

WCA Trip Ratings

WHITEWATER TRIPS

Beginner

Participant feels comfortable in a canoe or kayak, and is proficient in forward and steering strokes. Moving water with no rapids. Some small riffles. Wide passages.

Novice

Can perform draw, pry, and sweep strokes; and is able to side slip and backpaddle in a straight line. Can enter and exit from a mild current. Recognizes basic river features and hazards. Some small rapids with small waves and few obstacles. Course easy to recognize. River class I.

Intermediate

Is proficient at all basic whitewater strokes. Can execute front and back ferries and eddy turns in a moderate current. Understands leaning and bracing techniques. Knowledgeable of river hazards, safety, and rescue procedures. Is able to select a route and manoeuvre through moderate unobstructed rapids. River class II.

Advanced

Is able to ferry and eddy turn in strong currents, and has effective bracing strokes. Paddles strongly solo or tandem. Is able to roll, self-rescue, aid in rescuing others, and knows safety procedures thoroughly. Can select and negotiate a complex course through continuous rapids with high, irregular waves. River class III.

Expert

Has complete mastery of all strokes and manoeuvres, and can apply them with power and precision in turbulent water. Recovers quickly in unexpected and dangerous situations. Has a failproof roll. Can read complex water patterns and knows how they will affect the boat. Exhibits good judgement and has full competency in safety and rescue techniques. Can negotiate long, complex rapids with strong crosscurrents, powerful eddies, high waves, and obstructions directly in the current. River class IV and V.

FLATWATER TRIPS

Flatwater trip ratings will be determined by remoteness, length, and pace of trip; and the length, number, and ruggedness of portages. It is important to remember that cold water, strong winds on large lakes, and changing weather can create conditions dangerous for any paddler, no matter how skilled or experienced.