



## Quickstart Your Kayak

**COURSE OVERVIEW:** This workshop is a brief introduction to paddling a kayak. Students are presented with basic information on dressing to paddle safely and potential hazards and simple rescues. A minimal paddle skill set is presented and practiced, allowing students to safely and comfortably maneuver on still water.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** To make available a short program emphasizing safety, enjoyment and skill acquisition for entry level paddlers

**PARTICIPANT QUALIFICATIONS:** None

**MINIMUM PERSONAL EQUIPMENT FOR THE CLASS:**  
None

**COURSE DURATION:** Three + hours at Instructor's discretion

**LOCATION:** Quietwater

**SUCCESSIVE COURSES:** Intro to Kayak, Essentials of Kayak Touring, Essentials of River Kayak

The following is a summary of course content for the Quickstart Paddling program. The content and sequence of instruction should be arranged to best fit the students' needs, classroom location and time allowances.

### 1) INTRODUCTION AND LOGISTICS (10 minutes)

- Welcome
- Introduction of instructors and participants
- Course overview with expectations and limitations, and time frame
- Waiver, assumption of risk, and medical form
- PFD policy (wear at all times on water)
- Site specifics: sequence, regrouping, toilet facilities, and alternate possibilities

### 2) PERSONAL PREPARATION (5 minutes)

- Personal Behavior:
  - a. No alcohol/ substance abuse
  - b. Private property rights
  - c. Litter
  - d. Etiquette (at put-in & take-out, on water, noise)

- Personal Skills:
  - a. Swimming ability (identify non-swimmers in class)
  - b. Physical fitness and warm ups (see handout)
  - c. Paddling and boat handling
  - d. Safety and rescue
  - e. (Optional) first aid and CPR
  - f. Personal Equipment

### 3) SAFETY AND RESCUE (40 minutes)

- Life jackets (PFD): types, materials, correct fit
- Possible Hazards:
  - a. Current
  - b. Strainers
  - c. 3 W's- wind, waves, weather
- Hypothermia-Help & Huddle, appropriate clothing
- Hyperthermia-hydrate often and early, appropriate clothing
- Rescue:
  - a. Rescue Sequence: RETHROG
  - b. Rescue Priorities: people, boats, gear
- Demonstrate or Discuss:
  - a. Water confidence and comfort test
  - b. Effective rescue techniques

### 4) EQUIPMENT (15 minutes)

- Kayak: types, parts, materials
- Paddles: types, parts, hand positions, sizing

### 5) GETTING STARTED (30 minutes)

- Car Topping: racks, tie downs, loading and unloading
- Kayak Carries
- Launching: from land or docks
- Trim
- Positions of paddle and posture
- Terminology: onside, offside, etc.
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### 6) MANUVERS (1 hour, 45 minutes)

- Forward: Hull moves forward in a straight line.
- Forward Stopping: boat stops within a reasonable distance.
- Spin: (onside & offside) Hull pivots from standstill.
- Turn: Hull turns while underway
- Abeam: Hull moves sideway from standstill



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### **7) CONCLUSION** (15 minutes)

- Course Review
- Course Limitations (not advanced)
- Need for further instructions, practice, and experience
- ACA membership/participation cards
- Local paddle clubs or groups

### **NOTES**