

OCEAN RIVER ADVENTURES



BALANCE & BRACING

(3 hours) Brace yourself, this is going to be fun!

This practical clinic is designed to give you confidence with your bracing skills. You will practice techniques to balance your kayak on edge and use the low brace, high brace, and sculling brace to prevent a possible capsize. As well, you will learn to scull for support, a skill which can be used to prevent immersion during a partial capsize. As an added option, you may want to try the balance brace, a method to lay on the surface of the water while remaining seated in your kayak. This bracing technique was used by traditional Inuit kayakers for resting while at sea. You will feel empowered after gaining these skills!

Prerequisites

Before taking this clinic, we recommend that you have basic kayaking skills and rescue skills.

Itinerary

If Your Course Takes Place at Crystal Pool

Meet at **6:30 pm at Crystal Pool**, 2275 Quadra Street (south of Bay Street), Victoria, BC. Please arrive 10-15 minutes early. Please meet at the rear of Crystal Pool, on the opposite side of the building from the front doors. Because this is after regular pool hours, you will not be entering or exiting using the front doors; rather, we'll come and go using the back doors where we are able to load our kayaks and gear. Access to the rear of the building is gained via a service lane off Queens Avenue. Parking is not permitted on this service lane. Parking is available in parking lots on the west and north side of Crystal Pool, or on Queens Avenue.

If you are providing your own kayak for the program, please ensure it is clean and free of sand or gravel before bringing into the pool building.

Please **remove your street shoes** before entering the pool deck through the back entrance. This can be a bit challenging if you are carrying a kayak. Usually, there are people "on deck" to whom you can pass your kayak. Approximately half the people can be outside, and half the people can be inside while we load the kayaks into the pool building. If everyone chips in, things run quite smooth-

ly. When on the pool deck, most people wear paddling shoes, such as sport sandals (with heel straps), running shoes, wetsuit booties, or reef shoes.

Change rooms are located halfway up each side of the pool deck. The Women's Change Room is found on the right side of the pool, whereas the Men's Change Room is located on the left side of the pool. Lockers are available in the change rooms for 50 cents (at the time of writing).

If Your Course Takes Place at Ocean River Sports (in the Upper Harbour)

Meet your instructor(s) and other participants at **9:30 am at Ocean River Sports**, 1630 Store Street, Victoria, BC. Please arrive 10–15 minutes early for your program and check in at the Adventure Centre at the rear of the store. If you are driving, there is pay parking available beside Ocean River Sports or in other pay parking lots in the downtown area. You are responsible for payment of the parking fee. (Note: free roadside parking is available on Sundays). If you are parking a vehicle, we cannot be responsible for damage to or loss of your personal items, so please don't leave valuables locked in your vehicle.

If you are bringing your own kayak, you can drive down beside Ocean River Sports to drop off your kayak, then carry it along the ramp to the dock. If you are providing your own kayak for the program, please allow yourself enough time to unload your kayak. If you wish to make arrangements to drop off your kayak in advance of the program (e.g., the day before), we may be able to store it for you. Please contact our Adventure Centre to make these arrangements.

If you are renting a kayak from us, your kayak will be reserved for you and located on our dock.

After meeting and greeting all, we will be launching from our dock behind Ocean River Sports

We cannot be responsible for damage to or loss of your personal items, so please ensure valuables are stored securely. You can store your valuables in the watertight storage compartments (hatches) of your kayak. If you are doing this, place your valuables in a small bag, sack, or pack lined with a plastic bag to ensure dryness. Wetsuits will be available for you to wear if your course is outdoors (i.e., not in the pool). If you have your own drysuit or wetsuit, bring this for yourself.

What You Will Experience

After meeting your instructor(s) and classmates, you will learn the following skills:

- Edging a kayak
- Low brace
- High brace
- Sculling brace
- Balance brace (optional)
- Sculling for support

For your safety and enjoyment, we ensure that groups with more than 4 participants are led by two experienced instructors. Our minimum group size is 3 participants and 1 instructor; our maximum group size is 8 participants and 2 instructors.

Equipment List

Kayak and Paddling Gear

You will need a sea kayak and paddling gear for your program. You can either rent these from us for an additional fee, or you can provide your own sea kayak and paddling gear if you already own or have access to these.

If you are **renting a sea kayak and paddling gear** from Ocean River Sports (or if a sea kayak and paddling gear are included in the price of your program), you will be provided with the following items as one complete package:

- Sea kayak.
- Paddle.
- Sprayskirt.
- PFD (Personal Flotation Device): Canadian Coast Guard approved.
- Whistle.
- Hand pump.
- Throw-line (buoyant heaving line at least 15 meters in length).
- Paddle float.
- *Spare paddle (optional)
- *Sponge (optional): for drying out hatches

If you are **providing your own kayak and paddling gear** for your program, you must provide the paddling gear listed above, and your sea kayak must meet the following requirements**: (1) is suitable for open sea conditions; (2) has positive buoyancy when capsized; (3) is able to adequately carry gear as required for the program; and (4) has perimeter lines. Please note: recreational kayaks that do not meet the above requirements are not suitable for our programs. If you have questions about the suitability of your kayak, please contact us. If your program takes place in an indoor pool, please ensure your kayak and gear are clean of dirt, sand, and debris.

**Exceptions: (1) whitewater kayaks are permitted on our *Rolling* clinic; and (2) surf skis or Olympic-style kayaks with bulkheads or flotation bags are permitted on our *Perfect Your Forward Stroke* clinic.

What You Provide for Your Program

Overview

Please read the following equipment list carefully, as it indicates what you will need to bring with you on the program. Please avoid wearing cotton clothing as it keeps you cold when it's wet, and takes a long time to dry. Please wear clothing designed for outdoor wear and made from Merino (wool), silk, or synthetic materials, such as Capilene™, polyester, polypropylene, or nylon.

*indicates optional item.

Personal Gear

- Eyeglass retainer strap if you wear glasses.
- If you wear glasses or contacts, please bring an extra set in case of loss; also, don't forget contact lens solution and a carrying case for your contacts or glasses.
- *Nose plug or diving mask, which can prevent the uncomfortable sensation of getting water 'up your nose.' Part of your training will involve intentionally capsizing your kayak under controlled and safe conditions. Nose plugs are available at Ocean River Sports or stores that sell swimming accessories.
- *Extra car keys in case you lose yours.

Clothing

- Swimsuit and towel. A merino, silk or synthetic long underwear top can optionally be worn. Underwear can provide additional warmth, even when wet, and protection from the sun. Females may wish to wear nylon shorts over their swimsuit.
- Footwear for wearing while paddling (that can get wet); e.g., sport sandals (with heel strap), running shoes, wetsuit booties, or reef shoes with good soles.

Preparing for Your Program

Kayaking requires some upper body strength and endurance. If you are lacking this, it is rarely a problem as we don't paddle huge distances, and usually folks get by quite well with only occasional minor muscle aches. However, if you feel you could use some upper body conditioning before your trip, exercising with light weights can be quite helpful. Concentrate mainly on shoulder strengthening exercises, focusing on endurance rather than strength.

Medications

Please be sure to let us know of any limitations of which we should be aware. Please duplicate and separate the quantities of any medications you will need during your program, and give your duplicated medications to your instructor, who will carry them. This will provide an additional source of medications should the primary set become wet, damaged, or lost. If you are prone to any health disturbances, e.g., easily infected cuts or severe migraines, please remember to bring any preventive medications. If you have any questions about medications, contact your doctor.

Contact Us

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