



Participant Assessment Tool: Level-2 Kayak Skills

Paddle Canada Waiver Collected

Paddle Canada Course Number: _____
 Instructor Name(s): _____

Grading Matrix:
Pr: Student has been introduced and practiced skill -Instructor assigns a P/W/F
L2: Student performs the skill in level 2 conditions -Instructor assigns a P/W/F
Th: The theory has been presented and understood by the student-Instructor assigns a P/W/F
Ap: Student applies the knowledge in practice/practical conditions -Instructor assigns a P/W/F

Student 1:	Student 2:	Student 3:	Student 4:	Student 5: >4 participants requires 1 assistant	Student 6: >4 participants requires 1 assistant
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Re-Entry Skills P=Pass W=Weak F=Fail

solo re-entry	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
assisted re-entry as a swimmer	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
assisted re-entry as a paddler	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
bow rescue (Sw=Swimmer or Pdl=Paddler)	Sw	Pdl	Sw	Pdl	Sw	Pdl	Sw	Pdl	Sw	Pdl	Sw	Pdl
all-in re-entry	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
re-entry exercises and scenarios	L2		L2		L2		L2		L2		L2	
introduction to rolling	Th	Pr	Th	Pr	Th	Pr	Th	Pr	Th	Pr	Th	Pr
<i>towing (*scenario suggestions as per manual)</i>												
towing with a tow system	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
*towing scenarios	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2

Paddling Skills

launching and landing	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
forward stroke	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
<i>braces</i>												
low brace	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
high brace	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
<i>turning/course control strokes: while in motion with little loss of forward momentum</i>												
sweep strokes/pivots (on edge)	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
edging for course correction (inside and outside edge)	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
stern rudder (neutral, pry & draw)	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
bow rudder	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
low brace turns (optional in current)	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
high brace turns (optional in current)	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
paddling in rough water/blending strokes	Th	L2	Th	L2	Th	L2	Th	L2	Th	L2	Th	L2
<i>moving sideways</i>												
pulling draw	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
sculling draw	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2
hanging draw	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2	Pr	L2

Knowledge												
equipment	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap
introduction to tides and currents	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap
<i>Wilderness Navigation Techniques</i>												
nautical charts and topographic maps	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap
navigation tools and activity	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap
<i>Safety and Decision Making</i>												
weather interpretation and basic forecasting	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap
heat/cold issues	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap
leadership and decision making scenarios	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap
risk assesment, incident management and evacuation options	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap
collision regulations	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap
participant lead scenarios	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap
<i>Emergency Bivy</i>												
shelters	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap
knots and rope work	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap
making a hot meal	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap
water purification	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap	Th	Ap
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 Level 2 Skills Overview

Re-Entry and Recovery			
<p>Solo Re-entry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate techniques to re-enter the kayak unassisted by another paddler. The paddler must show confidence and control throughout the exercises and be able to be underway again in a timely manner, demonstrate solo re-entry using a sea kayak packed for an extended day trip, including emergency gear needed for an unplanned night out. 	<p>Assisted Re-entry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate multiple techniques to re-enter the kayak while being assisted by a peer as well as assisting others. The participant must show confidence and control throughout the exercises demonstrate assisted re-entries in sea kayaks packed for an extended day trip, including emergency gear needed for an unplanned night out, • be made aware of the inherent risks in lifting/drainage loaded boats and be introduced to other techniques to mitigate the risk of back or shoulder injury 	<p>All-in Re-entry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> participate in an all-in re-entry whereby two (or more) paddlers capsize and assist each other in emptying and re-entering the kayaks work together as a group to complete the activity in as short an amount of time as possible while still demonstrating good re-entry technique. 	
<p>Bow Rescue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> right a kayak from a capsized position using another paddler's assistance, emphasizing the use of a hip flick present some portion of a rescue kayak or paddle shaft to assist a paddler in righting themselves in a timely and effective manner. 	<p>Introduction to Rolling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand the benefits of having reliable rolling skills be introduced to the safe body mechanics involved in performing a roll attempt the components of a roll with the guidance of an instructor in the water beside them, and know how to access further information and training for developing this skill (books, videos, courses) 	<p>Re-entry Exercises and Scenarios: The participant will participate in a series of group or solo scenarios that increase in complexity and time. Scenarios will include difficulties such as seasickness, shoulder injuries, repetitive strain injuries, hypothermia, and leaky boats.</p>	<p>Towing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate safe, efficient towing techniques in a variety of scenarios demonstrate the use of a variety of tow systems such as long and short lines, pigtails, and deck mounted equipment give examples of the inherent dangers of towing and how best to mitigate them outline the use of accessible safety knives as an entanglement rescue tool.

Paddling Skills			
<p>Launching and Landing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate a variety of boat launchings and landings including beach and dock if conditions allow, demonstrate a safe beach launch and landing in gentle surf (knee high or less) identify appropriate locations to launch and land which minimize exposure to surf and other water users. 	<p>Forward Stroke:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate an efficient forward stroke with attention to the catch, power, exit and recovery phases. The principles of leg and lower core engagement, smooth and proper application of cadence will be part of the stroke development coaching demonstrate efficient and sustained forward paddling during a journey of 4 nautical miles in 2 hours. 	<p>Turning Strokes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> turn the kayak in each direction while in motion (with little loss of forward momentum) from the stern, middle and bow of the kayak demonstrate the turns in Level-2 conditions. 	
<p>Sweep Strokes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate effective leg drive for more power to assist with turning look where they are going rather than watch the paddle blade and experiment with both off and on -side edging. 	<p>Draw Stroke:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use a pulling draw stroke to move the kayak directly sideways use edging to help with weight shift and power. 	<p>Sculling Draw:</p> <p>use a sculling draw to move the kayak directly sideways, as well as diagonally.</p>	<p>Hanging Draw:</p> <p>use a hanging (or running) draw to move sideways while moving forward, to avoid an object just ahead.</p>
<p>Stern Rudder: Draw and Pry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate the use of a stern rudder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> apply a stern rudder in neutral to maintain direction while paddling downwind on small waves, apply a stern pry while paddling downwind on small waves, apply a stern draw while paddling downwind on small waves throughout those strokes demonstrate effective torso rotation for solid paddle placement while also looking forward as well as edging. 		<p>Bow Rudders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate the bow rudder under forward momentum and initiated with a sweep stroke on the outside of the turn demonstrate the turn on both edges (inside versus outside of the turn). 	
<p>Paddling in Rough Water:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate the foundation skills needed for paddling in rough water such as small surf and/or current demonstrate an understanding of how a boat reacts to surf and current demonstrate a ferry across gentle current or wind using appropriate landmarks to maintain course. 	<p>Low Brace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate an effective low brace in class 2 conditions demonstrate proper body positioning for shoulder protection to protect against shoulder injury. 	<p>High Brace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate an effective high brace in class 2 conditions demonstrate proper body positioning for shoulder protection to protect against shoulder injury. 	<p>Low and High Brace Turns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate low and high brace turns should be executed under forward momentum and initiated with a sweep stroke on the outside of the turn state the potential risk of shoulder injury with these turns and how to mitigate it ensure proper body position for shoulder protection.

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.

Knowledge		
<p>Equipment: <i>The participant will</i> describe the key features and attributes of paddling equipment and clothing including advantages and disadvantages of various sea kayak outfitting/design variations. Sea kayak paddle and spray skirt features, designs, and materials.</p> <p>Advantages and disadvantages of foot, handheld, and electric pumps.</p> <p>Life jacket supplementary features designed for sea kayaking. Rescue and safety equipment features necessary for coastal kayak tripping. Clothing design and fabric attributes for paddling in harsh conditions. First-aid kit basics. Repair-kit general preparation and use.</p>	<p>Introduction to Tides & Currents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> state the basic science behind what tide is and how it can generate current demonstrate how to locate and interpret relevant tide heights and current speeds from reference ports and stations in tides and currents tables or websites (e.g., tides.gc.ca), identify on a nautical chart where those values apply and make inferences on how they will manifest themselves given the local bathymetry in the surrounding areas, conclude what current speeds are manageable at a Level-2 skill level as well as how current interact with the sea state give examples of potentially hazardous environments due to tide and/or current activity. 	
<p>Weather Interpretation and Basic Forecasting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe local and regional weather patterns identify 4 different types of clouds and what types of weather they likely precede identify low/high-pressure systems, cold/warm fronts, their effects on local/regional weather identify the signs of weather change describe the effects of wind over water or land including channeling/ funneling, corner effects, land and sea breezes, fog, anabatic and katabatic winds, obtain and record a marine weather forecast via VHF, internet, or weather radio describe and apply backcountry lightning risk management and avoidance. 	<p>Nautical Charts and Topographic Maps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> give examples of the benefits, drawbacks and applicable uses of nautical charts and topographic maps use charts and/or topographic maps to interpret aids to navigation and determine potential hazards as well as identify common symbols on a chart/map. Participants should be able to co-locate those features in the real world use charts and/or topographical maps to determine possible launching/landing sites, possible campsites or other practical features for sea kayakers orient a chart/map to the environment use charts and/or topographical maps to navigate a route confidently take a bearing from a chart/map confidently shoot and follow a bearing for at least 1 nautical mile. 	
<p>Leadership and Decision Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate effective leadership and decision-making in the context of leading peers participate in scenarios and exercises that reflect differing styles of outdoor leadership demonstrate group awareness by paying attention to the location and energy levels of other members of the group while on the water demonstrate the ability to make good decisions for the group during simulated incidents lead the group effectively and safely on the water during designated segments of a day trip or environment transitions (e.g., headlands, getting on/off the water). 	<p>Heat/cold Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and describe symptoms, causes, effects of hypothermia and hyperthermia state and demonstrate the basic treatment for hyperthermia with a focus on prevention and early intervention state and demonstrate the basic treatment for hypothermia with a focus on prevention and early intervention. 	<p>Collision Regulations</p> <p>The participant will outline the collision regulations as they apply to sea kayakers.</p>
<p>Risk Assessment, Incident Management and Evacuation Options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete a formal route plan for a multi-day journey that accounts for hazards and effectively manages risk, assess and mitigate risks as they apply to a multi-day journey with peers in Class 2 conditions, demonstrate a strong understanding of current risk assessment concepts and terminology, participate confidently in scenarios requiring a complex and efficient response, demonstrate effective group management formations for incident mgmt. on the water, explain various pieces of technology available to summon help in the event of an emergency. This can include VHF radios, personal locator beacons, satellite messengers, flares, and state the procedures for evacuation as well as how to summon outside help (Canadian Coast Guard, police or local search and rescue). 	<p>Emergency Overnight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> state the importance of being prepared for an emergency overnight and be familiar with the essential necessary gear demonstrate how to set-up an emergency overnight shelter to keep warm and dry demonstrate how to make an emergency hot meal as well as ensure water is safe to drink be prepared with the necessary gear in the kayak for a possible overnight emergency 	<p>Knots & Ropework</p> <p>demonstrate the use of various knots to effectively tie down/secure a kayak and set up a tarp or emergency shelter, e.g., clove hitch, bowline, taut-line hitch, trucker's hitch.</p>
<p>Navigation Planning:</p> <p>complete a route-planning exercise that includes the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> measure distance on a chart/map for a route that is at least 9 nautical miles in length. The proposed route should include a combination of shoreline paddling and short crossings, and identify significant features along the route including prominent navigational features appropriate for piloting, alternate landing and camping sites, likely sources of water, and hazards. describe the advantages and limitations of a GPS for navigation. 	<p>Navigation: Journeying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use wilderness navigation techniques in the context of a multi-day trip in level-2 conditions such as: piloting, including the use of handrails and backstops, aiming off, lines of position, deduced reckoning, and declination/variation/deviation, confidently use a compass for simple navigation, calculate the group's speed, time, and distance traveled, give examples of how to identify their position to the outside world using latitude/longitude and a local description, record dead reckoning data and calculations, determine and follow a range in either wind or current in Level-2 conditions, use ranges and other simple piloting methods to aid in navigation demonstrate an understanding of the difference between heading, bearing and course. 	
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