UCLA Marina Aquatic Center

Kayaking Skills Evaluation Procedures(SEO)

The UCLA Marina Aquatic Center is primarily an instructional facility so most of our kayakers have learned to kayak on our boats by taking our classes. This enables us to be sure that everyone paddling our kayaks in Marina Del Rey and on Santa Monica Bay is able to safely operate the boats in the conditions they are likely to find there. If you have prior kayaking experience and would like to be able to kayak at the UCLA Marina Aquatic Center, then here is what you need to do to test out of our kayaking classes.

Level	Equipment	Max* Wind	Paddle Area*
No Qualifications	Single/Double sit-on-tops & seat back	12 knots	Entrance and Main channel
Sea Kayaking I	Touring kayaks w/o rudders – spray skirt, bilge pump	12 knots	Entrance and Main channel
Sea Kayaking II	Kayaks w/a rudder/paddle float	12 knots	Entrance, Main channel and Basins
Sea Kayaking III	Kayaks with rudder – helmets, spare paddle, tow rope (not salamander)	15 knots	Entrance, Main channel and Basins
Sea Kayaking IV	Kayaks with rudder – helmets, spare paddle, tow rope (not salamander), Always w/ 2 nd advanced kayaker	15 knots	Within 3 1/2 miles of the Breakwater on SM Bay

Qualification Levels

The test-out for each qualification level will include testing on both kayaking knowledge and practical skills. Each level's skills and knowledge build upon the skills and knowledge learned in previous classes.

Kayaking Knowledge-

Pass the appropriate level written exam of Introduction to Kayaking. A score of 80% or higher is passing. All lower level exams must be taken and passed before moving on to the higher levels. There are many good books to review basic kayaking skills and terminology. We also have in-house class handouts which we can provide.

Practical Skills -

To test out of each level of a kayaking classes you will need to demonstrate proficiency at the appropriate qualification level. At a minimum the practical exam will include:

Gear Preparation - Gather needed safety gear, inspect and prepare kayak.

Launching/Landing -	Safely launch and land on the dock. Demonstrate safe and stable technique for entering/exiting kayak.	
Wet Exit and Self Rescue-	Perform safe and efficient wet exit and self rescue re-entry using either cowboy scramble technique or paddle float rescue.	
Paddle Strokes -	Demonstrate sufficient forward, reverse, sweep, and draw strokes.	
Boat handling-	Demonstrate ability to maneuver kayak and maintain heading. Must be able to paddle on a straight course.	
Assisted Rescue -	Demonstrate proficiency as rescuer and rescuee during assisted or T rescue.	
General kayak skills -	At the instructor's discretion you may be asked to demonstrate any skills deemed appropriate for the level being tested out. This may include additional practical skills, answering general knowledge kayaking questions, as well as judgment-based scenarios.	
Additional Intermediate Skills		
Beach landing/launching		
through surf zone -	Demonstrate safe timing and execution of beach landing and launching while attempting to avoid an encounter with a breaking break in the impact zone.	
Paddle Float Rescue	Demonstrate proficiency in paddle float rescue.	
Towing	Demonstrate proficiency in towing scenarios, including assisted towing procedures.	

The practical exam is just that, an exam. Either you are able to perform the required skills and answer the questions or you are not. **It is not a lesson.** The instructor will only teach you about local knowledge and the MAC's policies and procedures. A Skills Evaluation and Orientation Session will take two and a half hours including preparation and clean-up. Allow additional time for the written exam. You must take the written exam(s) prior to the practical skills portion. Taking the written exams is free. The dockmaster may give you the written exam during regular business hours but it is best to call in advance to make sure they will be able to do so (weekends are generally very busy). Call the MAC to schedule a Skills Evaluation and Orientation.

You should bring a change of clothes (you will get wet during the wet exit and rescues). PFDs are available at the MAC and are required to be worn at all times and wetsuits are also available (first come first serve).



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