



Participant Assessment Tool: **Basic Kayak Skills**

Paddle Canada Waiver Collected

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student 1:	Student 2:	Student 3:	Student 4:	Student 5:	Student 6:

Paddle Canada Course Number: _____

Instructor Name(s): _____

Re-Entry Skills P=Pass W=Weak F=Fail

wet exit						
emptying a kayak <i>(from shore and on water)</i>						
assisted re-entry as a swimmer						
assisted re-entry as a rescuer						
understand differences of re-entry in single vs double kayak						

Paddling Skills

lifting and carrying a kayak						
launching and landing						
forward stroke						
stopping						
reverse stroke						
forward sweep						
reverse sweep						
pivots						
draw stroke						

Introduction to edging

low brace						
edging						

Knowledge

kayak part names						
outfitting a kayak						
paddling and safety equipment						
injury prevention						
sun safety						
collision regulations						
navigation						
risk assessment and mitigation						
impacts of kayakers on the environment						

Student Outcome: (Pass, Conditional, Incomplete)
 (if a conditional pass was awarded conditions have to be clearly documented below and shared with the student)

Instructor Notes:

Please Note: This checklist is based on the Paddle Canada Sea Kayaking Manual (published in 2025). For up to date skills and requirements please consult the most recent manual.

Paddle Canada Basic Skills Overview

Paddling Skills		
Lifting and Carrying a Kayak The participant will demonstrate an ability to lift and carry a kayak in tandem with another person safely.	Launching and Landing The participant will enter and exit a kayak safely from either a beach or dock of low or medium height.	Emptying the kayak The participant will empty the kayak in shallow water, for example, after a capsize, entering or exiting the kayak at the shoreline.
Forward Stroke The participant will paddle forward on a short journey (200 metres or more) in a straight line under control without the use of a rudder or skeg.	Reverse Stroke The participant will: paddle in reverse over a short distance (50 metres or more) in a straight line without the use of a rudder or skeg, and look behind them periodically.	Stopping The participant will stop the kayak without changing the kayak's heading while paddling at a moderate speed.
Forward Sweep Stroke <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use forward sweeps to turn the kayak in each direction, and • attempt to use edging to assist with turning. 	Reverse Sweep Stroke <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use reverse sweeps to turn the kayak in each direction, • attempt to use edging to assist with turning, and • strive to look where they are going rather than watching their blade. 	Pivots <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use both forward and reverse sweep strokes to pivot the kayak in both directions, and • attempt to edge their kayak to assist with turning.
Draw Stroke The participant will use a draw stroke to move the kayak sideways 2 metres.	Edging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate the beginnings of good edge control to assist in turning, and • paddle forward for 5 metres with the kayak tilted on edge. 	Low Brace The participant will simulate a capsize and demonstrate proper low brace technique to recover.

Re-entry Skills	
Wet Exit The participant will release the spray skirt and exit the kayak in a controlled and confident manner.	Assisted Re-entries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wet exit and re-enter the kayak in deep water with assistance from another paddler, • demonstrate the re-entry as both a swimmer and the assistant • understand the differences between the re-entry of a single and a double kayak.

Knowledge		
Kayak Part Names and Outfitting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • state the basic name and purpose of the different features of a kayak, and • outline the potential risks of paddling a kayak without deck lines, toggles/grab loops or bulkheads. 	Paddling and Safety Equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • list the minimum safety equipment for kayaking as required by Transport Canada as well as its proper use, and • list other important yet optional safety equipment they might consider bringing including an extra paddle and paddlefloat. 	Injury Prevention The participant will participate in various warm-up procedures that can help prevent common injuries.
Sun Safety The participant will outline the positive effects of sun safety clothing, including hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen.	Collision Regulations The participant will state the basic collision regulations as they pertain to interactions between sea kayakers and other maritime operators.	Impact of Kayakers on the Environment The participant will give examples of how kayakers have a negative impact on the local natural environment.
Navigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate the basic concepts of navigation in the context of a short paddle (2 to 3 hours) in protected waters, including: • piloting as it relates to observing landmarks so they can keep track of their location, and • keeping track of time to identify how quickly the paddlers are progressing and when to turn back. • conclude that navigation is an essential aspect of kayaking and a topic that is developed in later levels. 	Risk Assessment and Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe common paddling hazards, • explain how to avoid or reduce exposure to make safe decisions, • use a simple risk assessment framework to identify the risks of paddling in sheltered waters, • explain the basic concepts of hazards, risks, mitigation, and benefits, and • identify basic paddling hazards. 	

Please Note: This is only an overview of the skills taught in this course. It is based on the Paddle Canada Sea Kayaking Manual V27 (published in 2025). Please see the full manual for up to date skills and requirements as well as for more details including course setup, pre-requisites, as well as important teaching notes on each skill.