



Level 2: Essentials of Stand Up Paddleboarding

(Sample Skills Course)

Course Overview: The **Essentials of Stand Up Paddleboarding** course is designed to develop and refine the skills needed to paddle effectively in conditions where wind, waves and current are present. This course is also designed to increase knowledge of SUP equipment.

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 2: Essentials of Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP) or higher

Course Prerequisites: None



Level 2: Essentials of Stand Up Paddleboarding

(Sample Skills Course)

Course Duration: Approximately 4 hours (or more at instructor discretion)

Course Location / Venue: This class is taught in the following conditions:

- Access to safe landing within 0.5 nautical miles/0.9 kilometers from shore (required)
- 5 - 10 knot winds (required)

Note: conditions, if present, should not exceed 1 foot/0.3 meters waves or 2 knot currents.

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

Succeeding courses: Skills Courses, Assessments, and Instructor Certification courses:

Level 3: Surf Stand Up Paddleboarding

Level 3: Coastal Stand Up Paddleboarding

Level 3: River Stand Up Paddleboarding

Level 4: Whitewater Stand Up Paddleboarding

Level 5: Advanced Whitewater Stand Up Paddleboarding

The following is a general summary of course content for the **Essentials of 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

- Water
- Weather
- Wind
- Waves

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)
- History of the sport: indigenous roots to modern day SUP
- Develop awareness of SUP destinations (local, regional and national)
- Board and Paddle terminology



Level 2: Essentials of Stand Up Paddleboarding

(Sample Skills Course)

SUP equipment

- SUP Board
 - Design (all-around, touring, racing, surf, whitewater)
 - Construction (composite, plastic, inflatable, foam board)
 - Parts
 - How to Carry: 2-person, solo handle, solo overhead or other effective means
- SUP Paddle
 - Design (intended use, blade angle, blade size, shape)
 - Construction (composite, plastic, aluminum, foam core blade, wood)
 - Parts
 - Sizing (fixed and adjustable paddles)
 - Effective hand placement on the paddle
- PFDs
 - Inflatable
 - Inherently buoyant
 - How to properly fit and use a PFD
- SUP Leash
 - Types (coiled, straight, combo, quick release)
 - Parts
 - When & how to use
- Safety Equipment
 - Dry bags, waterproof containers, deck bags
 - First aid kit
 - Repair kit
 - Communication devices (cell phones, VHF radio, etc.)
 - Sound signaling device (whistle)
 - Tow Rope
 - Additional gear for your paddling environment (signaling devices, white light, hydration & snacks, extra layers of clothing, etc.)

SUP Safety

- 4Ws: Water, Weather, Wind, & Waves awareness
- Current dynamics and hazards (river and/or tidal)
- USCG regulations / safety requirements
- Proper warm up

Launching and Landing

- Entry/exit from the beach, 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

Stances

- Prone position: lying down (swim position) with paddle blade under chest/belly
- Sitting
- Kneeling: paddling using double-overhand or over-under paddle grip
- Neutral with variation/slight stagger: 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
- Hybrid/Modified stance: one foot drops back 2-3 inches enhancing rotation while maintaining balance
- Surf Stance
- Board Trim: Transfer weight from nose to tail and rail to rail to affect momentum and maneuverability

Maneuvers

- Forward Paddling: 200 feet/61 meters paddle in a straight line without changing sides; must demonstrate on both the right and



Level 2: Essentials of Stand Up Paddleboarding

(Sample Skills Course)

left side. (Example: canted stroke or other effective means).

- Reverse Paddling: Paddle backwards 2 board lengths maintaining directional control without switching hands. (Example: reverse stroke & cross nose draw combination or other effective means).
- Stop: Completely stop the SUP from a good speed in less than 2 board lengths.
- Bracing: Allowing the body to recover and maintain balance using the paddle as a support when falling towards or away from the blade.
- 360: Rotate SUP 360 degrees with limited forward & backward momentum using forward sweeps, reverse sweeps, draw to nose, and cross nose draws.
- Lateral Movement: Use draws to travel sideways (20 feet/6 meters) on both sides.
- Turning on the Move: Sweep strokes and static draws while underway to turn board
- Board Trim: Transfer weight from nose to tail and rail to rail to affect momentum and maneuverability
- Side Slip: Move board sideways while underway to avoid an obstacle (Example: Draw on the move and Hanging Draw)
- Pivot Turn: pivot 180 degrees in place with weighted tail
- Moving Pivot Turn: Pivot 180 degrees while underway with weighted tail
- Paddle a course using a variety of L2 strokes & maneuvers with an emphasis on blended strokes,

controlled tight turns, and efficient board control while maintaining momentum. (Example: Figure of 8 Course or other effective means).

Strokes & Bracing

Emphasis should be placed on paddle articulation (Catch - Power - Recovery), fluid transitions, utilization of board trim, and effective transfer of power from the paddle through the feet.

- Forward Stroke
- Canted Forward Stroke
- Reverse Stroke
- Forward Sweep
- Reverse Sweep
- Draws (side, sculling, hanging draw, draw on the move)
- Draws to nose/tail and Cross Nose (Static and Dynamic)

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
- Techniques for falling
- Board remount: from side of board or from back of board
- Assisted remounts: side-by-side, board flip rescue, or other effective means
- Methods for board and gear recovery
- Towing: contact tow, leash tow, tow line, or other effective means

Day Tripping

- Trip planning: determine route difficulty and skill requirements
- Leader qualities: representing the group's best interests and taking overall responsibility



Level 2: Essentials of Stand Up Paddleboarding (Sample Skills Course)

- Loading equipment on SUPs: dry, secure, proper trim, accessible
- Route planning & navigation tools
- On water navigation
- Rules of the Road

Technical Knowledge to Build On

- Use of float plans
- Environmental hazards: on lakes, rivers and oceans

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 maneuvers
- Life sport / Paddling options
- Local paddling groups / Clubs
- Handouts / Reference materials
- ACA Membership forms
- Course evaluation
- Participation cards