



# Level 3: River Canoeing

## Instructor Criteria

**Overview:** Fundamentally, we expect that participants should have the paddling skills, technical knowledge, rescue ability, teaching ability, group management, and interpersonal skills commensurate with this level of certification prior to presenting themselves for evaluation as Instructor Candidates at an Instructor Certification Exam (ICE).

**Essential Eligibility Criteria:** In order to participate in an Instructor Development Workshop (IDW), an Instructor Candidate must satisfy the following essential eligibility criteria:

- Be 18 years or older
- Be a current ACA member in good standing
- Be able to independently participate in all skills, activities and rescues listed in the appropriate ACA Certification Course Outline and Instructor Criteria documents
- Be able to effectively communicate with the Instructor Trainer and other course participants
- Be able to manage all personal care and mobility independently

In order to participate in an Instructor Certification Exam (ICE), an Instructor Candidate must satisfy the following essential eligibility criteria:

- Be 18 years or older
- Be a current ACA member in good standing
- Be able to independently complete all skills, activities and rescues listed in the appropriate ACA Certification Course Outline and Instructor Criteria documents
- Be able to effectively communicate, including effective verbal communication
- Be able to manage all personal care and mobility independently

**Prerequisites:** Completion of the appropriate level skills course, assessment course, safety and rescue course, or equivalent skills.

**Recommended:** Completion of an L3 River Safety and Rescue Course or equivalent skills.

**Course Duration:** Combined IDW & ICE - 4 Days (32 hours) Minimum

**Course Location / Venue:** Class I rapids on sections of rivers rated up to Class I-II

**Class Ratio: Tandem:** 6 Candidates : 1 Trainer; with a qualified assistant the ratio can be 12:2  
**Solo:** 5 Candidates: 1 Trainer; with a qualified assistant the ratio can be 10:2

**Succeeding Levels of Certification:**

- Level 4: Whitewater Canoeing
- Level 5: Advanced Whitewater Canoeing
- Canoe Rolling

The following is a list of the criteria used to evaluate Instructor Candidates. The content covered and sequence of evaluation should be adjusted to best fit the participant's needs, class location and time allowance.



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### General Requirements for all Instructor Certifications:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Meet the appropriate essential eligibility criteria
- Successfully complete an Instructor Certification Workshop (IDW & ICE)
- Be a full ACA member
- Upon successful completion, register with the Safety Education & Instruction Council
- Have and maintain First Aid and age appropriate CPR
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of paddlesports and the ACA
- Demonstrate the ability to appropriately perform and teach all of the following material unassisted in the appropriate venue

### Maintenance Requirements:

- Teach at least two courses that meet ACA standards within the four-year certification period and report the results to the National Office
- Complete an Instructor Update, at the highest level of certification, during the four-year certification period
- Maintain ACA membership and SEIC registration annually

### Level 3: River Canoeing Instructor Requirements:

- 1) Demonstrate a knowledge of ACA Paperwork:
  - How to register & report a course (with and without insurance)
  - An understanding of the ACA Waiver & Release of Liability
- 2) Demonstrate a knowledge of teaching and learning theory:
  - Characteristics of different types of learners
  - Effective teaching methods
  - Effective prepared and impromptu presentations
  - Evaluate and provide feedback
  - Effectively make documented skill assessments
- 3) Demonstrate the following:
  - Positive interpersonal skills
  - Appropriate group management skills (including leadership and judgment)
  - Ability to choose an appropriate venue / class site
- 4) Demonstrate ability to paddle efficiently and comfortably, in moving water utilizing versatile/whitewater canoes with proper outfitting and gear.
  - Boat stability
  - Vertical paddle
  - Safe and effective body usage: Bio-Mechanics (Body, Linkage and Rotation)
  - Parts of strokes: CPR (Catch, Power, Recovery)



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5) Demonstrate the ability to teach and appropriately model these paddle strokes:

**Tandem (Bow)**

- Forward w/ torso rotation
- Forward w/Switch
- Cross Forward
- Back
- Reverse J
- Draw (static & dynamic)
- Bow Draw (static & dynamic)
- Cross Bow Draw (static & dynamic)
- Push Away
- Pry (static & dynamic)
- Sweeps (Forward/Reverse)
- Duffek (onside & offside)
- Sculling Draw
- Sculling Pry
- Braces (high & low)

**Tandem (Stern):**

- Forward w/ torso rotation
- Forward w/Switch
- Forward w/Rudder
- Forward w/Stern Pry
- Forward w/J Stroke
- Back
- Far Back
- Compound Back
- Draw (static & dynamic)
- Stern Draw
- Sculling Draw
- Push Away
- Pry (static & dynamic)
- Sculling Pry
- Stern Pry
- Sweeps (Forward/Reverse)
- Braces (high & low)

**Solo:**

- Forward w/ torso rotation
- Forward w/Switch
- Forward w/Rudder
- Forward w/Stern Pry
- Forward w/J Stroke
- Back
- Reverse J
- Cross Forward
- Cross Back
- Far Back
- Compound Back
- Draw (static & dynamic)
- Bow Draw (static & dynamic)
- Cross Bow Draw (static & dynamic)
- Stern Draw
- Push Away
- Pry (static & dynamic)
- Stern Pry
- Sculling Pry
- Sweeps (Forward/Reverse)
- Duffek (onside & offside)
- Braces (high & low)

6) Demonstrate the ability to teach and appropriately model these flat water maneuvers:

- Forward: Straight 50 YDS
- Reverse: Straight 30 YDS with correction
- Stopping (Forward/Reverse): 1 Boat Length from good speed
- Spin: 360 degree pivot to onside & offside
- Abeam: Sideways both sides 20 FT w/o headway
- Turns: Figure 8 (50 YDS) w/initiation and leans
- Sit & Switch Technique
- Switch Positions in the canoe on water
- Sideslips (Shifts): Onside & Offside
- Carving Circle: Inside/Outside

7) Demonstrate the ability to teach and appropriately model these maneuvers in Class I:

- Front Ferries: To a fixed point
- Eddy Turns: w/boat leans into large eddies
- Peel-Outs
- C-Turns



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- S-Turns
  - Back Ferries
  - Sideslips (Shifts) - onside & offside
  - Spins (Onside & Offside)
  - Bracing (High/Low)
  - Attainments
- 8) Demonstrate a knowledge and the ability to teach, the following river features and risks associated with them:
- Currents
  - Rocks (Upstream and downstream V's)
  - Ledges and low head dams (Horizon Line)
  - Broaching
  - Pins and entrapment
  - Strainers/Sieves
  - Bends
  - Undercut Rocks/Ice
  - Dams/Flow diversion structures and pipelines
- 9) Demonstrate the ability to teach and appropriately model these rescue techniques:
- Deep water exits: Vault and Slide performed in moving water
  - Controlled Capsize: Performed in deep moving water
  - Self Rescue: Swim 25 FT to shore in moving water using defensive and offensive technique
  - Towing a swimmer/canoe
  - Swim a canoe 25 FT to shore
  - Empty a canoe full of water at shore line
  - Canoe over canoe rescue (T Rescue) on quiet water
  - Side by side (Parallel) on moving water
  - Re-entry: Self & Assisted; Heel Hook, Sling on flat water
  - Throw Rope: Rescuer must be able to throw a rope to a swimmer in moving water at 30 ft and demonstrate proper rope technique as a swimming victim.
  - Entrapments (Stabilization Line)
  - Pinned Boat Rescues (Arm Strong, Rope/Vector, Simple Mechanical Advantage)
  - 1&2 person wading with a paddle
- 10) Demonstrate the ability to teach the following safety concepts:
- PFD's (Life Vests): Types, Usage, Fitting and Regulations
  - Helmets: Types and usage
  - 6-P's of prevention concept: Proper Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance
  - Safety issues and hazards of moving water rivers with no rapids
  - Universal signals: Paddle, hand, whistle
  - Weather conditions important to the canoeist: 4-W's (Water, Wind, Waves and Weather)
  - Cold shock, hypothermia and hyperthermia; (HELP/HUDDLE) prevention and treatment
  - Rescue Sequence: (RETHROG)
  - Signaling devices and safety equipment



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- Boat traffic awareness and safe practice
  - Safety equipment: Bailer, pump, sling, light
  - Launching and Landing: Low dock or bank to enter and exit safely
  - River etiquette
  - Emergency procedures
- 11) Demonstrate the ability to teach the following concepts and skills:
- Environmental Issues: Leave No Trace etc, ecology
  - Personal Preparation: Planning, clothing, food and water
  - Canoe: types, parts, materials, whitewater outfitting
  - Paddle: Types, parts, materials, fit
  - River Classifications (Understanding of Class I - VI)
  - Concepts of Paddling (Class I-II)
  - River Hydrology, features and hazards (Class I-II)
  - Group Organization & Travel
  - Strategies in river running (Class I-II)
  - Canoe Carries: Overhead & Suitcase
  - Canoe Trim
  - Posture, Rocking, Balance
  - Trip Planning: Familiar with how to prepare for a short day trip
  - Knots: Figure 8 or bowline, truckers hitch and 2 half hitches
  - Federal, State and Local Laws and Regulations
  - Car Topping: Loading/Unloading (Use of straps and knots)
  - Canoe nomenclature & design
  - Bio-mechanics of canoeing
- 12) Demonstrate a knowledge and the ability to teach the following skills related to leading a group on a moving water river:
- Planning a trip
  - Put-in Briefing
  - Scouting
  - Portage and Lining
  - Group (3 boat minimum)
  - Group Management (Lead /Sweep, Safety, Spacing)
- 13) Demonstrate leadership, group management skills, experience and judgment necessary to be a safe, effective instructor.
- 14) Demonstrate the ability to perform these skills in Class I-II conditions:
- Paddle comfortably
  - Perform appropriate emergency procedures related to entrapments and pin situations using rope, vector and simple mechanical advantage



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