

Association of Canadian Sea Kayak Guides

Leadership Course Curriculum



The curriculum is divided into seven categories:

1. Leadership, Communication & Decision Making
2. Capsize Recovery & Incident Response
3. Trip Planning & Camping Skills
4. Equipment & Clothing
5. Paddling Skills
6. Navigation
7. Weather

1. Leadership, Communication & Decision Making

Group Travel

pod formation and spacing
lead and sweep positions
group communication
travel hazards
recognizing individual strengths and weaknesses
balancing the group's strengths and weaknesses

Judgment & Decision Making

importance of forethought
identification of factors involved in decisions
probability and consequence
deferring to the conservative decision
awareness of the group and environment
stress as a factor

Communication & Conflict Resolution

inter-group, group-leader and leader-leader communication
conflict recognition and resolution

Leadership Styles

awareness of different styles
pros & cons of different styles
development and effectiveness of personal style

The ACSKG's primary training emphasis is incident prevention, followed closely by the requirement to comprehensively train for incident response.

ACSKG instructors are encouraged to share with course participants the preventative lessons that may be learned from the Transportation Safety Board of Canada Marine Investigation Report M93W0008: www.acskg.ca/tsb

2. Capsize Recovery & Incident Response

Capsize Recovery

prevention
ongoing contingency planning
assisted rescue
solo rescue
rolling (an exposure to rolling only)
managing the group
post-rescue assessment
flares, emergency equipment and clothing

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Incident Response & Evacuation Procedures

- pre-trip organization
- implementing evacuations
- documentation and reporting

Towing

- pros & cons of towing
- options for towing with one and two kayaks
- tow system designs

3. Trip Planning & Camping Skills

Menu Planning & Preparation

- recognizing and accommodating dietary needs
- packaging and organization techniques
- cooking techniques
- sanitation
- presentation

Pre-Trip Planning & Contingency Plans

- reviewing the group's medical information
- route and schedule planning
- alternative routes and schedules
- familiarization with local weather and sea state
- evaluating route hazards
- assessing food and equipment
- creating evacuation plans

Ongoing Trip Planning & Contingency Plans

- group assessment
- keeping a log
- continual assessment of conditions
- reassessment of pre-trip plans

Campsite Selection

- exposure, access and condition of foreshore
- drinking water
- suitability for group size

Minimum Impact Camping

- familiarization with minimum impact practices
- campsite selection
- cooking; location and fire use
- harvesting
- visual impact
- inter-group etiquette

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4. Equipment & Clothing

Kayak Design & Features

parts of kayak
design features affecting kayak performance
singles and doubles
flotation (bulkheads & hatches)
construction and materials

Kayak Repair & Maintenance

pre-trip maintenance
field repair of kayaks and equipment
repair kits - supplies and tools

Clothing Options

fabrics and layering
rain, wind and sun apparel

Communication Devices

licensing
emergency use
weather reports
storage, accessibility and care
pros & cons of different devices (region-specific applications)

Other Equipment

Coast Guard requirements
paddle designs and maintenance
sprayskirt designs and maintenance
PFD designs and maintenance
group care of equipment

5. Paddling Skills

Launching & Landing

loading and unloading kayaks
beach surfaces
methods of launching and landing
order of launching and landing
kayak stability while launching and landing
group safety

Paddling Mechanics

paddle grip
body position
torso rotation
feathered & unfeathered

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Propulsion Strokes

forward stroke
reverse stroke

Maneuvering Strokes

sweep & reverse sweep
draw (in-water & out-of-water recovery)

Stability Strokes

low brace
high brace

6. Navigation

Chart Interpretation

chart preparation and accessibility
colour scheme
scale and distance
shoreline features
land features and topography
sea floor bathymetry
common symbols and hazard symbols
use of: Chart 1 Symbols, Abbreviations & Terms
interpreting tide and current tables

Compass Use

types of compasses
parts of compass
deviation and variation
orientation of chart with compass
taking a bearing from landmarks
taking a bearing from the chart
planning a route with bearings
paddling a bearing
drift compensation
triangulation

Currents

current tables
current speeds and effects
eddies
narrowing and shallowing effects
ferrying
wind opposing current
predicting slack and maximum flood/ebb

Launching

assessing sea state and weather conditions
near shore hazards

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Natural Ranges

using ranges to determine drift and progress
using ranges to complement compass bearings

On Water Navigation

awareness of sea state
recognizing developing seas
recognizing landmarks

Surf Management

on shore evaluation of surf
refraction, diffraction, diffusion and concentration
sets
launching in surf
landing in surf

Tides

tide theory
tide tables
seasonal and geographical variations
consequences of high and low tides
overnight tide height predictions
low pressure and storm effects

7. Weather

Weather Forecasts

obtaining marine forecasts
update times
terms and language
importance of ongoing monitoring
using local knowledge to interpret forecast

Weather Interpretation

recognizing wind direction and speeds
recognizing fronts and system changes
effects on sea state
daily wind speed variations
lee and windward shores
combining forecasts and local observation
keeping log entries

Weather Theory

atmospheric pressure
high pressure systems - characteristics
low pressure systems - characteristics
fronts
local effects - funneling and bending
onshore and offshore winds
fog