



Above and Beyond Alaska, LLC
Alaska Boat and Kayak Center

www.beyondak.com
www.juneaukayak.com

Beginner Kayak Class Orientation, Benefits, and Outline

ORIENTATION:

Purpose – This class is designed to provide novice and self-taught kayakers with the basic paddling skills and rescue techniques necessary to safely paddle in calm sea conditions. The class will teach people new skills, build confidence, and establish a solid foundation for continued improvement.

Time and Location – All of the beginner classes, unless otherwise specified, are held at Auke Lake from 9am to 5pm. A 30 minute to 1 hour lunch break will be taken in the middle of the day.

Class Size and Ratio – All ABAK classes will have a maximum of 10 students and maintain a maximum instructor to student ratio of 1:5. The only variance to this is if a private class is scheduled with more than 10 students.

Essential Eligibility Criteria – In order to participate in an ABAK kayak class, each participant must meet the following criteria:

- Be able to independently participate in all individual skills and activities listed in the course outline while also maintaining an appropriate and safe body position
- Be able to hold their breath while under water
- While in the water wearing a properly fitted lifejacket, be able to independently turn from a face down to a face up position keeping their head above water
- Be able to effectively communicate with the instructor and other course participants
- Be able to manage all personal care independently, or with the assistance of a companion
- Be able to manage all personal mobility independently, or with the assistance of a companion

Class Prerequisites – None. No previous experience is required and ABAK will provide all of the necessary equipment.

Succeeding Classes – ABAK offers an Intermediate Kayak class that builds on the skills learned in the Beginner Kayak class

Equipment Provided – Single or Double sit-in sea kayak with all the necessary paddling accessories (spray skirt, life jacket, paddle, paddle float, bilge pump, rescue sling). A dry suit and neoprene booties are also provided. First aid kit and cell phone in case of emergencies will be available in the instructors vehicle.

You Bring – Warm layers, food and water, a full extra set of clothing. Please plan on dressing as you would for a long, wet hike/paddle. Polypro, wool, or fleece is a must – **NO COTTON!**

Challenge By Choice – While ABAK encourages students to participate in all aspects of this class, each individual has the option to choose not to participate in certain aspects. In these instances it will be the student's responsibility to communicate their choice with the instructor.

BENEFITS AND DISCOUNTS:

- Learn new paddling skills and rescue techniques
- Meet potential paddling partners and learn about paddling options in the Juneau area
- Receive the following discounts:
 - 15% off on all in-stock retail items at our kayak shop in Auke Bay
 - 15% off a new kayak purchase (shipping not included)
 - Discounts on dry suit rentals (discount will vary depending on availability and duration of use)

CLASS OUTLINE:

The following is a general summary of course content for the class with typical time schedule. The actual content covered and sequence of instruction will vary depending on the participant's needs/interests and time available.

In the morning the participants and students will be in comfortable clothing that is adequate for the days weather. Unless there is an unplanned capsized, students will stay dry and in their kayaks while being introduced to the equipment and basic paddling strokes/maneuvers.

9:00am – Introduction, Expectations, & Logistics:

- Welcome, introductions, sign waiver
- Student & instructor course expectations and limitations
- Course itinerary & site logistics
- PFD policy (always wear on water)
- Briefly discuss Leave No Trace ethics and expectation to follow them

9:30am – Introduction to Equipment

- Kayak: types, anatomy, adjustments
- Kayak Accessories: paddle, life jackets, basic safety equipment (paddle float, bilge pump, rescue sling, partner, whistle, other)
- Additional equipment for day trips (i.e. food/water, layers, first aid kit, maps, radio, flares)
- Carrying kayaks
- Loading, unloading, and securing kayaks to/from trailers and vehicles

10:30am – Getting on the Water

- Launching/landing from land or docks
- Body position/posture and balance
- What to do in the event of a capsized and practicing releasing spray skirt while sitting in the kayak

10:45am – Basic Strokes and Maneuvers

- Back/Stopping
- Forward
- Sweep

- Stern Rudder
- Draw/Sculling Draw
- Rudder and/or Skeg Use
- Introduction to Edging

12:30am – Lunch

1:00pm – Prepare for Afternoon Session

In the afternoon all participants and the instructor will wear dry suits and be spending time in the water practicing wet exits, self rescues, and assisted rescues.

1:30pm – Wet Exits

In a controlled shallow location all participants will practice a wet exit. This is important as it demonstrates to the instructor that the student has the ability to safely exit the kayak and swim to shore with their boat in the event of a capsized.

2:00pm – Assisted Rescue/Re-entry

- T Rescue
- Re-enter & pump
- Re-enter with sling & pump
- Re-enter with heel hook & pump
- Others as time allows

3:00pm – Self Rescue

- Deep water wet exit
- Paddle float re-entry
- Paddle float re-entry with rescue sling
- Others as time allows

4:30pm – Conclusion & Wrap Up:

- Discuss the Southeast Alaska paddling environment (wind, waves, weather, water)
- Discuss how to paddle safe (go with others, use conservative judgment, continue practicing basic skills learned today, importance of additional instruction/practice/experience)
- Importance of having First Aid and CPR training
- Demonstration of advanced skills/maneuvers to be learned as a next step
- Discuss paddling options (locations to go, paddling groups, renting, purchasing, etc)
- Group debrief and individual feedback