

Nanaimo Paddlers Self-Assessment Guide

Nanaimo Paddlers welcomes all paddlers. Since our trips vary in skill level, we ask that you self-assess your level of ability in order to be safe and enjoy your outing with the Club. Everyone is responsible for their own safety and we encourage people to have had kayak training and/or experience and know how to do a wet exit and rescue before joining us. If you need to upgrade your skills, there are a number of outfitters who hold courses... see our Links page on www.nanaimopaddlers.org. Thank you.

The trips posted on meetup have a description of what conditions you will likely find on that paddle. Please pay particular attention to the length of crossings, wind speeds expected, water conditions, paddling in currents and paddling speed that is posted.

Please use the following descriptions and criteria to place yourself into one of the categories. Self-assessment is important to you, to us and to other participants. Self-assessment helps us manage risk and allows participants to learn and perform at a reasonably equal level. Self-assess yourself into the category that best describes your paddling experience and competence. You do not have to meet every criteria of the category, but should meet many of them. Then join the trip that is most close to your paddling abilities.

PADDLERS' SELF-ASSESSMENT OF SKILLS

The information following provides a guideline for a self-assessment of your kayaking skills. This is designed to help you determine which club activities and trips you should take. The table derives from both the ACA and BCU rating systems of increasing level of skill, knowledge, seamanship and kayaking experience.

Rating	Skills						
	Forward Paddle	Turning	Moving Sideways	Preventing Capsize	Can Handle Wind, Current, and Waves	Recovery / Rescue	Trip Experience
Novice	Basic forward paddle	Basic sweep stroke	None	Good balance	Flat--water conditions	Ability to wet exit	Short day trips in flat water
Advanced Beginner	Beginning body rotation	Uses advanced sweep strokes & starts to edge	Basic sculling	Basic low & high braces	Calm or protected conditions	Self rescue & assisted rescue	Day trips in calm protected waters
Intermediate	Uses advanced body rotation to produce power	Uses advanced edging to turn	Uses advanced sculling strokes	Brace to prevent capsize	11-16 knots 3 knots 3-6 ft swells, 1-3 ft breaking	Advanced rescues & use of tow line, beginnings of roll	Day and multi-day trips in mild to moderate open water conditions, 8-15 miles per day at 3.5 mph pacing
Advanced Intermediate	Uses polished fluid strokes	Uses advanced edging to turn	Uses advanced sculling strokes	Ability to handle surf landings & high waves	15-20 knots 3+ knots 3-5+ ft. breaking	Roll & rescues in rough water	Multi-day trips 15-20 miles in open water conditions at 4mph
Advanced	Uses polished fluid strokes	Uses advanced edging to turn	Uses advanced sculling strokes	Ability to handle high beam waves and surf landings	25+ knots 3+ knots, tidal races 8+ft. breaking	Rolls and rescues in very rough water	Multi-day trips 20+ miles in open water conditions at 4+mph