



The Community Boating Center  
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## Intro to Sea Kayaking Course Syllabus

**Course Description:** Introduction to Sea Kayaking is the Community Boating Center's introductory sea kayaking class, designed for adults with little or no kayaking experience. Participants use single kayaks and learn basics of kayaks and paddling.

**Course Hours:** 9 hours (3 - three hour classes)

**Course Cost:** \$220

**Prerequisites:** None

**Course Objectives:**

- Proper paddle strokes and technique
- Self rescue & wet exit
- Assisted rescue
- Skills proficiency to rent sea kayak from CBC

**Course Materials Provided by CBC:**

- Life jackets
- wetsuits
- Sea kayaks
- Instructor, instructor to student ratio 1:4 or greater
- Safety equipment

**Course Materials Provided by Student:**

- Personal gear - rain gear, UV protection
- Snacks
- Warm change of clothes
- Closed toe water shoes - can be tennis shoes
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**Tentative Class Schedule:**

**Sample Daily Lesson Plans**

Below is a general outline of the class itinerary. It is often modified due to weather conditions and/or the pace of student learning.

## Day One:

### On Land

- **Kayak “Anatomy”**
  - Bow and Stern
  - Hatches and bulkheads
  - Cockpits (careful of combing)
  - Seats
  - Toe Pegs
  - Rudders and rudder launch mechanism; compare to skegs
  - Grab Lines
- **PFD's (Life Jackets)**
  - Importance in cold water environment
  - Proper fitting
- **Paddling, On-land Demo**
  - Forward Stroke
  - Reverse Stroke (Back Paddle)
  - Sweep Strokes (Forward and Reverse)
  - Entry and Exit of Boat, On-land
  - Picking up & Carrying
  - Foot – Butt – Foot
  - Low and Slow
  - Adjust Toe Pegs

### Pee Break

### Move Boats & Gear to Launch Area

### Launch Boats

### On Water

- **Straight Line Paddling (Paddle to a distant point --- to teaching area)**
  - Concentrate on torso rotation and even paddling on each side.
  - Catch, Power Phase, Release
  - High Angle Stroke
- **Paddle Forward 10 strokes, and Stop Using Reverse (Back) Stroke**
  - Repeat in reverse
- **Sweep strokes (Forward and Backward)**
  - Concentrate on reaching far forward, sweeping out away from boat, and reaching back all the way to the boat.
  - Torso Rotation
  - Low angle paddle position
- **Stationary Pivot (Pirouette)**
  - Do forward sweep followed by reverse sweep to make boat pivot in place
  - Concentrate on Body Rotation and straight arms
  - How many strokes does it take to turn 360 degrees?
- **Paddle Backwards as a group**
  - Use Reverse Sweep strokes to correct direction.

- **Fun Paddle**
  - Suggest to Taylor Dock area (conditions permitting); practice maneuvering through pilings
- **Return to Boating Center**
  - Exit boats
  - Carry to storage area
  - Wash boats and gear
- **Debrief & Discuss Session 2\***

\*Advise students that wet exit and rescues will be covered and that they should be prepared to be wet most of the session. They should bring a towel, change of dry clothes, hat (wool or poly fleece – preferably with a chin strap) if desired (swim cap or snorkeling/diving hood helpful, if they already own or can borrow), nose clips highly recommended (should have string/cord to attach clip to life jacket).

## **Day Two:**

### **On Land**

- **Review Spray Skirts**
  - Grab Loop accessibility.
  - Proper positioning of skirt to avoid pooling of water in lap.
  - Sit in boats, practice attaching and removing skirt several times.
- **Review Rescue Equipment**
  - Pump and Sponge
  - Paddle Float
- **Wet Exit and Re-entry Demo**

**Pee Break – dress in wetsuits if they haven't already**

### **Launch Boats**

### **On Water(2 hours)**

- **Paddle to teaching area, beyond Padden Marine Dock.**
- **Perform Wet Exit practice**
  - One student at a time; spray skirts attached to coaming.
  - Instructor in the water close by to assist if necessary and to be supportive.
  - Student holds onto paddle and boat during wet exit.
  - Each student should successfully wet exit at least twice.
  - If time permits, have each student hold themselves in the cockpit for 5 sec. before exiting for a third wet exit. Explain “de-conditioning” for cold water gasp reflex.
- **Discuss and demonstrate the T-rescue (assisted rescue)**
  - Communicate clearly and loudly with swimmer.
  - Swimmer holds onto paddle, moves to the stern of the boat, and put weight on the stern to pop the bow out of the water. Swamped kayak may be right side up or upside down.
  - Alternatively: swimmer directed to side of swamped kayak next to cockpit and helps right the kayak by pushing coaming upwards upon direction from rescuer.
  - Drag boat across lap until cockpit is mostly out of water.
  - Drain water and move parallel to boat in opposite orientation (i.e. bow to stern).
  - Instruct student to use heel hook reentry (previously demonstrated).
  - Swimmer brings legs into cockpit, then rotates to sit inside boat.
  - Pump out excess water, if needed. Reattach spray skirt.
  - Each student should perform as rescuer and as capsized paddler at least once.
  - Instructor(s) and assistant(s) will closely supervise practice.

**Debrief and Discuss Next Class**

## **Day 3:**

Students “suit up” in wetsuits and paddle tops upon arrival. Instructor(s) give quick briefing on content of session, and then students move boats and equipment to launch area. Paddle to teaching area beyond Padden Marine Dock.

### **On Water**

- **Review of forward and turning strokes**
- **Edging**
  - Students practice “rocking” the boat side-to-side by using knee lifts and relaxing.
  - Instructor(s) demonstrate turns, comparing turns done with sweep strokes alone and sweep strokes with an edged boat.
  - Students practice making linked edged turns (figure 8s or a course around buoys or stationary boats).
- **Low Brace & Low Brace Turn**
  - Explanation and demonstration of the low brace for preventing capsize.
  - Students practice the low brace in a static position.
  - Demonstration of the low brace turn.
  - Practice of low brace turns at moderate speed.
  - Discussion of the high brace (why we don’t teach, hazards, uses)
- **Draw Stroke**
  - Discussion and demonstration of the draw stroke to move the kayak sideways, in either direction.
  - Out-of-water paddle recovery and in-water paddle recovery during the stroke.
  - Practice by moving toward a specific target in each direction.
- **Self-Rescue**
  - Demonstration of the paddle float rescue using “heel hook” method of re-entering the cockpit. If student is familiar with “scramble” reentry, allow them to try.
  - Use of the hand pump (aka bilge pump).
  - Each student should perform at least one self-rescue using either of the cockpit re-entry methods.

**Return to boating center, clean and store gear.**

**Class debriefing session, discussion of “what’s next,” and final Q & A.**

**Students complete Class Evaluation Form.**