



Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring Trip Leader Assessment Course

Course Overview

This ACA Assessment Course is designed to evaluate your ability to perform all of the skills listed and demonstrate an appropriate level of paddling knowledge. This assessment course provides the opportunity for you to receive documentation of having achieved this level of paddling ability.

For successful completion of the Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring Trip Leader assessment, an individual must demonstrate technical proficiency, trip planning, group management and leadership skills in the published course venue. While this is not a teaching award, candidates awarded this credential must be able to provide basic tips to paddlers, as appropriate, to help them through the environment and overall experience.

The purpose of the Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring Trip Leader (Level 2: EKTTL) program is an assessment process for individuals who intend to lead other paddlers, either recreationally or professionally, in protected waterways. The emphasis of the Trip Leader program is leadership. Successful completion of this assessment will provide evidence of the candidate's technical skills and confirm their knowledge, understanding, and ability to plan and implement trips, for a wide variety of abilities, in environments up to and including the published course venue/conditions.

Assessment Course Prerequisites

- Acknowledgment of personal compliance with the [ACA Essential Eligibility Criteria \(EEC\)](#).
- Be a current ACA Member
- Completion of the Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring Trip Leader Skills Course

Course Duration

One day (8 hours) minimum

Course Location / Accessible Venues

Calm, protected water with constant access to safe landing and within .5 nm from shore:

- Winds less than 10 knots
- Waves less than 1 foot (0.3 meters)
- Current less than 1 knot
- No surf - shore break less than 1 ft (0.3 meters)

Course Size

5 Participants: 1 Instructor; with an additional qualified assistant, the ratio can be 10 : 2. The maximum number of participants permitted is 10.

Assessor

This assessment course may be offered by:

- Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring Instructor Trainer (or higher), or
- Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Instructor with the Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring Trip Leading (EKTTTL) Endorsement, or
- Level 4: Open Water Coastal Kayaking Instructor (or higher)

Succeeding Courses

- Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring Certification Course
 - Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Skills, Assessment, Trip Leader, or Certification Course
-

Equipment

Assessment candidates shall possess all the equipment appropriate for a trip leader in Level 2: EKTTTL conditions and demonstrate the judgement to carry equipment that is appropriate for day trips and various group characteristics.

Candidates' gear selections shall cover the following categories:

- Kayak (single sit-on-top or sit-inside, or tandem sit-on-top or sit-inside with fixed flotation sufficient to allow deep-water self-rescue) and personal equipment appropriate for kayak touring. Neither sit-on-top or tandems are required for the assessment. However, if sit-on-top kayaks are used, at least some of the kayaks in the course must be sit-inside to allow demonstration skills and knowledge of both types of boats; and, if tandem kayaks are used, at least some of the kayaks in the course must be singles to allow demonstration of skills and knowledge in both types of boats.
- Safety and emergency
- Signaling and communications
- First aid and equipment repair kits
- Navigation

Skills

This skills assessment is to focus on desired results rather than on specific technique. Assessment candidates must be able to demonstrate safe, effective, and efficient maneuvering. The assessment context shall include maneuvering for towing, quickly attaining the bow of a capsized kayak, paddling on edge to maintain directional stability, using support strokes to prevent capsize, reverse paddling to assist in rescue rather than turning, or similar practical applications of personal skills. The assessor shall evaluate the candidate's situational awareness and ability to maintain group control during the performance of rescues and towing exercises. A variety of touring, sit-on-top and tandem kayaks may be used at the assessor's discretion.

Leadership

Leadership ability shall be assessed during a journey where each candidate is given the opportunity to make appropriate decisions, cognizant of conditions and the current performance capability of the group. Individual legs shall be debriefed to assess an understanding of leadership principles and to reveal the candidate's decision-making process. Candidates must show leadership appropriate to the circumstances, the risk at hand, the individuals being led, and the environmental challenges encountered.

Knowledge

Knowledge topics provide a framework of knowledge necessary for trip planning, implementation, and leadership. All are to be assessed in the context of the Level 2: EKTTL environment and conditions. A candidate's knowledge can be assessed using a variety of methods which may include observation, self-assessment, feedback, written assessment, questioning and pre-assigned and/or ad-hoc presentations. For further detail on each of the assessment categories, refer to the Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring Trip Leader Training Skills Course document.

Assessment Criteria Checklist

Participant Name: _____

Participant ACA Membership #: _____

Course Venue: _____

Course Date(s): _____

P = Pass, N = Not Pass, DNO = Did Not Observe

Maneuvers	Pass? P/N/DNO
Forward and reverse paddling	
Turning with forward and reverse momentum	
Static turns and 360° rotation with forward and reverse strokes	
Sideways movement—static	
Low brace to prevent capsize	

Comment:

Rescues and Tows	Pass? P/N/DNO
T-rescue	
Scoop rescue	
Unresponsive paddler rescue, i.e., Hand of God or boat flip	
Side by side with stabilization assisted rescue (if using sit-on-top)	
Cross kayak life jacket grab assisted rescue (if using sit-on-top)	
Stirrup rescue	
Efficient self-rescue from swimming start	
Swimmer carries (bow, stern and back deck)	
Contact tow (forward and reverse)	
Tow—single boat and multiple boat inline	
Rafted tow	

Comment:

Technical	Pass? P/N/DNO
Navigation	
Boat repair	

Comment:

Leadership	Pass? P/N/DNO
Group abilities	
Environmental awareness	
Group awareness	
Group management	
Risk assessment	
Communications	
Positioning	
Launching and landing	

Comment:

Knowledge	Pass? P/N/DNO
Weather	
Tides and currents	
Conditions	
Trip Planning	
Communication and signaling	
Nautical rules of the road	
Leave No Trace skills and ethics	
Prevention and management of hypothermia and hyperthermia	

Comment:

Final Assessment
Pass or Needs More Work (circle one)
Assessor Name:
Assessor Signature:
Assessor ACA Number:
Course Conclusion Date:
Comments:

© American Canoe Association

Date of last revision: 1/10/2024

<https://americancanoe.org>

This curriculum is managed by the ACA Coastal Kayaking Committee. To connect with the leadership of this committee, please view the SEIC Committee rosters on [the ACA website](#).

 [Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring Trip Leader Skills Course](#)