



## Quickstart Your Canoe

**COURSE OVERVIEW:** To expose participants to the basic paddling and safety skills necessary to explore the different crafts used in paddle sport.

**PARTICIPANT QUALIFICATIONS:** None

**MINIMUM PERSONAL EQUIPMENT FOR THE CLASS:**  
None

**COURSE DURATION:** 3 hours or more at Instructor's discretion

**LOCATION:** Flatwater with limited wind conditions

**SUCCESSIVE COURSES:** Introduction to Canoe, Essentials of River Canoe, Essentials of Touring Canoe

The following is a general summary of course content for the Quickstart Paddling program. The content and sequence of instruction should be arranged to best fit the student's needs, class location and time allowance.

### 1) INTRODUCTION AND LOGISTICS (10 minutes)

- Welcome
- Introduction of instructors and participants
- Course overview with expectations, limitations and time frame
- Waiver, assumption of risk, and medical form
- PFD policy (wear at all times on water)
- Site specifics: regrouping, toilet facilities, etc.

### 2) THE PADDLING ENVIRONMENT (5 minutes)

- 3 W's - Wind, Waves, Weather

### 3) PERSONAL PREPARATION (5 minutes)

- Personal Behavior:
  - No alcohol/ substance abuse
  - Private property rights
  - Litter
  - Etiquette (at put-in & take-out, on water, noise, litter)
- Personal Skills:
  - Swimming ability (identify non-swimmers in class)
  - Physical fitness and warm ups (handout)
  - Safe paddling and boat handling
  - Safety and rescue
  - Personal Equipment (see handout)

### 4) GETTING STARTED (20 minutes)

- Boat Carries: Suitcase, overhead
- Launching: from land or docks
- Tandem Communication (division of labor)
- Hull Trim
- Positions: sitting, kneeling, posture (Students may select sitting or kneeling stance in canoes).

### 5) EQUIPMENT (15 Minutes)

- Boats: types, parts, materials
- Paddles: types, parts, hand positions, sizing
- Life jackets (PFD): types, materials, correct fit

### 6) SAFETY & RESCUE (30 minutes)

- Hypothermia-Help & Huddle, appropriate clothing
- Hyperthermia-hydration, clothing
- Rescue:
  - Rescue Sequence: RETHROG
  - Rescue Priorities: people, boats, gear
  - Demonstrate or Discuss:
    - Water confidence and comfort test
    - How to empty a boat full of water
    - Boat over Boat rescue

### 7) STROKES & MANEUVERS (1½ hours)

- Strokes
  - Canoe Bow:
    - a. Forward, Forward w/Switch, Back,
    - b. Draw, Pushaway/Pry or Cross Draw
  - Canoe Stern:
    - a. Forward, Forward w/Switch,
    - b. Stern Pushaway/Pry/Rudder, Stern Draw, Back
  - Canoe Solo:
    - a. Forward, Forward w/Switch,
    - b. Stern Pushaway/Pry/Rudder, Stern Draw, Back, Sweeps
- Maneuvers
  - Forward: travel in reasonably straight line.
  - Stopping: stop in a reasonable distance.
  - Spin: pivot in place.
  - Turn: turn in arc while underway



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- Apply general basic paddling concepts.
- (canoe tandem only); paddle opposite sides, in
- cadence, etc.
- Additional strokes or maneuvers may be added at the instructors discretion and participant's needs.

### **8) NEXT STEPS** (10 minutes)

- Course Review
- Course Limitations (not advanced)
- Need for more instruction, practice, experience
- Demonstrate an advanced maneuver
- ACA membership/participation cards
- Local paddle clubs or groups

### **NOTES**