

# OCEAN RIVER ADVENTURES



## SEA KAYAKING LEVEL-2 SKILLS

*(4 days) Explore your watery world!*

In this four-day course, you will learn how to handle more challenging sea conditions with comfort and confidence. You will learn intermediate-level paddling techniques, rescue skills, and towing techniques for use in areas with ocean currents and moderate sea conditions. To quickly recover from a capsize, you will learn how to roll a kayak! A comprehensive navigation component will be included so you can get out there and explore. As this course features an overnight component, you will also learn how to organize and pack for an overnight trip. This course teaches you the necessary components for **Paddle Canada Sea Kayaking Level-2 Skills Certification**.

### Prerequisites

Before taking this course, we recommend that you have Paddle Canada Sea Kayaking Level-1 Skills Certification or equivalent skills and knowledge, including basic kayaking skills, rescue skills, and navigation knowledge. As well, you should have completed at least 3 one-day-long kayaking trips in different locations. Specifically, before the course, you will have previously received instruction on how to correctly perform foundational paddle strokes without the aid of a rudder, including paddling forward, turning using sweep strokes, paddling backward in a straight line, stopping, drawing a kayak sideways, and performing a low brace. You will also have previously received instruction on how to correctly capsize in a kayak, self-rescue, rescue another paddler, predict tides and currents, interpret marine weather forecasts, and read marine charts. In addition, training in Wilderness First Aid (16 hours) with CPR is strongly recommended.

For your safety and enjoyment, and for the safety and enjoyment of others in the program, please ensure you enter the course with the prerequisite knowledge, skills, and experience. If you are unsure about your level of experience, please give us a call.

### Itinerary

**Day 1:** Meet your instructor(s) and other participants at **8:30 am** on our docks below 450 Swift St. Please try to arrive 10-15 early to make sure you're ready to start on time.

Please bring a plenty of water and a lunch. 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.

During the program, we are keen to help you improve your kayaking and outdoor skills. The incredible environment of the area is an ideal classroom. Depending on the itinerary of the day, we spend between 3-8 hours on the water daily with plenty of time for snacks and rest stops.

Please arrange your accommodation for you to stay within the Victoria area for the first night.

**Day 2-4:** On the second day of the program, we will head out to locations in the outskirts of Victoria

## **What You Will Experience**

Our safety-conscious instructors are among the most highly trained and versatile on the coast. They will ensure you have a safe and enjoyable experience. The course comprises a series of modules over 4 days. The modules are described below.

### Intermediate Strokes

During this module, we'll teach you how to intentionally edge your kayak, yet remain stable, by applying paddle finesse and motion. Discover how to spin on a dime using a low or high brace (telemark) turn, learn how to move your kayak sideways under motion with a slipstream stroke and practice sculling for support so that you will feel 'untippable.'

Specifically, you will learn the following:

- Efficient forward paddling techniques
- Edging your kayak
- High bracing
- Sculling for support
- Forward and reverse turning on edge
- Slipstream stroke
- Low telemark and high telemark turns
- Bow rudder and cross-bow rudder strokes

### Kayak Rolling

You will learn rolling, the ultimate self-rescue technique. This will give you a renewed confidence in your braces and less concern for unanticipated capsizes. Before trying a full roll, our instructors will cover the necessary components, including hip snaps, bracing, kayak edge control and underwater orientation.

Specifically, you will learn:

- Hip snaps
- Bracing
- Kayak edge control
- Orienting yourself underwater
- Rolling

### Kayak Camping Primer

In this module, you will learn basic principles of camping from a kayak, including gear choices, food choices, storage methods, and packing techniques. Information learned in this module will be applied during the overnight camping portion of the course.

### Intermediate Navigation

In this module, you will learn important navigational skills, such as calculating ferry angles, selecting natural ranges, laying out lines of position and using marine chart symbols. These skills will help you to navigate in more challenging conditions, including ocean currents, longer crossings, night-time, and fog.

- Specifically, you will learn the following:
- Course correction through calculating ferry angles
- Crossing tides and currents
- Orienting using a compass and triangulation
- How to use a compass and chart to plot a course

### Intermediate Rescues

This module will cover towing, risk management, responding to incidents, as well as solo and assisted rescues in moderate sea conditions. This is an excellent opportunity for you to practice these skills in actual open ocean conditions, under the watchful eye of skilled instructors. You'll learn to use your greatest safety device – your brain!

Specifically, you will learn the following:

- Paddling skills to efficiently approach capsized paddlers
- Capsizing
- Assisted and solo rescue techniques
- Scoop rescues
- Stirrup rescues
- Towing techniques

### Paddling in Currents

Coastal areas such as Vancouver Island have a great deal of strong currents that could be dangerous to paddlers without the right strokes and skills. In this module, you'll learn to handle currents with confidence! You'll learn risk management strategies, along with how to enter, exit, traverse and ferry across currents.

- Specifically, you'll learn the following:
- Risk management strategies
- How to identify current, eddies, and eddy lines
- Techniques for paddling upstream and downstream in current
- Techniques for crossing eddy lines
- Techniques for entering current ('peeling out')

- Techniques for exiting current ('eddying out')
- Techniques for crossing currents
- How to ferry across currents

## **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 it 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).
- Paddle float.
- \*Spare paddle (optional)

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:

#### Safety Gear

- First aid equipment.
- VHF Marine Radio.
- Signalling flares.
- Large, group tarp.
- Towline: a towline is between 8 and 15 metres long and has a quick release belt and carabiner attachment point. Note that this is different from a throw-line. A quality towline is the Northwater Quick Release Rescue Tow, also known as the “Burrito Bag.”
- Helmets, which we will wear when kayaking in rough water near shorelines). If you like, you may wish to provide your own kayaking helmet.
- Wetsuit.
- Paddling jacket.
- \*If you like, you may wish to provide your own wetsuit and paddling jacket or drysuit. If you are providing your own, please ensure that it is comfortable for paddling for extended periods and will keep you warm during immersion.

#### Navigation Equipment

- Shared charts of the paddling areas.
- Chart 1: Symbols, Abbreviations and Terms.
- Tide and Current Tables Volume 5: Juan de Fuca Strait & Strait of Georgia.
- Orienteering (hiker’s) compass.
- Large chart case.

### 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 buy gear, check out our website at [www.oceanriver.com](http://www.oceanriver.com) or call us! Our contact information is located at the end of this document.

\*indicates optional item.

#### Safety Gear

- Stirrup: 4.5 m loop of buoyant 3/8 inch rope or webbing.

- Small repair kit for field repairs: includes items such as tent pole repair tube, stove repair tools, extra buckles and fasteners, a spare rudder cable, duct tape, marine adhesive (e.g., Aquaseal™ or Seam Grip™), and assorted patches for tent or clothing.

#### Navigation Equipment

- Shoelace or string for measuring distances on a chart.
- Watch
- 2 pens for writing notes.
- 2 pencils for drawing on charts.
- Notebook for taking general notes
- Waterproof case for notes, such as a chart case or large Ziplock™ bag; alternately, use a waterproof notebook/logbook, such as those made by Write-In-the-Rain™).
- \*Marine Compass.
- \*GPS.

#### 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.
- Small personal first-aid kit; including items such as Band-Aids, blister protection, antiseptic towelettes, aspirin, and any personal medications you require (if you require any special medications, please refer to the section in this document entitled Medications).
- \*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.
- \*Waterproof or disposable camera.
- \*Binoculars.
- \*Insect repellent.
- \*Extra car keys in case you lose yours.

#### Clothing

- Neoprene 'Scull Cap' or thin wool toque (to wear under your helmet to keep your head warm when wet).
- Swimsuit and camping 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-filling gloves may actually cause blistering. To keep your hands warm in cooler weather, you may wish to wear wool gloves inside dishwashing gloves, or buy 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.
- 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.
- Wool or fleece or cap (in the spring or fall; significant body heat is lost through the head and neck).
- Additional warm fleece pullover or Merino (wool) sweater to keep you warm in cooler weather.
- 3 pairs of warm, wool socks.
- Rain pants.
- 1 pair of wind-resistant pants.
- 1 pair of shorts.
- 2-3 pairs of long underwear tops (of varying warmth ratings)
- 2-3 pairs of long underwear bottoms (of varying warmth ratings)
- \*Baseball cap.
- \*Bathing suit (the ocean is quite cold, but on a hot day, there may be the opportunity for a quick dip).

### Camping Gear

- Tent (1- or 2-person) with fly, poles, pegs, and optional ground sheet; the ground sheet protects the tent floor from sharp objects.
- Sleeping bag: 3 season bag with synthetic insulation.
- Sleeping pad, such as a Thermarest™, Exped™, or insulating foam. If you are bringing an inflatable sleeping pad, make sure you have a means to repair a puncture, such as appropriate glue and patches.
- Small flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries and an extra bulb.

- Small pillow case (you can fill this with soft clothing to make a comfortable pillow) or small camp pillow (one that can pack up quite small).
- Good book.
- Small day pack or fanny pack for carrying camera, water bottle, etc., on short hikes.
- Spare garbage bags and Ziploc bags to keep things dry and carry personal waste.
- \*Earplugs for light sleepers.
- \*Folding camp chair.
- \*Games, such as Frisbee or cards.
- Small, personal tarp with thin cord; Ocean River Sports will provide a large group tarp, but bring a small one for yourself).
- Pocket knife.

If you need to rent gear such as tents, sleeping bags, or sleeping pads, you can make arrangements with a rental company, such as Sports Rent. There is a Sports Rent store conveniently located one block from Ocean River Sports. Their contact information is as follows:

- Sports Rent  
#3 1950 Government Street  
Victoria, BC, Canada V8T 4N8  
(250) 385-7368  
[www.sportsrentbc.com](http://www.sportsrentbc.com)

#### Cooking Gear

- Stove: a small, single burner hiker's stove works best.
- Fuel: enough fuel for duration of program. Add extra in case of delay.
- Lighter.
- Pots and pans.
- Cooking utensils.
- Knife for slicing and dicing.
- Cutting board.
- Cup.
- Bowl.
- Plate.
- Cutlery.
- Can opener.
- Pot scrubber
- Biodegradable soap.
- \*Small, collapsible sink.
- \*Insulated mug.

### 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).
- Packed lunch on first day
- Drinking water (minimum of 3 liters or 3 quarts per day). Extra in case of delay. Collapsible “Dromedary” containers work well for carrying water.
- Food: nutritious and enough to provide you with adequate energy for the program. Extra in case of delay.
- \*Thermos with a warm drink.

### Toiletries

- Toothbrush.
- Toothpaste.
- Small towel; a Packtowl™ is a good brand, packs very small, and dries quickly.
- Tampons/sanitary napkins for females.
- Additional toiletries of your choice, such as deodorant, dental floss, and hand lotion.
- Toilet paper in a waterproof plastic bag. Our campsites will be near outhouses equipped with toilet paper; however, it's worthwhile to bring some extra toilet paper just in case!
- Biodegradable soap to wash.
- \*Hand sanitizer\_

### Packing Your Gear

- You will need to waterproof at least your clothing and sleeping bag. Depending on how watertight your kayak is, you can pack the rest of your gear loose or in Ziplock bags inside nylon stuff sacks. Here are two packing methods that work well.

### Dry Bag Method

- Dry Bags are especially designed for paddle sports and are available at most sporting goods stores.

### Stuff Sack with Garbage Bag Liner Method

- This is the tried and true method of years gone by. Line a stuff sack with a garbage bag. Pack as normal. Squeeze the air out before twisting the garbage bag top. Don't tie the garbage bag or use twist ties. Simply tuck the twisted end down into the stuff sack before drawing the top closed. This technique is reliable but not durable, so make sure you bring extra bags with you. You can improve the durability of this system by adding a second stuff sack into the garbage bag creating a plastic sandwich. This method takes up less room than dry bags and makes the kayak easier to pack.

### Some Suggestions for Packing

- Lots of smaller bags are better than a few larger ones
- A large duffel bag is useful for transporting all your small bags to and from the water
- A large Tupperware is good for storing wet gear in your car

## 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.

## Readings for the Course

The following readings will help you to prepare for the course. A textbook will be provided to you for the course: *Navigation Sea State & Weather: A Paddler's Manual. Freedom of the Seas Volume 1*, by Michael Parly, JF Marleau, Andrew Woodford & Piper Harris. Please take the time to review this textbook prior to the start of the course. The textbook can be picked up from the Adventure Centre at Ocean River Sports prior to the course start. Alternately, you can contact the Adventure Centre to make arrangements for the textbook to be mailed to you if there is adequate time before the course start. If you are not able to pick up the textbook prior to the course start, it will be provided to you at the start of the course.

*Navigation Sea State & Weather: A Paddler's Manual. Freedom of the Seas Volume 1:*

Charts and Maps, pg. 14-38

Practical Navigation Techniques, pg. 40-49

Navigating with a Compass, pg. 65-87

Tides and Currents, pg. 110-126

Recording the Marine VHF Weather 186-196

## Medications

Please fill out and return the attached medical form and waiver no later than 14 days prior to the program start date. We will need this information to help us plan for the program.

Please note that you will require a **current tetanus shot** (less than 10 years old). This is very important, as tetanus is a naturally occurring bacteria that lives in the soil. If you do not have up-to-date tetanus inoculation, you may contract tetanus through a scratch or cut, and require immediate evacuation. A simple tetanus shot, easily accessible at most medical facilities, removes the risk of contracting tetanus. **You will not be permitted to participate in the program without a current tetanus shot.**

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.

Swell or wind waves can be encountered on the ocean. If seasickness is of concern to you, your doctor or pharmacist may be able to recommend medication to help. Also, anti-nausea (drug-free) wristbands work well for many people if put on at the beginning of a paddling day. Please note that seasickness occurs only rarely in sea kayaking. Be sure to let us know if you anticipate that seasickness will be a problem for you.

## How to Get Here

Victoria, BC, is a small modern city (it's the capital city of the province of British Columbia) located on Vancouver Island. It is easily accessed by air, ferry, and bus. Air Canada and WestJet offer regularly scheduled flights. BC Ferries offers ferry service from Canadian departure locations, while Washington State Ferries and the M.V. Coho offer ferry services from American departure locations.

Air Canada  
1-888-247-2262 (in North America)  
[www.aircanada.com](http://www.aircanada.com)

WestJet  
1-888-WESTJET (1-888-937-8538)  
[www.westjet.com](http://www.westjet.com)

BC Ferries  
[www.bcferries.com](http://www.bcferries.com)

Washington State Ferries  
[www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries)

M.V. Coho Ferry  
1-888-99-FERRY (33779)  
[www.cohoferry.com](http://www.cohoferry.com)

Pacific Coast Line (Bus)  
1-800-661-1725  
[www.pacificcoach.com](http://www.pacificcoach.com)

Ocean River Sports is conveniently located in downtown Victoria. We are within minutes of many major hotels, bed and breakfasts, and hostels. As well, there are National and Provincial Parks located just outside the city, and several private RV-style camping locations within the city. For more information, contact the following:

Tourism British Columbia  
[www.hellobc.com](http://www.hellobc.com)

Tourism Victoria  
1-250-953-2033; Accommodation Reservations 1-800-663-3883  
[www.tourismvictoria.com](http://www.tourismvictoria.com)

Provincial Parks of British Columbia  
[www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/)

National Parks of Canada  
[www.pc.gc.ca](http://www.pc.gc.ca)

## How to Register

Programs may fill up quickly, so register early to avoid disappointment. Depending on the program you're registering for, a deposit or full payment is required to secure your place. For your convenience, we accept Visa and MasterCard.

## Contact Us

Ocean River Sports  
1630 Store Street  
Victoria, British Columbia, Canada V8W 1V3

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Phone: (250) 381-4233  
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[adventure@oceanriver.com](mailto:adventure@oceanriver.com)  
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