TVCC Paddle School

Frequently Asked Questions

**2023 Edition**

(as of April 1, Noon)

## When is Paddle School?

* June 2, 3 and 4, 2023

## Where is Paddle School?

* Adventures Unlimited, 522 US Hwy 64, Ocoee, TN 37361
* GPS: 35.1227, -84.7070

## How do I sign up for Paddle School?

* Register at the TVCC website: <https://tvccpaddler.com/paddle-school-2/>

## Can I just show up at Paddle School and register?

* No, everyone must pre-register online
* This streamlines and expedites our check-in and ensures that you sign the liability waiver

## How much does Paddle School cost?

* Base cost for a student is $60
* Options are available that can be purchased when registering:
  + Camping ($10)
  + Saturday catered meal ($15)
  + T-Shirt ($15 Cotton Short Sleeve / $28 Sport Tech Long Sleeve)
  + Raffle Tickets for the 3 boats available (Varies)
  + TVCC Stickers ($2)

## What if I need to change my registration information?

* Let these people know what needs to change on your registration:
  + Contact Steve Lamb: [PS-Ops@tvccpaddler.com](mailto:PS-Ops@tvccpaddler.com) or
  + Contact BG Smith: Treasurer@tvccpaddler.com

## What if I need to cancel my registration?

* If you find out you can’t come to Paddle School, please let us know. Our cancellation and refund policy is as follows:
  + Full Refund (less fees) before May 14th
  + 50% Refund before May 23rd
* Let these people know:
  + Contact Steve Lamb: [PS-Ops@tvccpaddler.com](mailto:PS-Ops@tvccpaddler.com) or
  + Contact BG Smith: [Treasurer@tvccpaddler.com](mailto:Treasurer@tvccpaddler.com)

## Where do I go when I get to AU for Paddle School?

* When arriving at AU for Paddle School, proceed to the covered picnic pavilion that is across the parking lot from the bathhouse. A large TVCC sign says “**Check In Here**”

## Where do I pick up my T-Shirt, Meal Ticket, Raffle Tickets, etc.?

* When arriving at AU for Paddle School, proceed to the covered picnic pavilion that is across the parking lot from the bathhouse. A large TVCC sign says “**Check In Here**”
* Check In process (2-min!) follows a maze-like path through the pavilion arriving at the last station where friendly TVCC volunteers will have a swag bag for you with all the Paddle School essentials and anything you ordered: T-shirts, Meal tickets, raffle tickets, camping wristbands, etc. *Ask for yours by the Name you Used to Register!*
* If you ordered something through the Non-Paddler and Extras process, it will also be available at the Check In pavilion.
* Anything you ordered and requested to be shipped will be sent beginning June 5, 2023.

## Where do I check in for camping at AU for Paddle School?

* It depends!
* If you are camping in an RV:
  + You must register with AU before Paddle School. Spots are limited and go fast. Other RV campgrounds are in the area so check your favorite camping app to find one. (Parksville SP, Ocoee Outpost (formerly River Rats), Ocoee Whitewater RV Park, … )
    - Check in with AU at their Office at far end of property where their paddle trips gather
    - AU will issue you a Pass and post sticker that goes on a clip at your site.
* If you are Primitive camping, Van/Truck camping:
  + You must register with us online (Paddle School registration) or with AU through their online site or by walking in their office.
    - Registering through TVCC online provides a 50% discount on the cost!
  + If you registered with TVCC - Check In with us during Paddle School Check In process upon arriving at AU.
    - You must have a wristband, issued by us, on your person while in the campground. It will be in your swag bag that you pick up during Check In. AU will be checking daily and if not registered with us, they will charge you. This is an insurance requirement.
  + If you registered with AU - Check In with them at their service desk.
  + You can purchase additional camping from TVCC online using the “Extras” button on the Paddle School page at TVCC website or during the Check In process.
  + TVCC camping covers Friday and Saturday nights. You can purchase additional nights with AU at $10 per person per night. Go to their office to make arrangements.
  + It's open camping, no assigned spots, so first come - first choice!

## What is the schedule for Paddle School activities?

* The schedule (subject to change) is posted on the TVCC website on the Paddle School page. You can download and print the schedule
* Copies of the schedule will be posted around AU during Paddle School

## What are the camping rules at AU?

* AU is our awesome host for Paddle School and have very few rules for campers, however:
  + Quiet Hours: from 11 pm-8 am
  + No generators in primitive campground areas
  + All campers must be registered. TVCC registered campers must have a special wristband on their person at all times inside the campground. AU will be checking.
  + Dogs OK, keep them on leash and clean up after them
  + Dogs cannot be left unattended in the campground while you are on the river!
  + No dogs in bungalows
  + Bathhouse is 24/7
  + Hammocks OK
  + TVCC has put extra porta-potties in the campground (yea!)

## Bus Bar Rules and AU rules in General?

* AU is our awesome host for Paddle School, Jules, our Auctioneeress, is also the Operations Director of AU. AU is a great partner with us for Paddle School and we want to keep the relationship going for years to come. So the few rules they have … we abide by:
  + The Bus Bar, where many things happen, is a business with a Liquor License, so NO OUTSIDE ALCOHOL will be allowed inside the Bus Bar. If the bar is open, you MUST SHOW ID AND GET A WRISTBAND if you intend to drink at the Bus Bar. All ages are welcome.
  + No cover charge because of Paddle School.
  + No pets are allowed inside the Bus Bar.
  + Campground is managed by AU and they require everyone to be registered either with us (via Paddle School registration) or with them. Primitive campers registering with us will be issued a wristband that must be on the person camping. AU will conduct checks of campers during the weekend.
  + Campground quiet hours are 11 PM to 8 AM
  + No generators are allowed in the campground.
  + Dogs are allowed in the campground, but must be on a leash and you must clean up after them.
  + Dogs MUST NOT BE LEFT UNATTENDED in campground while you are out on river for the day! See the last FAQ about Ocoee Dog Care! They are 3 minutes away from AU! Great facility!
    - Ocoee River Dogs: https://www.ocoeedogs.com/
  + Bathhouse is open 24/7.

## What do I need to bring to Paddle School?

* Normal camping gear, food, personal stuff for 2.5 days (if camping)
* Paddle gear and paddle clothes for 2 days
* Dry clothes after coming off the river.
* River essentials: dry bag, water bottle, sunscreen, hat or helmet, good water shoes, normal safety gear for your type paddling (1st Aid kit, pin kit, etc)
* Your lunches for Saturday and Sunday on the river (lots of water!)

## What Paddle Gear do I need to bring to Paddle School?

* Whitewater classes:
  + Helmet
  + PFD (Personal Flotation Device)
  + Spray Skirt
  + Paddle
  + Boat
* Flatwater Classes and SUP:
  + PFD (Personal Flotation Device)
  + Spray Skirt (optional for flatwater course)
  + Paddle
  + Boat or SUP ( and air pump if inflatable!!)

## Do I need to be a member of TVCC to go to Paddle School?

* Yes, if you are attending Paddle School as a Student, Instructor or a Support Boater you must be a member in good standing (up to date Dues) for the duration of Paddle School (through the close of school on Sunday)
* The TVCC Treasurer will be checking membership and informing you if you need to update your status – No exceptions. Part of our Insurance program.

## What if I want to bring a guest or a family member to Paddle School?

* You are welcome to bring a non-paddling Guest or non-paddling Family Member to Paddle School. You must register them on the TVCC website using the “Non-Paddler, Guest, Extra Orders” registration form. This is an insurance requirement. Buy them a nice T-Shirt and a meal while signing them up!

## How do I order an extra T-Shirt / Meal Ticket / Raffle Tickets / Camping?

* Go to the TVCC website using the “Non-Paddler, Guest, Extra Orders” registration form.
* Use the form to order extra camping, meals, T-Shirts, raffle tickets, stickers, and even ship things to yourself or others.

## What boat should I bring to Paddle School?

* Bring the boat you want to learn in, train in, practice in.
* You can bring multiple boats if you want to try a different boat on the second day.
* Some boats are more appropriate for certain water conditions than others
* Your instructor can answer some questions for you once you are assigned
* Contact us if you have any specific question or concerns about boat choice

## What should I wear on the river?

* It depends!
* Both the Hiwassee and Ocoee are dam-released waters and tend to be cold to very cold since the water is pulled from the bottom of the reservoir. Water temperatures on some of these rivers are in the 50s year round.
* Always dress for the swim! Dress in layers to help trap body heat. Begin with a long-sleeved base layer of light wicking fabrics first such as polypropylene, capilene, or a rash guard. Next add an insulating layer such as a thick skin of fleece layer, followed by a waterproofing layer such as a splash top or dry top. You can always take off layers as needed.
* Be sure that the clothing that you choose is fitted and that all pockets zip or Velcro shut. You may also want to wear a pair of synthetic or wool socks under your paddle shoes. **Keep in mind that cotton is worthless on the river.**
* Wear good, firm bottom shoes! You may have to walk on wet, slippery, sharp-edged rocks.
* ***\*\* The sport tech long sleeve shirt we offer for sale at paddle school is the perfect first layer for all summer boating \*\**  (Hint)**

## Does TVCC have loaner equipment for Paddle School?

* No, TVCC has no equipment to loan.
* If you’re new to whitewater kayaking, we recommend that you rent or borrow your first set of gear so that you can learn what you like.  Remember, you need 5 items: Boat, Paddle, Skirt, Helmet, and PFD.
* Some of our members have extra gear they may lend if you can get hold of them. Use the [TVCC Kayaking Facebook Page](https://www.facebook.com/groups/178587568829319/) to network. Post your request there and check back often.
  + Once assigned to an instructor, they can maybe point you in that direction.
* There are many places to rent gear for Paddle School … see next question!

## Where can I get gear for Paddle School?

* Buy, Beg, Borrow!
* For Whitewater:
  + Specifically ask to be in the Outdoor Chattanooga (OC) class at Paddle School if you need all gear. OC partners with TVCC for our school. They normally run a Rapid Learning Program as part of Chattanooga’s Parks & Recreation Department. OC will provide boats & gear for TVCC participants in their classes – but space is limited. Please contact Steven Courtney ([sjc2020@gmail.com](mailto:sjc2020@gmail.com)) ASAP if you want to use this option.
  + Not many options for renting whitewater gear, but try Rock Creek in Chattanooga and Ocoee. NOC in Ocoee might also have some gear.
* For Flatwater:
  + Check with local outfitters who offer rental packages and boat demos. Call early, because there are a limited number of setups available.  Here is a link to kayak rentals in the area: <https://near-me.co/kayak-rentals-near-me/>
  + Rusty’s Rentals by Harrison Bay State Park is fairly good, but might only have Sit On Top boats. (423) 591-5526
  + Battlefield Outdoors in Ft Oglethorpe, GA rents boats. [(706) 841-0040](https://www.google.com/search?gs_ssp=eJzj4tVP1zc0TDZLrjBPzog3YLRSNaiwsDAzMDM3TTI3SUtLSTExtDKoMDS1SDM0MDK2SDEzMTBNTfYSSUosKclJTctMzUlRyC8tScnPLyoGACr7FuY&q=battlefield+outdoors&oq=Battlefield+Outdoors&aqs=chrome.1.0i355i512j46i175i199i512j0i512l2j0i22i30j0i390i650l2.12044j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#)
* Buy Used Gear:
  + If you want to search for used gear, the best place to look is Facebook. We recommend these Groups: [Chattanooga Area Gear Swap](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1578979785674522/), [TVCC Kayaking](https://www.facebook.com/groups/178587568829319/), [North Alabama Paddle Sports](https://www.facebook.com/groups/123246941024098/), [WNC Gear Swap](https://www.facebook.com/groups/491258480941483/), and [Paddle 4 Less](https://www.facebook.com/groups/paddle4less/).
  + If you’re in the Chattanooga Area, [The Gear Closet](https://gearcloset.org/) and [Four Bridge Outfitters](http://www.fourbridgesoutfitters.com/) often have previously loved paddling gear and non-cotton base layers to keep warm.

## What class should I register for?

* It depends!
* If you are beginning your journey in kayaking a Level 1 or Basic Flatwater would be a good choice
* If you are an avid flatwater kayaker, sea kayaker, or overnight canoeist, the River Running Class 1 course might be a good fit.
* If you have paddled before, have your own gear, have a good confidence about being on the water, comfortable being on certain rivers like the Hiwassee, but your roll really needs a lot of work and it is what is holding you back, then a Level 2 is a good choice.
* If you are a whitewater paddler that has good comfort and confidence in Class II water (Hiwassee), your pool roll is pretty good but your combat roll needs work, or you just want to really challenge yourself and learn new skills while a strong crew with instructors and experience support boaters are present, then a Level 3 course might be good fit
* A confident whitewater paddler that wants to up their game, really work on their skills, try new skills, run new lines, try playboating .. Level 4 is what you want

## How are classes in Paddle School run?

* Paddle School philosophy is “Challenge by Choice.” Instructors will present skills and water opportunities to practice those skills under their tutelage. It is your choice to take advantage of those opportunities. The instructors and support boaters will not press you to do something you are not comfortable with. The student has the final call.
* The only required skill that all students, in all classes, must demonstrate is a safe water exit from their boat or SUP. We require this for obvious reasons. Usually, this skill is demonstrated and performed early on the first day.
* All classes will begin with some sort of warm-up so that the instructor can assess the abilities of the class.
* Classes are designed and put together by an experienced team of TVCC gurus who cull through the information you provided on your registration form including your skill assessment, goals, and personal skills development objectives. We pair you up with like-minded students and find the best instructor and support boaters to work with you.
* A typical class size is 5 students with one instructor and 2-3 support boaters. We never exceed a ratio of 1 instructor to 5 students.
* After the first day of Paddle School you can request changes to ensure you maximize the training opportunity available. These include asking for a different class, different instructor, different river, etc. We want you to get as much out of the Paddle School experience as possible while having fun doing it. Tell your instructor what you would like and that will get relayed to our team and you will be notified of the changes for the next day.
* TVCC follows training standards established by the American Canoe Association (ACA) and our Instructors are either ACA Certified Instructors or the most experienced paddlers in our club.
* Your instructor will reach out to you within a week or two before Paddle School. They will discuss their plans for the class and give you a chance to ask any questions you may have.

## What rivers will classes be held on?

* Classes will take place on the Hiwassee and Ocoee Rivers.
* Level 1 and some Level 2 whitewater classes will proceed to the Hiwassee River or to easier sections of the Ocoee, think 'take-out'.
* Level 3 classes are held on both the Hiwassee and Ocoee depending on the assessed skill level of the students. Newer, less experienced Level 3 paddlers might start on the Hiwassee and move to the Ocoee on Day 2. Level 4 classes will be on the Ocoee.
* Flatwater classes are held on Parksville Lake and Class I River Running on the Lower Hiwassee.
* More information on these rivers can be found at the following American Whitewater links:
  + Hiwassee: <https://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/River/detail/id/1751/>
  + Ocoee: <https://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/River/detail/id/1780/>
* Please note that all students are responsible for any associated fees and vehicle damage.
  + There is a $3 per vehicle parking fee for the Hiwassee. Bring cash with you to cover the fees.

## Where can I find out what class I am in and who the other students are?

* Instructors will contact you about 1-2 weeks prior to review everything. Ask!
* At AU, large posters with the class compositions will be posted in the Bus Bar on Saturday morning, hopefully Friday night. Walk around and find your name and meet your instructor and introduce yourself to them.

## How can I help/volunteer at Paddle School?

* Yes, you can! Lots of ways to help! TVCC is an all-volunteer organization. Nothing gets done unless someone volunteers to do it! Paddle School is our biggest event all year and needs a little bit of help from a lot of people to make it work!
* We will have a Volunteer Coordinator to help get organized.
* Here are some of the tasks that you can help with:
  + Paddle School setup: Friday, Noon to 4 PM
  + Registration Check In: Friday afternoon, 4 - 6:30 PM
  + Registration Check In: Saturday morning, 7:30 – 8:15 AM
  + Friday dinner prep: Friday, 4 – 6 PM
  + Saturday dinner wrist band checker: Saturday, 5:15 – 6:30 PM
  + Saturday dinner clean-up: 7 - 7:30 PM
  + Auction set up: Saturday, 6 - 7 PM
  + Auction Runners and Spotters: Saturday, 7:30-10 PM
  + Bus Bar Clean up: Saturday, 10 – 11 PM
  + Base camp break down: Sunday, Noon - 4 PM
  + Campground - clean sweep and litter patrol: 3 – 5 PM

## What other things happen at Paddle School?

* Paddle School is more than paddling! Who guessed! Lots of other things are going on. Here are a few:
  + Live music in the Bus Bar! Friday night till 11 PM
  + Kayaking Outfitting Friday 6 PM till 11 PM (free service courtesy of TVCC)
    - Have your boat professionally outfitted by Eric Zitzow from Kayak Outfitting.com
  + Workshops and Clinics: Saturday AM and PM; Sunday AM
    - Rope throwing clinic
    - Overnight Kayak Camping clinic
    - Sports injuries therapy clinic
    - Kayaking first aid kit clinic
    - And more, stay tuned
  + TVCC Live Auction, in Bus Bar, Saturday 7:30 PM
  + Mandatory Safety Brief on Saturday morning at 8:45 AM

## What are the Friday meal options?

* A \*\* free \*\* TVCC-hosted BBQ cookout will be available on the front porch of the bathhouse. We ask that you sign up for this when registering so we know how many to expect.
  + Entrée options include: Hamburgers, Hot dogs, Veggie Burgers and Veggie hot dogs.
  + We ask our members to bring side dishes, salads, and desserts.
  + TVCC will provide water, soft drinks, and tea
  + You are welcome to BYOB of choice!
* Near AU are a couple of fairly good restaurants. Most are located near the intersection of Hwy 64 and Hwy 411. Here are a few:
  + Los Poblanos Mexican
  + Cajun Lady
  + Gondolier
  + Ocoee Dam Deli
  + Ocoee Café
  + McD’s, Hardee’s, and Subway are nearby as well

## What are the Saturday night meal options?

* A catered meal is offered for $15 when registering for Paddle School. You can choose a Herbivore (vegan) or a Carnivore (meat) meal option. Sides are the same for either.
* Meal will be provided by Jordan’s BBQ from Cleveland, TN, one of the area’s top rated BBQ restaurants. It will be served on the front porch of the bathhouse.
* Please note: the main vegan entrée is a special portobello mushroom dish that everyone loves! Unfortunately, we never have enough when Carnivores see them .. they get excited! So be warned, and consider ordering a Herbivore meal if you want to try the mushrooms! Better yet just order a second meal using the Extras button on the registration page!
* You are welcome to BYOB!
* The Saturday menu options:
  + Carnivore: Pulled pork or chicken BBQ
  + Herbivore: Portobello mushrooms
  + Baked beans
  + Cole slaw
  + Buns
  + Tea/Lemonade
* If you pass on the catered option, local restaurants near AU include:
  + Los Poblanos Mexican
  + Cajun Lady
  + Gondolier
  + Ocoee Dam Deli
  + Ocoee Café
  + McD’s, Hardee’s, and Subway are nearby as well

## What are breakfast dining options at AU or the local community?

* TVCC does not offer any planned options for breakfast Saturday or Sunday. You are on your own for breakfast. (Most people are dragging their tired bodies out of bed!)
* Local options include:
  + AU’s *Crazy River Café*: located on the bathhouse porch
    - Offers a variety of traditional breakfast options & coffee!
    - Will open at 7:30 am Sat & Sun / Extra Staff
    - Will offer TVCC Paddle School specials - Grab & Go’s
  + Nearby AU is a McD’s, Hardee’s, and Ocoee Café
* Friendly reminder: don’t wander off too far. There is a mandatory safety briefing in the Bus Bar at 8:45 AM

## What are my lunch options for Paddle School?

* If you are a student at Paddle School you will be eating lunch on the river and will need to provide your own lunches for the weekend. Please bring something portable. Bring lots of snacks and plenty of water for the day as well. You need to stay hydrated. You will want a dry bag (or multiple ziploc bags) to keep your food from getting soggy!
* Hanging around AU for the day? Go to their Bus Bar Grille! Awesome food!

## What are emergency medical options in the area?

* If you are having a serious medical emergency Dial 911
* TVCC maintains a First Aid Tent near the bathhouse for minor issues
* If you are injured on the river your instructor will initiate appropriate action to include terminating the class to tend to the injured paddler
  + Render First Aid on scene as appropriate using available capabilities.
  + Escalate as situation dictates
  + Use available communication capabilities to relay info about the situation to appropriate response agencies.
* Rescue Services in Ocoee:
  + W. Polk County Sheriff: 423-338-4540
  + W. Polk County Fire & Rescue: 423-338-4539
* Hospitals with 24/7 ER:
  + Tennova Healthcare: 2305 Chambliss Ave NW; Cleveland TN (10 miles from AU)
  + Starr Regional: 886 Hwy 411 N; Etowah, TN (21 mi from AU)

## What are pet care options in the area?

* Dogs MUST NOT BE LEFT UNATTENDED in the campground while you are out on river for the day!
* If you need to board your dog while at Paddle School here is a suggestion:
  + Ocoee River Dog Daycare and Resort: https://www.ocoeedogs.com/

| If your questions or concerns are not found in this FAQ Sheet, here is who to contact for more information:  * **General Paddle School Info**: Steve Lamb: [PS-Ops@tvccpaddler.com](mailto:PS-Ops@tvccpaddler.com) * **Registration Questions/Issues:** Steve Lamb: [PS-Ops@tvccpaddler.com](mailto:PS-Ops@tvccpaddler.com) * **Payments/Refunds:** BG Smith: [Treasurer@tvccpaddler.com](mailto:Treasurer@tvccpaddler.com) * **Volunteer Opportunities:** Dian Lawhon: [sdianlawhon@gmail.com](mailto:sdianlawhon@gmail.com) * **Classes/Course:** Steven Courtney: [sjc2020@gmail.com](mailto:sjc2020@gmail.com) * **Meals:** Beth Johnson: [Social@tvccpaddler.com](mailto:Social@tvccpaddler.com) * **Training:** Carl Schoonover: [Training@tvccpaddler.com](mailto:Training@tvccpaddler.com) * **Safety:** Rob Theurer: [tellicorob@gmail.com](mailto:tellicorob@gmail.com) |
| --- |