



# Level 1: Introduction to Stand Up Paddleboarding

## (Sample Skills Course)

**Course Overview:** The **Introduction to Stand Up Paddleboarding** course is designed to introduce and expose the participant to sufficient skills and knowledge, so that they can enjoy the sport of Stand Up Paddleboarding in a calm, flat water setting.

### **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.*

**Minimum Personal Equipment:** Properly fitted PFD, SUP paddle, Stand Up Paddleboard, appropriate clothing for the weather.

**Instructors:** ACA Level 1: Introduction to Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP) or higher

**Course Prerequisites:** None



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**Course Duration:** Approximately 2 hours (or more at instructor discretion)

**Course Location / Venue:** Calm, flat water, protected from wind, waves and outside boat traffic, with no apparent current, and within swimming distance of shore.

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

### Succeeding courses:

Level 2: Essentials of Stand Up Paddleboarding

Level 3: River Stand Up Paddleboarding

Level 3: Surf Stand Up Paddleboarding (under development)

The following is a general summary of course content for the **Introduction to Stand Up Paddleboarding** course. The content covered and sequence of instruction should be adjusted to best fit the participant's needs, class location and time allowance.

### Course Content

#### Introduction, Expectations, & Logistics:

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

#### The Paddling Environment:

- Wind
- Waves
- Weather
- Water

#### Personal Preparation:

- Personal ability
- Swimming ability

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

#### On Shore Presentations

- Personal clothing, wetsuits and gear (shoes or no shoes – depends on environment)
- PFD's (required by Coast Guard law outside of surf zone)
- Safety equipment (whistle)
- Short history of SUP
- Basic Board terminology
- Paddle orientation and use
- Concepts to paddling
- Proper care of equipment
- Transportation of equipment
- Correct hand placement/relaxed grip
- Proper warm up - stretching technique
- Board carries: solo and two-person



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### Launching and Landing

- Entry/exit from the shore or dock (deep enough to protect fin, ease of getting on board)
- Board trim awareness (nose to tail, rail to rail)
- Awareness of body, board, and blade

### Board & Paddle Control

- Prone position: lying down (swim position) with paddle blade under chest/belly
- Sitting: on back face of paddle blade
- Kneeling: paddling using double-overhand & over-under paddle grip

### Standing & Balance

- Neutral Stance: toes forward, knees bent, between hip and shoulder width, trim nose-tail
- Board wiggle: legs act independently from upper body, head/torso remain over center of board
- Modified neutral stance one foot drops back 2-3 inches enhancing rotation while maintaining balance

### Safety & Rescue:

- Responsibility of the group, individual, rescuer, victim
- Rescue Priorities: People, Boards, Paddles, other gear
- Signals: Whistle, Paddle, Hand
- Hypo/Hyperthermia
- Evaluate water comfort and confidence
- Proper falling techniques
- Use of board leash
- Unassisted remounting of board – from side of board or from back of board

- Remount board first, then retrieve paddle if it was released during fall

### Maneuvers:

- Paddle in a reasonable straight line
- Stop in a reasonable distance
- Do gradual, wide turns
- Spin: pivot board to onside and off sides (sitting and standing)
- Adjusting strokes and board trim for wind & waves

### Strokes:

- Forward Sweep
- Reverse Sweep
- Forward (Basic forward stroke)
- Reverse (back stroke)
- Draw
- Bracing (High/low, sculling / slapping)

### The following are demonstrated by the Instructor

- Exhausted paddler board tow using leash or PFD tow

### Conclusion & Wrap Up:

- Group debrief / Individual feedback
- Course limitations
- Importance of First Aid & CPR
- Importance of additional instruction, practice, experience
- Importance of appropriate level of safety & rescue training
- Demo advanced maneuver
- Life sport / Paddling options
- Local paddling groups / Clubs
- Handouts / Reference materials
- ACA Membership forms
- Course evaluation
- Participation cards



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