



Definition & Requirements for Guided Mothership Kayak Tours

Guided mothership kayak tours operate from a passenger vessel or permanent base (hereafter referred to as a “mothership”), which is equipped with a rescue vessel. When clients travel in kayaks separately from the mothership, they are accompanied by at least one certified sea kayak guide.

Rescue vessels and crew must be capable of loading all clients onboard the rescue vessels. A mothership may serve as a rescue vessel if the mothership is capable of quick response in shallow waters.

A kayak guide on each day trip will carry a waterproofed marine VHF radio with extra fully-charged and waterproofed batteries, or the ability to recharge the original batteries during the trip. Crew remaining on the mothership will constantly monitor the marine VHF radio during kayak day trips.

Kayak guides will also carry equipment requirements as described in the ACSKG Operating Standards: acskg.ca/standards

Guide to Client Ratios

The following ratios are for sea kayak outings that venture further than four nautical miles from the kayak launch site and/or are overnight or longer.

For mothership tours, adjustments are made to these ratios; see page two.

Boundaries are identified on ACSKG Water Classification Maps: acskg.ca/maps

Ratio Details: acskg.ca/ratios



Coastal Water Classifications

- I Protected waters
- II Open coastal waters
- III High energy waters with minimal refuge

Guide to Client Ratios
Association of Canadian Sea Kayak Guides

Water Classification	Single kayaks	Mixed fleets	Double kayaks
Class I	1:4 2:5 to 8	1:5 2:6 to 10	1:6 2:7 to 10
Class II	2:6	2:8	2:10
Class III	2:4	2:6	2:8



Standards for Guided Mothership Kayak Tours

While taking into consideration sea state and weather conditions, a rescue vessel and crew will be no more than 15 minutes response time from each kayak group at all times, to a maximum distance of four nautical miles.

If separate kayak groups depart the mothership, at least one kayak guide must accompany each group. A rescue vessel with crew must be available to respond to each kayak group; two kayak groups require two rescue vessels.

If only one crew member remains on the mothership, this crew member must be on standby for the operation of the rescue vessel while the kayak guides and clients travel together in a single group.

Mothership kayak guides must be either ACSKG certified full guides or assistant guides, or equivalent. Certification equivalence: acskg.ca/equivalence

For an assistant guide to qualify for leading a mothership kayak tour alone (without a full guide), the certified assistant must have logged at least 30 days of guiding, or equivalent.

One certified full guide, or one qualified assistant guide, is permitted to be the sole leader of mothership kayak tours in ACSKG Coastal Water Classification (CWC) of Class I and II.

When a qualified assistant guide is working alone (without a full guide) in CWC of Class II, then Class II guide to client ratios are halved. (For example, in single kayaks the ratio of 2:6 becomes 1:3.)

When a certified *full* guide leads a mothership kayak tour in CWC of Class II, then guide to client ratios of Class I will apply. (For example, in single kayaks a ratio of 1:4 will apply. Or, if working together with a certified assistant guide, a ratio of 2:8 will apply to a fleet of single kayaks.)

Class III waters can be extremely dangerous and require the utmost in caution and preparation. Guided mothership kayak tours operating in CWC of Class III must follow the ACSKG's Class III guide to client ratios and be led by a certified Class III full guide plus an assistant guide.