



# Level 2: Essentials of Sit-On-Top 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 Sit-On-Top 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 Sit-On-Top Kayak Touring Trip Leader (Level 2: ESOTKTTL) program is an assessment process for individuals who intend to lead other paddlers, either recreationally or professionally, in protected waterways using Sit-On-Top kayaks only. 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 Sit-On-Top 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

## 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 Sit-On-Top Kayak Touring Trip Leading (ESOTKTTL) Endorsement, or
- Level 4: Open Water Coastal Kayaking Instructor (or higher)

## **Succeeding Courses**

- Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Skills, Assessment, Trip Leader, or Certification Course
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## **Equipment**

Assessment candidates shall possess all the equipment appropriate for a trip leader in Level 2: ESOTKTTL 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 tandem sit-on-top with fixed flotation sufficient to allow deep-water self-rescue) and personal equipment appropriate for kayak touring. 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 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: ESOTKTTL 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 Sit-On-Top Kayak Trip Leader Touring Skills Training Course document.

For further detail on each of the assessment categories, refer to the Level 2: ESOTKTL skills/training 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
Side by side with stabilization-assisted rescue	
cross kayak PFD grab assisted rescue	
injured or unresponsive paddler rescue, i.e., Hand of God or boat flip	
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:

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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](#).