

Frequently Asked Questions

What should my child bring to camp each day?

Here is our list...

- water
- a lunch
- sunscreen
- hat
- clothing to suit the weather! our camp is run primarily in the outdoors, with indoors shelters used only in very inclement weather.
- water footwear (watershoes, or neoprene socks with sandals, etc)
- bathing suit
- shorts
- towel
- water shirt - We recommend rashguards, they are synthetic tops that prevent chaffing and protect from the sun. They can be bought at MEC, Trailhead, Paddleshack, and other outdoors or surf stores. Level 6 is one brand that is popular (they are based in Ottawa). A synthetic t-shirt would also work, we just want to avoid cotton, as they will be getting wet and need sun protection.
- Optional: a nose plug
- Optional: PFD (life-jacket), if they want to use their own PFD that is fine, please write their name on it before sending it to camp, and our instructors will check to make sure it is in safe condition.

My child is younger than 9, but is very interested in coming to camp. Can they attend?

We cannot accept children younger than 9 in the camp program. This is due to a combination of liability issues, and the program. Our program consists of physical activities that are primarily in the outdoors. It is not beneficial to introduce younger children who are not prepared physically or mentally for the challenges of this sport. We would prefer to wait a little longer, and welcome them when they are ready to get the most out of the program.

There are other opportunities to begin kayaking with the ORR! For younger children we offer custom evening/weekend programs that require parent supervision.

If you would like to prepare your child for starting the sport when they are older, we recommend swimming lessons, and exposure to general paddle sports. The Rideau Canoe Club offers a flatwater equivalent of our program, called Canoe Kids, which is open to children 7+ in age.

What equipment do they need?

The ORR provides all necessary equipment for the summer camps. If your child has their own PFD they can bring it along for the instructors to check before using it. We ask that you use our kayaks for the program, as they are specific to whitewater. If your child has a whitewater kayak that they would like to use, you can check with us as to whether it would be appropriate. We typically do not have the storage space to keep any additional kayaks at the course for the week.

They do need suitable water clothing, footwear, and clothing that will keep them happy in the outdoors all day. We recommend bathing suits with swim shorts and rashguards. For footwear, watershoes work well, they just need to stay on properly when they are in the water. If it is a rainy cold day, participants need to bring clothing that keep them comfortable.

I am not sure if this is the right camp for my child. Can you tell me more?

Our camp program is based on beginner whitewater kayaking progression. Our goal is to teach key skills in a safe, fun environment, and to introduce kids to the sport. The participants will be prepared for paddling in Class II rapids on the last day of Level 1 camps. The reason we encourage parents to consider if this camp is suitable, is that not every child is excited to try this. Our instructors are fantastic at facilitating a gentle progression and positive experience, but whitewater kayaking is not the ideal sport for every individual. If a child is not comfortable in water environments, does not want to go into moving water, or is uninterested in the sport, then they are not likely to have fun, and would potentially hold back a group of keen kids who are excited to try this. If the instructors feel that a participant is not ready to paddle on the rapids by the Friday of the camp, we will offer the option that they can attend and watch the others paddle on the Friday, or they can choose to not attend.

If you are not sure if your child would like to try this, we recommend that you bring them to the Pumphouse paddling course, to see what it is all about. Our club [calendar](#) shows when there will be sessions running, so they can observe paddlers on the rapids. There is a beautiful look-out to watch from. If they are happy to be in and around water, think that the paddling looks really cool, and want to try it, chances are they will fit in just fine. If the camp environment would not be optimal for your child, we do arrange custom group or private lessons. You could get a group of 3-6 friends together to come out for a lesson on the flatwater, to see what it is like. Please contact us if you are interested in this.