



Course Overview

The Northwest Sea Kayaking course explores the 400 islands and outcrops of the beautiful San Juan Islands. Here you will have the opportunity to escape your usual routine, explore stunning wilderness areas, and spend time reflecting with others. You don't need to have previous sea kayaking experience, our instructors will teach you skills for wilderness travel—how to pack appropriately, paddle kayaks, set up tarps, cook, and navigate the sea. Your patrol will paddle through the inland waterways, moving your camp from island to island while navigating the changing currents of the Salish Sea. The course also includes a focus cultivating skills around leadership, character development, service to others and interpersonal development. Wilderness travel is challenging, but with appropriate pre-course preparation, using tools we provide, adults of various ages and body types can be successful.



Arriving as physically prepared as possible and excited for the opportunity for personal development will enhance your experience and allow you to take full advantage of the expedition. You will also build your confidence to take on challenges in the enriching and empowering environment of a gender specific course.

This course is open to non-binary, trans-women and gender expansive identifying students. We strive to create an inclusive environment for all of our students.

Outcomes

Outward Bound promotes character development, leadership, and service in the most engaging classroom possible ... the wilderness. In real time, students experience the effects of their decisions on themselves and the other members of their group as they work to complete difficult tasks necessary for wilderness travel. Instructors challenge students to try new things and step outside their comfort zones. They also provide individualized feedback to students that can be implemented on course, as well as afterwards upon return home to their communities. Adult courses offer a unique opportunity to disconnect from everyday life and reconnect with one's self and others. Regardless of age or life stage, Outward Bound believes that everyone can benefit from opportunities to experience challenge, adventure, and to work within a supportive environment to gain a greater sense of self.

Course Areas

SAN JUAN ISLANDS, WASHINGTON – Nestled between Vancouver Island and the North Cascades, the San Juan Islands are a unique coastal cruising ground of sparkling water and mountain scenery. You will encounter sandy and rocky beaches, shallow and deep harbors, placid and reef-studded bays. Sightings of harbor seals, porpoise and eagles are common as well as the rare glimpse of an Orca whale. The islands get less average rainfall than the surrounding area due to the rain-shadow effect of the Olympic Mountains. Summertime high temperatures are around 70 degrees Fahrenheit while lows could be in the 40s.



Course Activities

SEA KAYAKING – Participants will paddle from island to island and get acquainted with the fascinating natural and cultural history of the Pacific Northwest coast. Instructors will teach students the technical skills, teamwork, and communication skills necessary to travel as a group in a working waterway. Students may also have the opportunity to do a service project with a local land agency, hike to an island vista, or just comb the beach.

SERVICE – Service to others and to our environment is a core value of Outward Bound and is integrated into each course. Groups follow Leave No Trace ethics as they engage in acts of service while leading and supporting fellow participants. Students see the impact of their actions firsthand, and may develop a desire to continue service in their home communities.

SOLO – In order for profound learning to take place, students spend time reflecting on their experience, and Solo is that opportunity. The Solo experience provides an important break from the rigors of the expedition and gives students the opportunity to reflect on their Outward Bound experience. With sufficient food and equipment, students will set up camp at sites of their own, using the wilderness skills learned during the first portions of the course. The amount of time students spend on Solo is based on course length, weather, student condition, age, and Instructor preference. Solo campsites are chosen to offer as much solitude as possible (yet be within emergency whistle-signaling distance of other group members). Most students spend their Solo time journaling, drawing, reflecting, thinking and resting as they process lessons of the course to focus on their goals for the future. Instructors check on each participant at regular intervals, as safety is always a top priority.

Sample Itinerary

The following is an example of what your itinerary may look like. Your actual course plan will vary according to weather, student skills and abilities, and instructor preferences.

Day 1	Course start
Day 2	Intro to sea kayak skills such as wet exits, rescue, and basic paddling
Day 3-6	Explore the San Juan Islands by sea kayak
Day 7	Transport home

