

Beginning Whitewater Kayaking Course

Student Handbook

Spring 2024

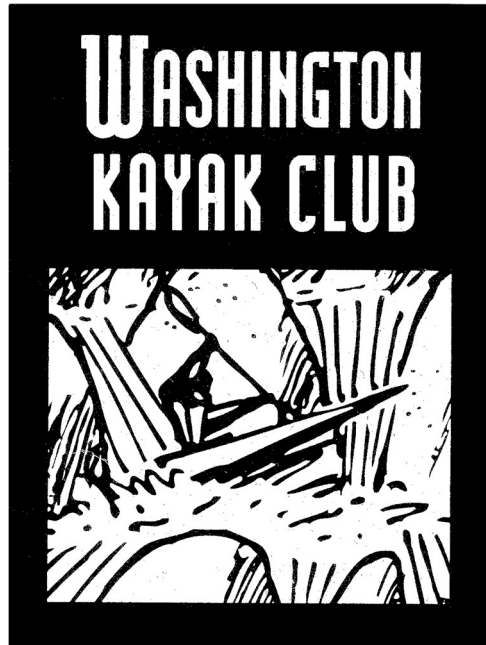


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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Beginning Whitewater Course. We look forward to working with you and helping you successfully complete this course. The methods and techniques you learn, skills you develop, and experience you gain from completing this course will give you a sound basis for a safe and enjoyable kayaking career.

The Beginning Whitewater Kayaking Course is a program of classroom and on-water instruction. You will succeed in this course and have more fun in the process if you keep the following points in mind:

- The Washington Kayak Club (WKC) is a club, not a guide service. The course instructors and helpers are volunteers who will help you learn the craft of whitewater kayaking. You are an equal participant, responsible for your safety and progress in the WKC Beginning Whitewater Kayaking Course.
- Commit now to attend all the classes, pool sessions, and river days. This course teaches a progression of skills, therefore participation in all sessions is required. Arriving late or missing a session will impact your ability to continue with the course.
- Arrive on time for all classes and on-water days. Consider arriving 15 minutes early to orient yourself to any new location.
- Good physical conditioning is recommended for completing on-water days and also for your safety. You are encouraged to start your training before the class begins.
- Be prepared and organized for each day of the course! Read the referenced pages from your textbook "Whitewater Kayaking, The Ultimate Guide" and the listed handouts as well as watch the videos mentioned throughout your student handbook. We will use the river to explain many concepts throughout the course, however your familiarity with the terminology will be helpful for your understanding.
- Have a positive attitude and seek help and information when needed. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Your instructors enjoy helping you. We want you to succeed and continue to kayak (with us) in the future.
- Your kayaking friends and family will be great resources for your kayaking development; however, during this course we will only allow our chosen volunteers and instructors at any session.
- The club is committed to conserving the wild places where we play. Be environmentally conscious and responsible.
- Importantly, HAVE FUN!

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Course Instructors:	Phone	Email
Ross Healy	206.953.8309	healyr3@hotmail.com
Ayla Wilk	276.340.0953	awilk@vt.edu
Chris Smith	206.556.6764	chrisjsmith1@gmail.com
Megan Kelly	509.630.7908	megspk@gmail.com
Jon Almquist	206.498.8064	jalmqui@rei.com
John Kelly	206.327.1896	john.p.kelly@comcast.net

River Information

American Whitewater (AW):

<http://www.americanwhitewater.org>

USGS Washington:

<https://waterdata.usgs.gov/wa/nwis/current/?type=flow>

Resource Materials

* Instruction e-book will be provided free with the course.

Guidebooks

A Guide to the Whitewater Rivers of Washington
A Paddler's Guide to the Olympic Peninsula
Washington Whitewater

Jeff Bennett
Gary Korb (*PDF version available thru AW*)
Douglass North

Safety Books

River Rescue
River Safety Anthology Walbridge
Whitewater Rescue Manual

Les Bechdel and Slim Ray
Charles and Jody Tinsley
Walbridge & Wayne A. Sunmacher Sr.

Instruction Books

Catch Every Eddy Surf Every Wave
Kayak
Performance Kayaking
The Bombproof Roll and Beyond
The Essential Whitewater Kayaker, A Complete Course
Whitewater and Sea Kayaking
* Whitewater Kayaking, the Ultimate Guide

Tom Foster and Kel Kelly
William Nealy
Stephen B. U'ren
Paul Dutky
Jeff Bennett
Kent Ford
Ken Whiting and Kevin Varette

Instructional Videos

Breakthru!; Retendo; The Kayak Roll
Cold, Wet and Alive
Essential Boat Control
Grace Under Pressure
Liquid Skills; SOAR
The Kayaker's Edge; The River Runners Edge

Performance Video & Instruction Inc
Walkabout Productions
Water Works Production
Rapid Progression
Ken Whiting
Kent Ford

Free Handouts (Log into WKC website to access)

WKC website>Club Info>Documents>Whitewater

COURSE SCHEDULE 2022

Day	Date	Time	Session	Venue
Sat	3/2	10:30am – 5:00pm	Classroom & Pool 1	SeaTac Community Center Evergreen Aquatic Center
Sun	3/3	10:00am – 2:30pm	River 1	Sammamish River -Kenmore Boat Launch
Sat	3/9	3:00pm – 5:00pm	Pool 2	Evergreen Aquatic Center
Sun	3/10	10:00am – 4:30pm	River 2	TBA
Sat	3/16	2:30pm – 5:00pm	Pool 3	Evergreen Aquatic Center
Sun	3/17*	10:00am – 4:30pm	River 3	TBA
Sat	3/23*	10:00am – 4:30pm	River 4	TBA

* NOTE: In the event of high-water, River 3 and River 4 may occur the same weekend (3/23 & 3/24).

WHAT TO EXPECT

Student Preparation

All required equipment is needed before the start of the course. Students are expected to prepare by reviewing the materials identified for each session. A majority of the sessions are at venues where access to the reference material is inconvenient or impractical. The syllabus structure builds on skills learned in the previous class so attendance at each class is required.

Class Materials Used

- Textbook reading assignments Whitewater Kayaking, the Ultimate Guide
- PDF reading assignments WKC website
- Online videos WKC website or links provided in this handbook

Pools

- First half hour we will unload and rinse boats, dress, chalk talk, etc.
- Bring all required gear on equipment matrix (pool column)

River Venues

- First half hour we will unload boats, dress and set shuttle for vehicles (don't be late!)
- Bring all required gear on equipment matrix (river column)
- River water levels and conditions are subject to change and can impact class River Days. If an alternative location is not available, the River Day may be cancelled and efforts will be made to reschedule a River Day within a reasonable timeframe.
- Be prepared to drive! We've been known to travel east of the mountains to run rivers at more suitable levels.

Protect your valuables!

Pool parking lots, river put-ins and river take-outs are like trailheads and are prone to vehicle break-ins.

Pools: bring all clothes and valuables to the poolside; do not leave them in the car or locker room.

Rivers: wear money, ID and car keys ON YOUR BODY; do not leave them in the car or in your kayak.

EQUIPMENT

The equipment matrix is a guide for deciding what equipment to bring for various types of outings. As you gain experience, you will learn whether you are generally cold or warm in various conditions and you will see which items you seem never to use and which items you always wish you had. For the duration of this class, however, please follow the matrix below.

Unfamiliar with how to transport kayaks on your vehicle? Review this video by NRS to help get you started (<http://www.nrs.com/learn/loading-kayaks-vehicle.asp>). Please let us know if you have any questions!

YOU ARE EXPECTED TO HAVE ALL REQUIRED EQUIPMENT BY THE FIRST DAY OF THE COURSE!

EQUIPMENT MATRIX		
Key: (X) Required Equipment (R) Recommended (O) Optional (n/a) Not Applicable		
POOL	RIVER	Kayak Equipment
X	X	Whitewater Hard-Shell Kayak (river runner or creek boat recommended)
X	X	Float Bags for back of kayak (front also, if long)
X	X	Whitewater Helmet
X	X	Whitewater Paddle
X	X	Whitewater Sprayskirt (needs to fit your kayak)
X	X	Whitewater PFD (personal floatation device)
O	X	Drysuit (recommended) or Drytop/Wetsuit combination
O	X	Booties
O	X	Paddling Gloves
R	R	Nose Plugs (could you go upside down w/o getting water up your nose?)
POOL	RIVER	Clothing (NO COTTON)
O	X	Helmet Liner/Hat (for warmth)
O	X	Socks (wool/synthetic)
n/a	X	Wicking Base Layer (capilene, polypropylene, wool, fleece)
n/a	X	Wicking Insulation Layer (capilene, polypropylene, wool, fleece)
X	X	Complete set of dry clothes (after on-water activity)
X	X	Towel (used on river to change under)
X	n/a	Pool Wear (could include: swimsuit, shorts, wicking top, neoprene, rash guard)
POOL	RIVER	Misc Equipment
O	X	Water or Hydration drink (bottle attached to inside of boat)
n/a	X	Dry bag/box (to keep lunch dry & needs to attach to inside of boat)
O	X	Lunch (energy bars, sandwich, trail mix, etc.)
n/a	X	Discover Pass (\$10 per day, \$30 annual pass) www.discover.wa.gov
n/a	R	Whistle
n/a	R	Sunscreen
n/a	R	Wallet (wear and stow on self - not in boat)
n/a	R	Extra vehicle keys (possibly hidden on car)
O	R	Sponge
n/a	O	Pogies
n/a	O	Sealskinz, Goretex Socks
n/a	O	Visor for helmet
O	O	Earplugs
n/a	O	Sunglasses w/ croakies
O	n/a	Goggles
POOL	RIVER	Gear Maintenance/Outfitting
n/a	O	Zipper Wax
O	O	Paddle Wax
n/a	O	Sealsaver
O	O	Extra pads, foam, duck tape, etc. for boat outfitting

SHOPPING RESOURCES

A Good Shopping Approach

- Get good clothing now! The people who dress warm and are comfortable are more willing to practice and hence are the ones who prosper in this sport.
- Consider renting a river-running/creek style kayak equipment for class. This allows you to get a good idea of what you like at an affordable price. Once you find a boat you are comfortable paddling and enjoy, consider the used boat market! A **river-running/creek style kayak** is a good start for both introduction into the sport and progressing your skills. Play boats are strongly discouraged for use in class. If you are taller than your boat, that's a good indication it is likely a play boat.
- There are many models of hard-shell kayaks available, and there is a lively market in used boats. Keep in mind, there are some models of boats on the used market that are Bad News for beginners. Feel free to ask us first!

Kayak Academy [Sales/Used Equipment/Rentals]

11801 188th Ave SE
Issaquah, WA 98027
206.527.1825
www.kayakacademy.com

Northwest Outdoor Center (NWOC) [Sales/Rentals/On-Site Bulletin Board of Used]

2100 Westlake N
Seattle, WA 98109
206.281.9694
www.nwoc.com

Internet [Web Used Classifieds]

Washington Kayak Club Classifieds – www.washingtonkayakclub.org
Craigslist (surrounding communities)
Boatertalk – www.boatertalk.com

Web Sales/Web Used Classifieds

Colorado Kayak Supply coloradokayak.com
Northwest River Supply (NRS) <http://www.nrs.com>
Outdoor Play www.outdoorplay.com

Facebook Groups [Tips/Suggestions/Used Gear]

Seattle White Water Kayaking <https://www.facebook.com/groups/SeattleWhiteWater/>
Washington Kayak Club <https://www.facebook.com/groups/11349657251/>
Whitewater Ladies of Washington <https://www.facebook.com/groups/560997027362095/>
Whitewater Wild PNW <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1644144329181909/>