



Sea Kayak Instruction and Leadership Systems

Course Policies and Procedures

About This Document

Within the following document you will find the policies and procedures that the SKILS team follows. Please review this document if you are about to embark on one of our programs. This will familiarize you with how we approach some of the more common situations that may arise during a program, as well as how to register, directions for some of our more common course destinations, and recommendations on where to purchase or rent gear.



How to Register

Communication

Registration is handled through the SKILS office, which is most effectively reached via e-mail (info@skils.ca). Our office is located on the West Coast in North Saanich on Vancouver Island, which means we work on Pacific Standard Time. Registration is done through email only at info@skils.ca, as this is the most effective means of keeping track of registration particulars. We do strongly recommend that you touch base with us via email prior to registering. Many of our programs assume substantial previous experience and we would like to ensure that you are registering for the most suitable program. Email us any questions you have about our courses, or information about your paddling goals, and we will direct you to the most appropriate program for you. If you need to reach us via snail mail please use the contact information listed below.

SKILS
8592 Deception PL,
North Saanich, BC, V8L 5C4

Payment

The following payment process will be followed for all programs:

- A deposit is required at the time of registration in order to secure your spot.
- The balance of your payment is due at least 30 days before the start of the program.
- British Columbia Harmonized Sales Tax (12%) will be charged on top of all listed fees.
- Payment can be made by Interact E-Transfer, cheque, money order or cash.
- No refunds will be issued within 30 days of the program.

Cancellations

We rarely cancel programs. If a cancellation is unavoidable, we will issue a full refund or make every reasonable effort to register you for an equivalent program; it is up to you. We strive to make these decisions at least 30 days in advance of the course start. If you are purchasing a plane ticket or making other bookings to attend this course, we strongly recommend that you purchase trip cancellation insurance. If you should need to cancel your registration in one of our programs, we will give you a full refund if you notify us more than 30 days before the course starts.

Unfortunately, we cannot offer refunds for cancellations made within 30 days of the course start date.

Paperwork

Waivers, Release of Liability and Medical Forms

You will be asked to sign a Waiver and Release of Liability for all SKILS programs, as well as a Paddle Canada Waiver for any program involving Paddle Canada sanctioned training. Current best practice in outdoor recreation demands that we personally witness you signing the Waiver and Release of Liability form. For this reason, please bring the waiver with you to the start of the course so you can sign it in the presence of the course instructors. If you forget your waiver, we will have extra copies available. Please read through the waiver prior to the program to ensure you understand what you are signing.

You will also be required to complete a SKILS medical form for all SKILS programs. Our medical form is very comprehensive; please review it prior to the program in order to be sure you have all the necessary information with you. Please do contact our office if you have concerns about your ability to participate in our programs as we can make reasonable accommodations for many physical, emotional, and psychological restrictions.

Travel and Medical Insurance

Unexpected medical and travel incidents do occur, and they often have hidden costs. We strongly encourage all our students to purchase additional insurance when taking a SKILS program. Specifically, ask your travel agent about trip cancellation insurance and additional medical insurance to cover events such as wilderness evacuations, ambulance transfers, and medical



equipment. The latter is especially important for individuals travelling outside their home province or internationally in order to take SKILS programs.

Tetanus

Make sure your tetanus shot is up-to-date. Up to date tetanus immunization is mandatory on all overnight programs and strongly recommended for all other programs.

SKILS Policies



Changes to the Itinerary

At our discretion, based on the weather conditions and the group, we may have to modify our itinerary. Any changes made to the itinerary and/or the objectives of the program will be discussed with the group before a final decision is made. Every reasonable attempt will be made to meet the established program objectives.

Evacuation Policy

Occasionally we will need to evacuate a participant from the program due to health or behavioral concerns. Depending on the urgency of the situation, SKILS will either arrange for transportation through local resources or through the Canadian Coast Guard. In this event, the evacuee is responsible for all costs associated with the evacuation.

The Weather

The weather is variable; over the duration of your program you can expect sun, rain, and wind in varying amounts. Please come prepared. You will also spend some time in the water during rescue practice and scenarios. The water temperature in the locations we typically paddle varies from 9°Celsius to 15°Celsius. Bring lots of clothing and immersion gear.

Conditional Passes and Reassessment

On certification-based courses, students sometimes need additional time to meet the requirements. In these situations, we adhere to the guidelines of the certifying body. Both the Sea Kayak Guides Alliance and Paddle Canada rely on the discretion of the instructors running the program to make suitable arrangements with the student.

When a student receives a conditional pass, they have 1 year from the end of the course to meet the conditions. SKILS does not charge for this reassessment, but it must be completed at the discretion and availability of the supervising instructor or their designate.

If a student fails a course, they must wait at least 6 months before retesting. SKILS will charge for retesting, based on our custom program rates.

Cigarettes, Alcohol, Illicit Drugs

Cigarettes are tolerated on most SKILS programs. Smokers are asked to respect the needs of other participants by smoking away from the group, timing their smoke breaks to minimize the impact on the course schedule, and to dispose of cigarette butts in accordance with low impact guidelines (pack it in, pack it out). If you have questions about these policies, please contact us before the start of the program.

Consumption of Alcohol is discouraged on all SKILS programs. If adult students want to consume alcohol, they should seek the advice of the course instructor prior to the program start. Alcohol consumption must take place at the end of formal programming and instruction for the day, and must not interfere with on water travel. If an instructor is concerned about alcohol consumption they have the right to suspend the program, and even remove the student(s) from the program.

Illicit drugs are not compatible with any SKILS programs. Students possessing or consuming illicit drugs will be removed from the program as soon as reasonably possible, at their own expense.



Privacy Policy

In accordance with Canadian and British Columbia law, SKILS works hard to keep your personal information secure. Personal information is any information about an identifiable individual including information regarding ethnic background, religion, marital status, medical, employment, and education. Information published publicly such as listed telephone number, address and name is not considered to be personal information. Any personal information gathered in the process of our programs will be kept on file for 7 years. This includes your medical form, waiver and release of liability, course evaluations, and exams.

Personal information in SKILS custody shall not be used or disclosed for purposes other than the reasons for which the information was collected or uses reasonably consistent with such purposes, unless consent has been given for such new uses.

The exception to this commitment is where the use is authorized by law or where disclosure is required by law. Other than where required or authorized by law, SKILS will seek written consent to disclose personal information. If SKILS finds it necessary to transfer personal information in our possession to a third party such as the Sea Kayak Guides Alliance of BC or Paddle Canada, the transfer of such information is completed according to a contractual relationship with the third party recipient to ensure those in receipt of the information maintain the confidentiality of such transferred information.

Equipment

Equipment Rental

Contact our office at info@skils.ca if you need to rent equipment. We have some equipment available for rent at below market rates and we can recommend reliable outfitters near most of our courses that can provide the equipment you need.



SKILS Rental Rates

Kayak and accessories (paddle, skirt, PDF, pump, tow line, paddle float, helmet)	\$30/day
Canoe and accessories	\$30/day
SUP and accessories	\$30/day
Helmet	\$10/program
Surfing Wet Suit	\$10 - \$90 per program
Drysuit	\$50/day
Tent	\$15/day
Sleeping Bag and Mat	\$10/day
Satellite Phone	\$25/day plus calling charges of \$2.50/minute

Places to Purchase and/or Rent Equipment

Following is a list of locations offering equipment rentals and/or sales that may be of use to you as you prepare for your program.

Victoria

- Mountain Equipment Coop
 - 1450 Government Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 1Z2
 - www.mec.ca
 - 250.386.2667

- Ocean River Sports
 - 1824 Store Street, Victoria, BC, V8T 4R4
 - www.oceanriver.com
 - 250.381.4233

Vancouver

- Ecomarine Ocean Kayaking Centre
 - 1668 Duranleau Street, Granville Island, Vancouver, BC, V6H 3S4
 - www.ecomarine.com
 - 604.689.7575

- Deep Cove Outdoors
 - 352 Lynn Ave, North Vancouver, BC, V7J 2C5
 - www.deepcoveoutdoors.com
 - #604.987.2202
- Mountain Equipment Coop
 - 130 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC, V5Y 1P3
 - www.mec.ca
 - 604.872.7858

Tofino

- Tofino Sea Kayaking
 - 320 Main Street, Box 620, Tofino BC Canada, V0R 2Z0
 - www.tofinoseakayaking.com
 - 250.725.4222

Ucluelet

- Pioneer Boat Works
 - 166 Fraser Lane, Ucluelet, BC, V0R 3A0
 - 250.726.4382

Port Alberni

- Alberni Outpost
 - 5161 River Road, Port Alberni, BC, V9Y 6Z2
 - www.albernioutpost.com
 - 250.723.2212

Courtenay/Campbell River

- Alberni Outpost
 - #3 – 1661 Cliff Ave, Courtenay, BC, V9N 2K6
 - www.albernioutpost.com
 - 250.871.0264
- Comox Valley Kayaks
 - 2020 Cliff Avenue, Courtenay, BC, V9N 2L3
 - www.comoxvalleykayaks.com
 - 250.334.2628

Nanaimo

- Alberni Outpost
 - #8 – 3200 Island Highway North, Nanaimo, BC, V9T 1W1
 - www.albernioutpost.com
 - 250.760.0044