section is not exhaustive and is provided here as a guide to the extent of knowledge necessary for safe and enjoyable paddling in a Level-2 environment.

Equipment — Demonstrate basic knowledge of the features and attributes of equipment, including

- rudder, skeg and deck lines advantages and disadvantages
- different sea kayak paddle features
- spray skirt construction and materials
- pumps: advantages and disadvantages of foot, deck, hand held, and electric models
- PFD supplementary features designed for sea kayaking
- fabrics and clothing attributes designed for paddling in harsh conditions
- rescue and safety equipment features necessary for coastal kayak tripping
- chart and map interpretation to plan and execute an extended trip
- first aid kit basics and use
- repair kit general preparation

Kayaking resources — Research various sources of information such as: tide and current tables, guidebooks, navigation texts, *Chart 1*, hydrographic charts, topographical maps, other books, videos, websites and a wide variety of resources that pertain to kayaking.

Heritage — Relate traditional Greenland and Aleutian designs to contemporary kayak design features. Discuss the merits and challenges of the identified design feature(s). Identify at least two other genres of kayaking and describe how the practice of kayaking differs in these genres (in terms of equipment, technique and environment): flatwater racing, slalom racing, surf ski, white water, kayak polo.

Environment — Identify natural objects found during the trip using a variety of resources (previous knowledge, other participants, leaders, guide books).

Describe the seven Leave No Trace Principles and practices given in the *Important Notes for All Courses* section of this manual, and work to integrate these principles and practices while on the trip.

Journeying and Seamanship

Journeying and seamanship refers to the practical skills, equipment preparation, trip planning and judgments that are ongoing throughout the planning and completion of an overnight trip. The following list is not exhaustive and is provided here as a guide to areas of judgment necessary for safe and enjoyable paddling in a Level-2 environment.

Preparation — Organize the gear and packing for an overnight outing. Create a list of minimum gear for an overnight trip. Describe the methods of outfitting a kayak to properly fit the paddler.

Organize the gear and packing — pack a kayak with a balanced and stable load for an overnight trip.

Navigation and route selection —

- Use charts to interpret aids to navigation and determine potential hazards.
- Use charts and / or topographical maps to navigate a route.
- Use charts and / or topographical maps to determine possible launching and landing sites.
- Use tide and current tables for tidal predictions.
- Use a compass for simple navigation. Record dead reckoning data and calculations.
- Use ranges and other simple piloting methods to aid in navigation.
- Introduce the use of basic GPS features in conjunction with a chart or topographic map.
- Use piloting methods such as lines of position formed by natural features, built structures, and compass bearings.
- Communicate your position and course to members of the paddling group and others such as rescue services and persons at a distance outside of the group.

Weather and sea conditions — obtain a marine weather forecast, report and observations, and interpret the probable effect on paddling conditions. Understand the cause and effects of currents and winds, on sea conditions.

Group awareness — understand the nature and purpose of leadership in a paddling trip. For group control and awareness, use the concepts of lead and sweep boats, or home boat, and paddling buddies.

Communication — discuss signalling devices such as flares, whistles, horns, mirrors, strobes, radios, cellular phones, and EPIRB or PLBs. Use visual and sound signals to effectively communicate on the water. Describe emergency procedures for communication with Coast Guard, police and the commercial and public boating community.

Knots — demonstrate and describe the use of various knots: clove hitch, bowline, figure of eight, rolling hitch. Understand the fundamental characteristics of line made of various materials.

Cold injuries — Hypothermia causes, effects and treatment (e.g., more in-depth understanding, the additional concerns with an overnight trip).

Camping skills — describe the features of a good campsite. Prepare a campsite for safety and comfort during inclement weather. Using a chart or map describe how to determine locations likely to provide good campsites.

Assessment

Activities focus on the practical skills for overnight trips. Well-developed skills are necessary, such as a strong forward stroke, effective bracing, and manoeuvring in waves and current, as well as rescue skills including rolling and towing. Activities that show control and confidence can include paddling through narrow rocky channels with small waves or current, or traversing moderate tidal races. At this level the participant must also engage in judgment, planning and navigation tasks relevant to an overnight trip along a diverse and moderately exposed shoreline.