



Level 3: SOT Coastal Kayaking

Instructor Criteria

Overview: Fundamentally, we expect that participants should have the paddling skills, technical knowledge, rescue ability, teaching ability, group management, and interpersonal skills commensurate with this level of certification prior to presenting themselves for evaluation as Instructor Candidates at an Instructor Certification Exam (ICE).

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: Completion of the Level 3: Sit on Top Coastal Kayaking skills assessment course.

Course Duration: Combined IDW & ICE – Minimum 5 days (40 hours)

Course Location / Venue:

L3: SOT Coastal Kayaking instructor certification cannot be completed unless during some period two conditions necessary for assessment are present during some portion the certification course. The four criteria are:

- 10-15 knot winds
- 1-2 foot seas
- 1-2 foot breaking waves
- 1-2 knots of current



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Class Ratio: 5 Candidates: 1 Trainer; with a qualified assistant the ratio can be 10:2

Succeeding Levels of Certification:

Level 3: Coastal Kayaking

These criteria are specifically for Sit on Top Kayak Instructors.

The following is a list of the criteria used to evaluate Instructor Candidates. The content covered and sequence of evaluation should be adjusted to best fit the participant's needs, class location and time allowance.

General Requirements for all Instructor Certifications:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Meet the appropriate essential eligibility criteria
- Successfully complete an Instructor Certification Workshop (IDW & ICE)
- Be a full ACA member
- Upon successful completion, register with the Safety Education & Instruction Council
- Have and maintain First Aid and age appropriate CPR
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of paddlesports and the ACA
- Demonstrate the ability to appropriately perform and teach all of the following material unassisted in the appropriate venue

Maintenance Requirements:

- Teach at least two courses that meet ACA standards within the four-year certification period and report the results to the National Office
- Complete an Instructor Update, at the highest level of certification, during the four-year certification period
- Maintain ACA membership and SEIC registration annually

Level 3: SOT Coastal Kayaking Instructor Requirements:

- 1) Demonstrate a knowledge of ACA Paperwork:
 - How to register & report a course (with and without insurance)
 - An understanding of the ACA Waiver & Release of Liability
- 2) Demonstrate a knowledge of:
 - Teaching theory
 - Learning theory
 - Effective methods of providing feedback
- 3) Demonstrate the following:
 - Positive interpersonal skills
 - Appropriate group management skills (including leadership and judgment)
 - Ability to choose an appropriate venue / class site



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- 4) Demonstrate the ability to effectively and efficiently perform, assess and teach the basic paddle strokes and maneuvers, to include:
 - Forward (touring & power)
 - Reverse & stopping
 - Forward and reverse sweeps
 - Draw (in-water / out-of-water/sculling)
 - High and low braces
 - Sculling brace
 - Stern rudder
 - Low brace turn
 - High brace turn
 - Bow rudder
 - Side-slip
 - Draw on the move

- 5) Demonstrate the understanding of and the ability to effectively and efficiently perform, assess and teach boat control skills, to include:
 - Edge awareness and control
 - Launching and landing in a variety of conditions
 - Forward paddling, reverse paddling and maneuvering in a variety of sea states, wind conditions, wind directions and tidal current up to the Level 3:SOTCK certification course venue

- 6) Demonstrate the ability to effectively and efficiently perform, assess and teach rescue techniques in a variety of sea states, wind conditions, wind directions and tidal current up to the Level 3: SOTCK certification course venue:
 - Capsize “exit” techniques (with thigh-straps if appropriate)
 - Self-Rescue (BBL (body, butt, leg) and scramble with and without a paddle float/assisting devices)
 - Side by side assisted rescue
 - Injured paddler rescue
 - Unresponsive paddler rescue
 - Management of fishing rods, gear (knife, scissors, etc.) and tie downs

Also have working knowledge and individual proficiency with the following:

- Anchoring and systems (trolley, anchor rode 3 X depth)
 - Sea anchor (drogues), and drag chains
 - Proper fit and use of thigh straps
- 7) Demonstrate knowledge of, and ability to effectively and efficiently perform, assess and teach, the following:
 - Safety issues and hazards of coastal kayaking
 - Development of a float plan
 - Equipment selection / packing
 - Weather forecasting resources and interpretation
 - Leave No Trace, understanding ecology, conservation and stewardship
 - Basic chart reading and use
 - Hypothermia and hyperthermia; prevention and treatment
 - Signaling devices and safety equipment
 - Boat traffic, Rules of the Road
 - Kayak design and equipment
 - Kayak towing technique



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- 8) Demonstrate the ability to effectively and efficiently perform, assess and teach group and incident management skills and concepts, to include:
- Communication and signaling (VHF radio protocol / pyrotechnics / smoke)
 - Situational awareness
 - Appropriate leadership, judgment and group management in a variety of open water coastal environments