

THE LAKE BALBOA KAYAK ORIENTATION CLASS

Here are the answers to the most commonly asked questions about the class:

What do I bring?

Bring the blue Safety Swim/Training Verification form with you and give it to the instructor. If you haven't already purchased a lap pass card and wish to do so, you can bring money or a check (we don't accept credit cards). Finally, we suggest bringing sunscreen and a bottle with some drinking water, although there is a drinking fountain at the boat ramp.

What should I wear?

Start with a loose fitting t-shirt or tank top. Also, shorts or preferably a pair of comfortable swim trunks. The best type of footwear is sandals or watershoes. Finally, a hat and sunglasses. During the class, you'll be wearing a life vest; between that and the energy you'll use paddling, most students are warm enough. Keep in mind that you will get some water on you. Water will drip off the paddle and collect in the boat, so do expect to get at least damp during the class. You may want to bring a towel to sit on during your drive home. Also, we have an outdoor shower and places to change clothes if you choose.

Where do I go?

The class will meet in the grass area just north of the boat ramp. If you are early and want to check in, there are people in the vicinity of the lifeguard station who can assist you. The class itself will be held at the grass area and out on the lake.

I'VE FINISHED THE ORIENTATION CLASS, NOW WHAT?

Here are some answers to the most commonly asked questions from our program participants:

When can I do a paddling workout?

The lake is open to the public every day of the year. Lifeguards will be able to provide access for you no later than 9:00 AM each day. The lake is open on holidays—every day of the year. The only exception to this would be during periods of heavy rain, thunderstorms or significant wind. On average, this has occurred about 6 days per year. You are welcome to call and inquire about the current condition of the lake. The lifeguard station phone number is (818) 756-9743. However, the phone will only be answered if there is a lifeguard or clerk on duty *inside* the station at that time.

Be aware that the park itself is quite busy on most weekends during the year. This will not impact your access to the boats, however, it may mean that you cannot park directly in front of the lifeguard station.

How do I check out a boat?

First, remember to *bring your lap pass*. Come to the lifeguard station and advise the lifeguard you want to use a kayak. They will take you to the storage room, punch your pass and help you set up a boat. They will also help you hand carry the boat to the boat ramp to launch. *Please do not drag the boat to or from the launch ramp*. The lifeguard will also assist you in returning the boat when you finish. In some cases, they will have you leave the boat on the ramp, other times they will help you hand carry it to the storage room.

How long can I use a boat for?

For the duration of your workout. For most people this is about one hour. The only prohibition is that you cannot “claim” a boat for the duration of the day.

How late can I stay on the lake?

The boat must be on the ramp one-half hour before the park closing time. This closing time varies during the course of the year. The earliest closing time is 5:00 PM during the winter and the latest is 8:00 PM during the summer. It roughly corresponds to sunset—effectively the park closes when it gets dark.

Why must I wear a PFD (life vest) when private boaters do not?

In any boat provided by the City of Los Angeles for use by the public, boaters are required to wear a PFD as a condition of program participation. Private boaters are subject only to state law, which effectively requires children to wear a PFD and adults to have one available and accessible. *Be aware that the lifeguards will strictly enforce the PFD requirement.*

What if I lose my lap pass?

Unfortunately, we cannot replace lost lap passes. A new one must be purchased if this happens.

Where can I go on the lake?

Kayak fitness paddlers may use the entire lake, however, the only embark/disembark point is the boat ramp. This means that you cannot exit the boat along the side of the lake. This is true for all boaters on the lake and is a risk management measure that prevents problems with overloaded boats, PFD issues and food or alcohol aboard boats. *Please stay clear of fishing lines that may extend out into the water.*

Please direct your comments or questions regarding the Kayak Fitness Program to the Lake Balboa lifeguard station. Our phone number is (818) 756-9743. This program is provided as a public service by the City of Los Angeles, Department of Recreation and Parks, Community Services Branch, Citywide Aquatics Division.