

## USCA BASIC CANOEING COURSE

Since 1999, the USCA has offered a basic canoe instruction program to build paddling skills for the beginner and novice paddler. The course will cover basic concepts for recreational canoeing teaching strokes, safety, and maneuvers needed to maintain boat control in moving water. All courses are taught by a USCA certified Instructor. The course consists of 4 to 6 hours of instruction done with the use of a video and group discussions, and “on the water” practice sessions with skill practice and verification.

The USCA Basic Canoeing Course teaches students how to paddle on quitewaters, those waters rated I and II on the international scale. This is not a whitewater class. The USCA program stresses what canoe racers have done and practiced for many years. The use of bent shaft paddles is encouraged, maintaining the direction of the canoe by switching sides with the paddle (using “hut”), and the use of seats and foot braces.

The skills presented and practiced by students are:

- ❑ The basic terminology of paddlesports
- ❑ An introduction to paddlesports equipment, where to find it and what to look for in rental or purchased equipment
- ❑ The safety equipment required for canoes and how to use that equipment.
- ❑ How to enter and exit a canoe safely
- ❑ How to launch a canoe safely
- ❑ How to carry a canoe safely
- ❑ How to perform a variety of canoe paddle strokes
- ❑ Understanding how to make a canoe go straight, turn, and stop

The United States Canoe Association’s [“Welcome Paddler”](#) (see link), a canoeing and kayaking water safety education pamphlet, and “An Introduction to Quietwater Canoeing,” video are used as the educational tools for the USCA Basic Canoeing Course. Instructors use both of these tools when teaching this course.

All instruction at or near the water requires the use of a wearable PFD (Personal Floatation Device or Lifejacket) by students and by instructors.

A certificate is issued upon successful completion of the course.

USCA instructors will also answer questions about different kinds of canoe racing and other paddling opportunities.

To find about USCA canoeing classes, please contact an instructor in your area. (See the [instructor list](#))

General questions about this program can be sent to:

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