

Alaska Kayak School – Ocean Training Program

NOTES I: The Progression, and Skills 2 Master

The Progression in the Ocean Training Program:

1. Get your sea kayaking gear together

This is an ongoing process, or you may want to wait until you've done enough training to know what kayak you want. If you have gear, know how to use it. You'll need personal protective gear for cold water paddling in any case, so you might start there, get your clothing.

2. Develop and hone your skills in calm water

This takes time, some training, and some focus on the details such as names and applications of the strokes and maneuvers, their most important points, and then lots of practice so that you can maneuver a kayak in many ways competently in flat water.

3. Learn to be comfortable with your skills in light winds, small waves and weak current.

After you've developed your skills a bit in flat water, it's time to take them to sea. Practice regularly and become relaxed while performing all the strokes and maneuvers in light winds (Force 1-2), small waves (up to 1.5'), and weak current (less than 1 knot). As soon as you move out doors, you need to add some navigation, planning and some group awareness to your toolbox. The transition to paddling in conditions is best done with the assistance of a professional coach or instructor. This is some serious fun, so enjoy it!

4. Transfer all the strokes and maneuvers and rescues to rough

water: Force 4 winds, waves to 1 meter, tidal streams to 2 knots, and 2-mile crossings. This is where the experienced coach and instructor can make a huge difference in your success. Coaches are old hands in advanced conditions, and can really help you come up to speed and relax as things get a bit "nautical".

Skills 2 Master in the Ocean Training Program:

Force 4 winds, Sea State 3, Tidal Streams 2 Knots

Sea Kayak for ocean paddling

Personal Gear

Preparing for paddling
Transporting Sea Kayaks
Launching and Landing
Wet Exit and Re-entry
Propulsion – forward, back, stopping
Turning, Steering and Control
Balance, Bracing and Edging
Maneuvering
Rescues
Towing
Eskimo Rolling
Navigation, Planning, & Group Awareness
First Aid Skills