

OCEAN RIVER ADVENTURES



BASIC KAYAK SKILLS (INCLUDING RESCUES)

(8 hours) Start your journey!

This inspiring course will introduce you to the skills and knowledge you need to safely start kayaking. It is suitable for new paddlers on their path through a nationally accredited curriculum; or for paddlers who already have some experience, but are looking for some formal instruction. You will learn basic paddling skills, including forward and reverse paddling, drawing your kayak sideways, and edging (intentionally leaning your kayak). As well, you'll have the opportunity to experience what it feels like to capsize in a kayak, how to be rescued by another kayaker, and how to rescue a paddling partner who has capsized. Finally, we'll discuss useful information to round out your understanding of kayaking, including aspects of boat design, safety equipment, and proper clothing. This course teaches you the necessary components for **Paddle Canada Basic Kayak Skills** Certification.

Itinerary

Itinerary for Spring/Fall Course Dates

If you have registered in a **Spring/Fall Course Date**, you will meet your instructor(s) and other participants at **12:00 pm 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. 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 to the end of the parking lot beside Ocean River Sports to drop off your kayak, then carry it down 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 on the trailer for you. Please contact our Adventure Centre to make these arrangements. Following the afternoon session, your kayak can be transported for you on our trailer to the pool, if you like.

If you are renting a kayak from us, your kayak will be reserved for you and located on our dock. It will also be transported to the pool for you for the evening session.

After meeting and greeting all, we will get into our kayaking gear and be introduced to the sport of sea kayaking, launching from our dock behind Ocean River Sports.

Following a dinner break, we will meet for the evening session at **6:15 pm at Crystal Pool, 2275 Quadra Street (south of Bay Street), Victoria, BC**. 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 a parking lot on the west or 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 smoothly. When on the pool deck, most people wear paddling shoes, such as sport sandals (with heel strap), 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).

During this 'pool' session, you will learn the important skills of how to capsize safely, how to be rescued by another paddler, and how to rescue another paddler who has capsized.

Itinerary for Summer Course Dates

If you have registered in a **Summer Course Date**, meet your instructor(s) and other participants at **8:30 am** at either Thetis Lake Regional Park (see below for directions) or Elk Lake Regional Park, depending on the date of your course (see below for directions). Please attempt to arrive 10-15 early to make sure you're ready to start on time.

To get to Thetis Lake from Victoria, take HWY-1 north toward Duncan. Take EXIT 10, toward VIEW ROYAL/COLWOOD. Once off the HWY, stay in left lane, which becomes ISLAND HWY/HWY-1A. Take the first right onto SIX MILE RD and follow this road to Thetis Lake Regional Park. Once inside the park, follow the narrow road through the park PAST the main parking lot. TAKE A HARD LEFT and continue to follow the narrow winding road through the park and continue past the main swimming beach. Follow the narrow road UNTIL IT ENDS in a small parking lot very near the water at what is known as 'Second' Beach or 'Canoe' Beach. Limited parking is available at this small parking lot. Alternately, you can park at the main parking lot and walk to Second Beach following the narrow road (approximately 10 minutes). Pay parking is available for \$2.25 (at the time of writing).

To get to Elk Lake, follow HWY-17 to the intersection of Sayward Road. Follow Sayward Road west to Hamsterly Road. Look for the Ocean River Sports van and kayaks where Hamsterly Road merges close to the beach on Elk Lake. Free parking is available on Hamsterly Road or in the large parking lots located on Brookleigh Road close by.

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; however, the lakes warm to a comfortable temperature in the summer and you may choose to not wear a wetsuit. Please bring plenty of water and a lunch.

For your safety and enjoyment, we ensure that groups with more than 5 participants are led by two experienced instructors. Our minimum group size is 3 participants and 1 instructor; our maximum group size is 10 participants and 2 instructors.

Weather

Weather in southern Vancouver Island is classified as sub-Mediterranean, and this area boasts the mildest climate in Canada. This means our weather is warm, but not too warm, and surprisingly dry. In spring and fall, we often get a mix of sun and cloud—certainly reasonable weather for sea kayaking, as your spraydeck covers the bottom part of your body and can keep you dry even during some rain. Combine this with a light raincoat and hat and you should be comfortable. If you are concerned about being outdoors in cooler weather with the possibility of rain, consider registering in a program that takes place during the summer, rather than the spring or fall. Summer is comfortable paddling weather, with temperatures from 18° to 32°C (65° to 90°F). The average monthly rainfall in summer is less than 2.5 cm (1"). Actually, this particular region is in a rain shadow. However, while this region is in a rain shadow, we're very close to the rainforest, which dominates the northern pacific coast. This means that neighbouring areas experience plenty of rain. As such, you must be prepared for the possibility of rain by bringing adequate clothing. Usually, rain doesn't last very long. We take this all in stride in the great outdoors! Programs run rain or shine.

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).
- *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* course; and (2) surf skis or Olympic-style kayaks with bulkheads or flotation bags are permitted on our *Perfect Your Forward Stroke* course.

What Ocean River Sports Provides for Your Program

Ocean River Sports provides the following equipment and supplies for your program:

- Wetsuit.
- Paddling jacket.
- First aid equipment.

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.

Ocean River Sports stocks many of the items listed below. If you need advice or would like to purchase gear, check out our website at www.oceanriver.com or call us! Our contact information is located at the end of this document.

*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.
- Sunglasses. Include a strap to secure them.
- Sunscreen: waterproof, sweat-proof, SPF 30 or higher.
- Lip sunblock.
- *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.
- *Moist towelettes for a quick, waterless cleanup.
- *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.
- Comfortable outdoor pants and/or shorts (depending on time of year), such as what you would wear for a light hike.
- Long-sleeved, non-cotton shirt or long underwear top to protect from the sun.
- Warm fleece pullover or Merino (wool) sweater to keep you warm in cooler weather.
- Hat for sun, rain, or warmth, depending on the weather. A broad-brimmed hat works best.

- For your hands, you may wish to wear cycling-type gloves to help prevent blistering. These should be snug-fitting, as loose-fitting gloves may actually cause blistering. To keep your hands warm in cooler weather, you may wish to wear wool gloves inside dishwashing gloves, or purchase neoprene gloves or pogies (a special paddling mitt).
- Extra gloves (wool or fleece) to wear at lunch or after paddling.
- Windbreaker (e.g., nylon jacket that can shed the wind).
- Rain jacket (with a hood, if you don't have a broad-brimmed rain hat). Gore-tex™ or other breathable material works well.
- A change of warm clothes placed in a marine dry bag (available at Ocean River Sports) or small backpack or duffle bag. If you are using a small backpack or duffle bag, your clothes can be waterproofed with large Ziplock™ bags or garbage bags (this ensures you have dry clothes to change into after paddling or if you capsize).
- 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.
- A change of footwear for wearing before and after paddling, such as a trail running shoe, light hiking shoe, or rubber boots. Waterproof footwear is preferable.

Food and Water

- Water bottle (filled): large enough to hold about 1 liter or 1 quart of water so you can keep yourself well-hydrated.
- Snack(s).
- Lunch/dinner
- *Thermos with a warm drink.
- *Hand sanitizer

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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