



## North East Wisconsin Paddlers Kayak Skills Class – General Outline

**Course Overview:** The Kayak Skills Class is designed as a short program emphasizing safety, enjoyment and skill acquisition for entry level individuals in the public, private and commercial setting. This course is appropriate for people interested in paddling all kayak craft, including traditional decked kayaks (whitewater, sea kayak, recreational), inflatables and sit-on-tops. The instructors will emphasize specific skills and techniques that are most appropriate for certain types of kayaks or paddling conditions in response to unique interests or preferences of the participating students.

**Goals:** The course is designed to help participants:

- Recall and apply the principals needed to have a safe day on the water
- Paddle in straight line; maneuver the kayak using appropriate basic strokes
- Outfit his/ her boat to comfortably fit their body
- Perform solo and assisted re-entry
- Dress appropriately for paddle conditions

It is our intent to help establish a foundation from which participants can confidently continue to develop skill outside of the class and experience the pleasures of the sport.

**Prerequisite:** None

**Other Requirements:** Appropriate swim gear for pool conditions; water socks if desired; ability to swim; nose clips (will be offered for a nominal charge at the class)

**Course Duration:** 12 hours in four three-hour sessions; split between classroom and pool

**Location:** Classroom and pool locations will be posted in the host facility

**Class Size:** Limited by pool capacity; typically 10 – 12 students

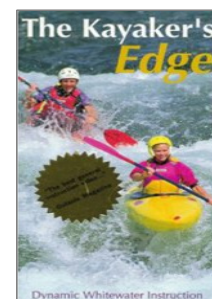
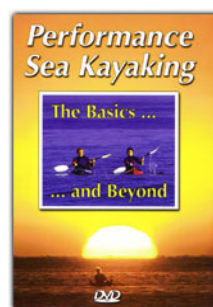
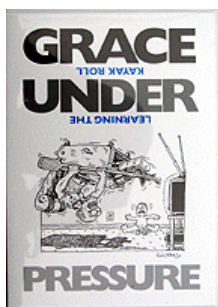
**Instructor Ratio:** Certified (ACA or BCU) and assistant instructors to meet or exceed ACA guidelines

**Successive Courses:** Open pool time, “Rolls and Rescues” class; *Student Outing Weekend (River and Coastal)*; Coastal Skills Workshops

In addition, course instructors and fellow students will share information on paddling related events and activities scheduled for the coming year, including information on kayak swaps and sessions, organized paddles and local outdoor or paddling groups.

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The following is a general summary of course content for the Kayak Skills class. The content and sequence of instruction will be arranged to best fit participant needs, class location and time allowances. Parts of the following videos are typically used as part of the classroom instruction.





### Kayak Skills Class 1 - Classroom

1. Housekeeping and Introductions
  - a. YMCA Waivers and student contact data, label helmets
  - b. Class logistics/ timing
  - c. Safety/ Lifeguard-in-charge / Secure valuables
  - d. Physical condition concerns/ issues/ nose clips
  - e. Introduction of Students
    - Paddling experience and interests
    - Own boats/ equipment? Type?
    - Hopes / expectations for this class?
  - f. Introduction of Instructors
    - Experience/ type of paddling
    - Other relevant information
2. Boats – 3 types (ocean, whitewater, recreation)
3. Skirts – nylon vs. neoprene – fit, tightness, purpose, grab loop
4. Entering boats
5. Paddle Intro – Hand placement and positioning (paddle per student)
6. Wet exit – Video (*Grace Under Pressure*) and dry land demo
7. J-leaning – Video (*Performance Sea Kayaking*) and dry land demo

### Kayak Skills Class 1 - Pool

1. Fit boats and helmets (label both)
2. Stretch exercise – paddle pass rotation
3. Swim test (width of pool)
4. Demo and enter boats (instructor assisted)
5. Raft up – wiggles and J-Leans
6. On-Water Demos
  - a. Demo wet exit and de-watering boats using side of pool
  - b. Demonstrate Eskimo bow rescue/ hip snap
7. Practice on/ in the water
  - a. Break into student/ instructor teams; progress to student wet exit (two times)
  - b. Pair students and practice bow recovery/ hip snap
  - c. Strokes – Forward and Reverse
  - d. Side paddle exercise for torso rotation
8. Water games
9. Wet exit – hang on to paddle and boat; store equipment

### Kayak Skills Class 2 - Classroom

1. Quick round of class introductions and questions/ feedback from last week –
2. Review
3. Safety gear – overview of usage and storage
  - a. Protective - PFD, helmet
  - b. Boat re-entry and rescue - Pump, float, throw/ tow ropes, stirrup
  - c. Signal gear - Lights, flares, whistles, Marine radio, mirror, air horn
  - d. Communication/ Navigation – Maps/ charts, compass, GPS, cell, VHF radio, hand signals
4. Paddles – types and anatomy
  - a. Whitewater/ touring/ Greenland
  - b. Paddle anatomy – length – weight – blade shape – grip
  - c. How to hold the paddle – paddler's box – torso rotation
5. PREP: Posture – Rotation – Eyesight – Positive Mental Attitude (intro)
6. Strokes (dry stroke drill)
  - a. Sweeps - Forward and reverse



- b. Forward and reverse strokes
- c. Side draws – out-of-water, in-water, sculling draw
- d. Show videos – *Performance Sea Kayaking, Kayaker's Edge*

### **Kayak Skills Class 2 - Pool**

1. Find/ fit boats, skirts, paddles
2. Stretch exercise – paddle pass rotation
3. Demo strokes (forward sweep, reverse sweep, out-of-water draw, in-water draw, sculling draw)
4. In water torso rotation exercise
5. Sweeps – extension, torso rotation, posture
6. Draw strokes – out of water recovery; in water recovery; sculling
7. Review Session 1 Strokes (If time permits)
  - a. Forward stroke – down and back
  - b. Reverse stroke – down and back (stopping)
8. Water games (c.s.i.)
9. Wet exit – hang on to paddle and boat; store equipment

### **Kayak Skills Class 3 - Classroom**

1. Quick round of class introductions with questions/ feedback from last week –
2. Communication (paddle signals, hand signals, radios)
3. Group paddle coordination
4. Dry land group paddle exercise
5. Paddler courtesy and etiquette
  - a. Eddies and playspots
  - b. Designated swim areas
  - c. Trespassing
  - d. Litter (leave no trace)
  - e. Fishermen, hunters and sailors
  - f. Boat landing courtesy /changing bags
6. Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)
7. Braces – high and low
8. Rescues (solo – paddle float, assisted – T/ TX)

### **Kayak Skills Class 3 - Pool**

1. Stretch exercise – paddle pass torso rotation
2. Demo rescues – out of boat solo with float and assisted (T/ TX or parallel with paddle)
3. Four people work on rescues in deep end
  - a. Remainder of class works on braces - low and high
  - b. Sculling brace
  - c. Practice bracing using strap pulls
  - d. Bracing – low and high
  - e. Bracing turns and edging
4. Rotate all students – all students must participate in recovery/ re-entry
5. Wet exit – in deep end (hanging on to paddle and boat); store equipment

### **Kayak Skills Class 4 - Classroom**

1. Quick round of class introductions with questions/ feedback from last week –
2. Hypothermia: video *Cold, Wet and Alive*
  - a. Clothing – options for all conditions; dressing for the water
  - b. Eating and hydration





- a. Hyperthermia
3. Other Safety Issues
  - a. On water safety hazards – waves, current, strainers, rocks, low head dams
  - b. Weather (storms, wind, sun)
    - a. Personal fitness and health situations (hypoglycemia, bee sting, sun stroke,
4. Distribute evaluation forms
5. Paddle networking opportunities – Student Outing Weekend (River and Coastal); Washington Island Canoe & Kayak Event, Door County Sea Kayak Symposium (July); NEWP Coastal Skills Workshops, informal paddle groups
6. Collect evaluation forms

#### **Kayak Skills Class 4 - Pool**

1. Review rescues – out of boat solo with float and assisted (T/ TX or parallel with paddle)
2. Stretch exercise – paddle pass torso rotation
3. Four people work on rescues in deep end
  - a. Remainder of class works on braces - low and high
  - b. Sculling brace
  - c. Practice bracing using straps
  - d. Bracing – low and high
  - e. Bracing turns and edging
4. Rotate all students – all students must participate in recovery/ re-entry
5. Individual requests and reviews
6. Wet exit – in deep end (hanging on to paddle and boat); store equipment