



March 29, 2010

Kayak Instruction, Inc. is proud to support the ACA Assessment Program, assessments document achieving a higher level of paddling skill. ACA assessments are an effective way for camp/park staff or any paddler to gain and document their paddling skill level. The Coastal Kayaking Day -Trip Leading Assessment is a requirement of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to receive a State of Texas Paddlecraft License.

Kayak Instruction's ACA assessment programs are offered as one or two day programs. Kayaks, paddles and equipment can be provided to the paddler or students can provided their own equipment.

Our affordable one or two day assessment sessions are offered as private classes or for small groups of paddlers.

One Day Assessment Sessions:

Private Lesson:	\$250.00
Group of Two or Three Paddlers:	\$175.00 per paddler
Group of Four to Five Paddlers:	\$125.00 per paddler

Two Day Assessment Sessions:

Private Lesson:	\$500.00
Group of Two to Three Paddlers:	\$350.00 per paddler
Group of Four to Five:	\$250.00 per paddler

Kayak Instruction, Inc. is available to travel to provide an assessment program at a location near you. Travel expenses, based on location, will be added to the stated session fee, please ask for details.

Please see below for details of the ACA Assessment Program.

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Overview of River Kayak Assessment Levels

The ACA skills assessment system is designed to supplement ACA River Kayak courses to clarify the paddler's path of progression, identify skill and knowledge level at the time of assessment, and assist in risk management decisions for river kayakers.

The following levels indicate an increasing level of skill, knowledge, river kayaking experience... This is a new program (2010) to the ACA. The assessments will be carried out for the public by Instructors.

This is a general summary. For a more detailed look at specific skill sets, see the Assessment Outlines for each level.

Level 1: Beginner any type kayak

Has the ability to do the following in a safe manner:

- Can paddle effectively with good maneuvering ability in calm water. Has fundamental safety knowledge and the ability to perform an assisted and self rescue in a competent manner. Knows the limitations of different types of craft, skill and experience.

Level 2: Practiced novice with a river or, recreational kayak (skirt optional) with appropriate flotation, sit-on-top, or inflatable kayak. Must have all L 1 skills and the ability to do the following in a safe manner:

- Perform basic strokes and maneuvers in moving water up through class 1 rapids.
- Perform an assisted deep water rescue and self-rescue in moving water.

L2 paddlers will have some experience paddling on rivers for short day trips.

Level 3: (Intermediate) River, or recreational kayak with spray skirt and appropriate flotation.

Has the ability to do the following in a safe manner:

- Perform basic strokes and maneuvers in rapids up through class II.
- Hold a kayak on edge using boat tilt and perform turns and maneuvers using boat tilt.
- Brace to prevent capsize.
- Perform assisted and self rescues in moving water and up through class II rapids.
- Knows and can use basic wading techniques.

L3 paddlers will have experience paddling on short day trips on easy whitewater rivers rated up to class I/II, with good working knowledge of planning, equipment judgment, river running technique and group leadership necessary on such trips.

Level 4: (Intermediate/Advanced) River kayak with spray skirt and appropriate flotation

Has the ability to do the following in a competent safe manner:

- Perform a wide general range of strokes and maneuvers efficiently and with grace and style in up through class III rapids.
- Effectively brace in class II/III rapids.
- Use efficient boat tilt (edging) for a variety of maneuvers in class II/III rapids
- Paddle efficiently with control in any direction in class II/III rapids.
- Front surf with good boat control to jet ferry, etc.

- Perform maneuvers, including ferrying and eddy turns, with good boat control.
 - Perform a variety of assisted rescues and self rescue in up through class III conditions.
 - Perform a roll in class II water.
 - Use a variety of unpinning techniques for pinned paddlecraft.
- L4 paddlers will have experience paddling on river day trips of 6 or more miles in class II/III conditions, with good working knowledge of the planning, equipment, judgment, river running technique and group leadership necessary for such trips.

Level 5: Advanced, river kayak with spray skirt and appropriate flotation
L5 Advanced Whitewater Assessment: is already possessing L 4 Assessment competence in whitewater with sufficient knowledge and skills to comfortably paddle and maneuver on class III/IV Rivers. Emphasis is on judgment, on-water management, river reading and risk management. The candidates must be able to paddle comfortably and proficiently on Class IV rapids. Prior completion of a whitewater rescue class is strongly suggested.

Recommended Courses as partial preparation for Assessments

Important note: Taking courses is an important phase of training for kayakers, but the courses alone are not enough. Follow-up practice, time on the water, and the experience gained by paddling in varying conditions is the best way to learn and absorb the skills introduced in a course. River sense and good judgment are learned over a period of time. There is a major difference between an assessment and a course. The course introduces a set of skills and body of knowledge to the student. An assessment measures the ability to use various skills and knowledge and rates the paddler accordingly. The courses listed below are recommended for each assessment level, but the skills covered in each course must be learned and absorbed in order to pass an assessment. As noted in the assessment descriptions above, paddling experience is also necessary and important.

- L1—Introduction to Kayak.
- L2—Essentials of River Kayaking.
- L3—River Kayaking
- L4—Whitewater Kayaking..
- L5 – Advanced White Water Kayaking.

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Kayaking – Level 1 Skills Assessment

ASSESSOR: Level 1 or higher Kayak Instructor
VENUE: Fatwater within swimming distance of shore

KAYAK & EQUIPMENT

- General purpose kayaks equipped with suitable floatation and grab loops
- PFD, paddle, food, drink, spare clothing and whistle
- Clothing suitable for immersion and appropriate to the conditions

STROKES & MANEUVERS

- LIFTING / CARRYING: Good, safe technique
- LAUNCHING: Low dock, or bank, for entering boat in a safe manner
- EFFICIENT FORWARD PADDLING: 50 yards in a reasonably straight line
- STOP: Stop the kayak from a good speed, forwards and reverse
- REVERSE: 10 yard paddle with reasonable control, looking over shoulder
- ROTATE 360° ON THE SPOT: Spin kayak using forward and reverse sweeps
- TURNING ON THE MOVE: Sweep strokes while underway to turn boat
- FIGURE OF 8: Paddle a figure of 8 course using a variety of strokes
- LANDING: Return to dock or bank and exit boat in a safe manner
- DRAW SIDEWAYS: Move the boat sideways 10 feet, both sides
- RUDDERING: Trailing paddle to keep the boat straight at reasonable speed
- PREVENTING A CAPSIZE: Low brace to stabilize and recover off balance boat

RESCUE & RECOVERY

- WET EXIT - Capsize and wet exit, swim boat to shore and empty in a safe manner
- T or TX rescue to empty boat and side by side assisted re entry
- Bull doze boat 20 feet to shore

KAYAK TRIPPING

- Experience: paddled at least a short duration (1 hr) and distance (1 mi) day trip

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE

- EQUIPMENT: Have a working knowledge of paddling equipment
- SAFETY: Understand the dangers of kayaking and how to avoid trouble
- HYPOTHERMIA: HYPERTHERMIA: Know symptoms and treatment
- ENVIRONMENT ISSUES: Understand ecology, water sense, LNT
- TRIP PLANNING: Familiar with how to prepare for a short day trip
- GROUP AWARENESS: Familiar with whistle and paddle signals and group dynamics
- GENERAL: Familiar with the different disciplines of paddle sport
- SECURING BOATS TO RACK: Attach to rack using suitable knots, or straps

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River Kayaking – Level 2 Skills Assessment

ASSESSOR: Level 2 or higher River Kayak Instructor
VENUE: Moving water through class 1 rapids

KAYAK & EQUIPMENT

- General purpose kayak or river kayak equipped with suitable floatation and grab loops
- PFD, optional spray skirt with release grab loop, paddle, food, drink, spare clothing, whistle
- Clothing suitable for immersion and appropriate to the conditions

STROKES & MANEUVERS

- LIFTING ~ CARRYING: Good technique with a variety of options
- LAUNCHING and LANDING: Low dock or bank to enter and exit safely
- EFFICIENT FORWARD PADDLING: 50 yards paddle in a reasonably straight line
- EFFICIENT REVERSE PADDLING: 10 yards paddle in a reasonably straight line
- STOP: Stop the kayak from a good speed, forwards or reverse
- ROTATE 360° ON THE SPOT: Spin kayak using forward and reverse sweeps
- PADDLE A FIGURE OF 8 COURSE: Using various strokes and with control
- DRAW SIDEWAYS: Move the boat sideways 10 feet with good directional stability
- PREVENT CAPSIZE: Effective low and high braces, with boat off balance
- RUDDERING: Trailing stern rudder to keep the boat straight at reasonable speed
- TURNING ON THE MOVE: Torso rotation and sweeps underway to turn with control
- EDDY TURNS and PEEL OUTS: using edging and torso rotation in and out of gentle eddies
- FERRYING: forward ferrying across moving water from eddy to eddy with controlled angle

RESCUE & RECOVERY

- WET EXIT: Capsize, *spray skirt optional , knows emergency procedure w/o release grab loop
- DEEP-WATER RESCUE: Assisted drain T or TX and re-enter both as victim and rescuer
- SWIM RESCUE: Swim to shore in moving water, using defensive and offensive technique
- BULLDOZING: Demonstrate boat bumping an empty boat to shore
- THROW BAG: use as victim and rescuer, must be able to throw a rope 30 ft across a 4 foot line

DEVELOPING SKILLS (not required to pass)

- BOW DRAW: with good paddle articulation
- ESKIMO RECOVERY: as victim and rescuer, use the boat or paddle to allow righting a capsize with paddler staying in the kayak
- EDGING ~ BOAT TILT: Paddle a circle while edging to each side
- ESKIMO ROLL: using a safe technique
- BACK FERRY: With control in moving water

KAYAK TRIPPING

- ONE MOVING WATER DAY TRIP: Has taken at least one day trip of 3 miles

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE

- EQUIPMENT: Have a working knowledge of river paddling equipment
- SAFETY: Understand the risks of river kayaking and avoidance techniques
- HYPOTHERMIA ~ HYPERTHERMIA: Recognition and treatment
- ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES: Leave No Trace etc, ecology
- TRIP PLANNING: Familiar with how to prepare for a short day trip
- RIVER HAZARDS: Able to recognize features and hazards in rivers up through class 1
- GROUP AWARENESS: Familiar with whistle and paddle signals, on water management
- RIVER RUNNING: Strategies on moving water through class I rapids
- GENERAL: Familiar with the different disciplines of paddle sport, seamanship
- SECURING BOATS TO RACK: Attach kayak to rack using rope and suitable knots, or straps

* Assessor will note if no spray skirt was used during the wet exit

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River Kayaking – Level 3 Skills Assessment

ASSESSOR: Level 3 or higher River Kayak Instructor
VENUE: Sections of Rivers rated up to class I-II whitewater

KAYAK & EQUIPMENT

- General purpose kayak or river kayak equipped with suitable flotation and grab loops.
- Type III PFD (or equivalent), sprayskirt with release grab-loop, kayaking helmet, paddle, food, drink, spare clothing, whistle, knife, first aid kit and throw rope.
- Clothing suitable for immersion and appropriate to the conditions.

STROKES & MANEUVERS ON FLATWATER

- **LIFTING/CARRYING:** Good technique with a variety of options.
- **LAUNCHING and LANDING:** Safe entry and exit from river bank.
- **EFFICIENT FORWARD PADDLING:** Paddle 50 yards forward with clear body rotation, directional control and ability to change pace.
- **EFFICIENT REVERSE PADDLING:** Paddle 10 yards backward with good boat control, using correct strokes and edging.
- **STOP:** Stop the kayak from a good speed, forward and reverse.
- **ROTATE 360° ON THE SPOT:** Spin kayak using forward and reverse sweeps.
- **DRAW SIDEWAYS:** Move a stationary kayak sideways 10 feet with good directional stability using the sculling draw and draw from the hip. While moving forward, effectively demonstrate the stationary draw (side-slip) maneuver.
- **PREVENT CAPSIZE:** Demonstrate effective low and high braces with the boat moving and off balance to the point of capsize, followed by forward paddling.
- **RUDDERING:** Rudder to keep the boat straight and to adjust direction.
- **TURNING ON THE MOVE:** Paddle a circle using edging for carved turns. Demonstrate Bow-draw/Duffek to turn.
- **NOTE:** Although assessed on flatwater, candidate is expected to be able to effectively use the above on river venue

MANEUVERS ON MOVING/CLASS I/II rapids

- **FERRYING:** Demonstrate forward ferrying across moving water from eddy to eddy with controlled angle. Demonstrate both forward and backward ferry to maintain position in moderate current/rapids.
- **EDDY TURNS and PEEL OUTS:** Demonstrate eddy turns and peelouts using edging and torso rotation.
 - Demonstrate a C turn (Peel out and turn into same eddy).
 - Demonstrate an S-turn (Peel out on one river side and eddy into opposite side, or across mid-channel eddy).

RESCUE & RECOVERY

- **WET EXIT:** Demonstrate capsize and appropriate skirt release. Demonstrate emergency procedure to release skirt w/o grab loop.

- DEEP-WATER RESCUE: Demonstrate assisted drain and re-enter both as victim and rescuer.
- SWIM RESCUE: Swim to shore in moving water, using defensive and offensive technique.
- TIRED SWIMMER RESCUE: Tow a swimmer to shore from moving water.
- ESKIMO RECOVERY/BOW RESCUE: As victim and rescuer, use the boat or paddle to allow righting a capsized boat with paddler staying in the kayak (Boat-appropriate).
- BULLDOZING: Demonstrate boat bumping an empty boat to shore.
- RESCUE ROPE: Demonstrate a rescue rope throw across a 4 foot line from 30 feet within 1 minute. Demonstrate proper rope technique as a swimming victim.

KAYAK TRIPPING

- ONE MOVING WATER DAY TRIP: Has taken at least one day trip of 5 miles.

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE

- EQUIPMENT: Have a working knowledge of river paddling equipment.
- SAFETY: Understand the risks of river kayaking and avoidance techniques.
- HYPOTHERMIA and HYPERTHERMIA: Recognition and treatment.
- ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES: Understands "Leave No Trace", environmental stewardship, etc.
- TRIP PLANNING: Is familiar with how to prepare for an extended day trip.
- RIVER HAZARDS: Is able to recognize or describe features and hazards in rivers up through class II whitewater.
- GROUP AWARENESS: Familiar with whistle and paddle signals and on-water group management.
- RIVER RUNNING: Is familiar with strategies to maneuver through class II rapids.
- GENERAL: Familiar with different disciplines of paddle sport and seamanship.
- SECURING BOATS TO RACK: Attach kayak to rack using rope and suitable knots, or straps.
- BOATING LAWS: Familiar with local boating laws as pertain to kayaking.
- Familiar with AWA Safety code

* *Assessor will note if no spray skirt was used during the wet exit*

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Whitewater Kayaking – Level 4 Skills Assessment

ASSESSOR: Level 4 or higher Whitewater Kayak Instructor
VENUE: Sections of rivers rated up to class II- III whitewater

KAYAK & EQUIPMENT

- River kayak equipped with suitable flotation and grab loops.
- Type III PFD (or equivalent), sprayskirt with release grab-loop, kayaking helmet, paddle, food, drink, spare clothing, whistle, knife, pin kit, first aid kit and throw rope.
- Clothing suitable for immersion and appropriate to the conditions.

STROKES & MANEUVERS ASSESSED ON FLATWATER

- **LIFTING/CARRYING:** Good technique with a variety of options.
- **LAUNCHING & LANDING:** Safe entry and exit from river bank.
- **EFFICIENT FORWARD PADDLING:** Paddle 50 yards forward with clear body rotation, directional control, and ability to change pace.
- **EFFICIENT REVERSE PADDLING:** Paddle 10 yards backward with good boat control, using correct strokes and edging.
- **STOP:** Stop the kayak from a good speed, forward and reverse.
- **ROTATE 360°:** Spin kayak using forward and reverse sweeps (looking into the turn).
- **DRAW SIDEWAYS:** Move a stationary kayak sideways 10 feet with good directional stability using the sculling draw and draw from the hip. While moving forward, effectively demonstrate the stationary draw (side-slip) maneuver.
- **PREVENT CAPSIZE:** Demonstrate effective low and high braces with the boat moving and off balance to the point of capsize, followed by forward paddling.
- **RUDDERING:** Rudder to keep the boat tracking straight and to adjust in each direction.
- **TURNING ON THE MOVE:** Paddle in a circle demonstrating carved turns using edging and the Bow-draw/Duffek to turn, include the gliding draw to control spin

Note: Although assessed on flatwater, candidate is expected to be able to perform all on white water

MANEUVERS ASSESSED ON CLASS II RAPIDS

- **EDDY TURNS & PEEL OUTS:** Demonstrate eddy turns and peel outs using edging, torso rotation and appropriate paddle strokes including using the gliding draw to control spin.
- **DEMONSTRATE C-TURNS:** (Peel out and turn into same eddy).
- **DEMONSTRATE S-TURNS:** (Peel out on one side and eddy into opposite side of river or across mid-channel eddy).

- FERRYING: Demonstrate forward ferrying across moving water from eddy to eddy with controlled angle. Demonstrate both forward and backward ferry to maintain position in moderate current.
- SURFING: Demonstrate front surfing with control to jet ferry across a wave.

RESCUE & RECOVERY

- WET EXIT: Demonstrate capsize and appropriate skirt release with control. Demonstrate emergency procedure to release skirt w/o grab loop.
- DEEP-WATER RESCUE: Demonstrate assisted drain and re-enter both as victim and rescuer.
- SWIM RESCUE: Swim to shore in moving water, using defensive and offensive technique.
- TIRED SWIMMER RESCUE: Tow a swimmer to shore from moving water.
- ESKIMO RECOVERY/BOW RESCUE: As victim and rescuer, use the boat or paddle to allow righting a capsize with paddler staying in the kayak.
- BULLDOZING: Demonstrate rescue boat bumping (pushing) an empty boat to shore.
- RESCUE ROPE: Demonstrate a rescue rope throw across a 4 foot line from 30 feet within 1 minute. Demonstrate proper rope technique as a swimming victim.
- KAYAK ROLL: Must be able to perform a safe, reliable roll from a non-setup position in moving water.

KAYAK TRIPPING

- ONE MOVING WATER DAY TRIP: Has taken at least one day trip of 5 miles.

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE

- EQUIPMENT: Have a working knowledge of river paddling equipment.
- SAFETY: Understand the risks of river kayaking and avoidance techniques.
- HYPOTHERMIA and HYPERTHERMIA: Recognition and treatment.
- ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES: Understands "Leave No Trace", environmental stewardship, etc.
- TRIP PLANNING: Is familiar with preparation and group gear for a day trip.
- RIVER HAZARDS: Is able to recognize or describe features and hazards in rivers up through class III whitewater.
- GROUP AWARENESS: Familiar with whistle and paddle signals and on-water group management.
- RIVER RUNNING: Is familiar with strategies to maneuver through class III rapids.
- GENERAL: Familiar with different disciplines of paddle sport and seamanship.
- SECURING BOATS TO RACK: Can safely attach kayak to rack using rope and suitable knots or straps.
- BOATING LAWS: Familiar with local boating laws as pertain to kayaking.
- Familiar with AW Safety Code.