



**OUTWARD BOUND
CANADA**

Instructor Recruitment Guide

2025 SEASON



WHY WORK HERE
compensation & impact

NEED TO KNOW
overview & expectations

APPLICATION
process & tips

Working for OBC

TYPE OF WORK + GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

WHAT IS AN INSTRUCTOR?

At Outward Bound Canada, our instructors are passionate, multi-talented professionals who inspire and empower youth through transformative outdoor experiences. As an instructor, you'll lead backcountry expeditions, deliver impactful outdoor education, and foster leadership and emotional growth in your participants. You'll also provide vital emotional support, navigating the challenges and rewards of the wilderness alongside your team.

This isn't just a job for a guide, teacher, social worker, or manager — it's a calling for those with a versatile skill set and a dedication to creating lasting, positive change. If you're ready to make a meaningful impact and embrace adventure, we'd love for you to join our team!

When instructors are hired, their role is assigned based on previous experience and training.

ASSISTANT INSTRUCTOR

Build rapport with students and develop technical and facilitation skills.

INSTRUCTOR

Facilitate group processes and teach lessons.

LEAD INSTRUCTOR

Supervise the instructor team, ultimately responsible for risk management and overall course progression.



CURRICULUM

As an instructor, you'll be prepared to facilitate engaging discussions and teach valuable lessons on a wide range of topics, including but not limited to:

Technical skills - backcountry camping, packing, expedition planning, cooking, fire building, weather systems, knots, tarp and tent set up, reading terrain, navigation, Leave No Trace, natural history and skills related to course type.

Interpersonal skills - conflict resolution, giving and receiving feedback, self-reflection, leadership styles, power and privilege, nervous system regulation, resilience, social-emotional intelligence, decision making.

Your ability to guide students through both technical and personal growth will be essential to their success in the program.



HOW CONTRACTS WORK

Most instructors work on a contract basis, meaning they are employed for the length of a course (typically ranging from 1-30+ days). The number of courses an instructor works is based on staffing needs and instructor preferences - some instructors work one course a year, while some work back-to-back courses all season. Explore our [2025 programs](#) to discover the types of programs in each region.



Instructors start work 2 days prior to student arrival to prep gear, food, lessons, and route plan.



In the field, instructors work together to teach lessons, plan activities, lead group travel, and support student needs.



Instructors wrap up a day after students leave, in order to clean and debrief.

Outside of working for OBC, instructors have many lifestyles and passions. Many work for other organizations in the outdoor industry as ski guides or in wilderness therapy, while others have full-time careers such as teachers or social workers. The possibilities are endless.

OBC Payscale & Experience Level

The pay scale was implemented in order to ensure transparency and recognize the diverse experience our instructor team brings to the field. All payscale categories add up to points that recognize your experience. Upon hire instructors fill a form to submit certification and experience, these will equate to points to find your OBC experience level.

Certifications

Each relevant certification adds additional points. Points correspond to the length and cost of the certification.

+

Education & Experience

University degrees, additional certifications, relevant work & OBC Online Training. Points correspond to the cost, relevance and duration.

+

Field Days

Each field day with OBC is worth 1 point. Other approved organizations and OBC training worth additional points.

=

Pay Range

OBC Experience Level ranges from 1 to 700+ points = \$170 to \$260 per day

Locations, Activities and Minimum Requirements

All OBC regions require the following in addition to any regional requirements listed in the table on the following page:

- Legally able to work in Canada
- Clear vulnerable sector police check
- First Aid Requirements:
 - Wilderness Programs: Wilderness First Responder (80hrs)
 - Urban Toronto Programs: CPR-C & Standard First Aid
- Experience working with youth in an outdoor setting, with a strong ability to mentor, guide, and support their development in both technical and interpersonal skills. Knowledge of challenges youth face and experience applying inclusive strategies to support diverse groups of varying learning styles and backgrounds.
- Experience in outdoor environments with practical knowledge of backcountry travel, camping, and outdoor education.

NEED HELP FINDING CERTIFICATION COURSES?

Here are a few organizations that provide courses for certifications:

- First Aid: Wilderness Medical Associates, Raven Medical, Mental Health Wilderness First Aid (MHWFA)
- Paddle: Sea Kayak Guides Alliance of BC (SKGABC), Paddle Canada (PC), Ontario Recreational Canoeing and Kayaking Association (ORCKA)
- Hiking & Camping: Association of Canadian Mountain Guides (ACMG), Interpretive Guides Association (IGA), Outdoor Council of Canada (OCC)

*If you have considerable experience but no certifications, please apply, and we will assess



If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at instructor_engagement@outwardbound.ca.

Location	Operating Season	Activity	Minimum Certifications
BC Island	Spring to Fall	Sea Kayaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sea Kayaking Guides Alliance of BC (SKGABC): from Assistant Overnight Guide to Level 3
	Spring to Fall	Hiking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional certification required
	Spring to Fall	Ocean Canoe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paddle Canada Ocean Canoe Certifications
BC Mainland (Vancouver Region)	Year Round	Hiking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional certification required
	Winter	Snowshoeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional certification required
	Year Round	Flatwater Canoeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paddle Canada Flatwater Instructor Certification
Rocky Mountains (Canmore Region)	Spring to Fall	Hiking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1+ years professional backpacking experience Association of Canadian Mountain Guides (ACMG) or Hiking Certifications are an asset but not required
	Summer	Whitewater Canoe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1+ years professional canoe tripping experience Paddle Canada Introduction to Tandem or Solo Moving Water Canoeing Instructor Swift Water Rescue Technician <p>Lead Instructor Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paddle Canada Intermediate Tandem or Solo Moving Water Canoeing Instructor certification Swiftwater Rescue Technician
	Winter	Snowshoeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1+ years professional winter camping experience <p>Lead Instructor Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACMG Winter Accreditation or IGA Winter Accreditation

Location	Operating Season	Activity	Minimum Certifications
Ontario Wilderness (Minden Region)	Spring to Fall	Flatwater Canoeing	<p>Paddle experience required and the following certifications are an asset:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paddle Canada Lake & Camping Skills Certifications, Ontario Recreational Canoeing and Kayaking Association (ORCKA) Certifications <p>Lead Instructor Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bronze Cross or National Life Saving
	Summer	Whitewater Canoe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1+ years professional canoe tripping experience Paddle Canada Introduction to Tandem or Solo Moving Water Canoeing Instructor Swift Water Rescue Technician <p>Lead Instructor Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paddle Canada Intermediate Tandem or Solo Moving Water Canoeing Instructor certification Swiftwater Rescue Technician
	Winter	Snowshoe & Winter Camping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1+ years professional winter camping experience Working on Ice
Urban Wild (Toronto Region)	Year Round	High & Low Ropes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Ropes Level 1
	Year Round	Flatwater Canoeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bronze Cross or National Life Saving required for Lead Instructors ORCKA or Paddle Canada certification or equivalent experience an asset.
	Year Round	Hiking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor Council of Canada Certifications are an asset Hike Ontario and IGA certification or equivalent experience an asset
	Year Round	High School Credit Courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience in facilitation of small to large groups of youth in games, team building, leadership development and initiatives. (e.g. summer camps, scouting/guiding, coaching, teaching, etc.) B.Ed and/or OCT are an asset.

Applying as an Instructor

[CLICK HERE TO APPLY](#)

TIPS FOR A STELLAR APPLICATION:

- **Emphasize life experiences**

What unique perspectives are you bringing? How will you inspire youth from diverse backgrounds? At OBC, we can help new instructors gain technical skills. Your lived experience and the personal growth you've derived from it is unteachable.

- **Include an accurate trip log** - click this link for a great example

While you don't need to have 100+ days in the field to be an instructor, sharing your outdoor and facilitation experience helps us understand your background and place you with effective co-instructors.

- **Well written application**

This job requires written documentation, which is a legal responsibility. Show us you have this skill.



- **Indicate relevant interests**

If you identify as part of an affinity group and want to support these communities with OBC, please let us know (ex: 2sLGBTQ+, Indigenous or BIPOC). Similarly, if you have a particular passion or area of expertise, we want to hear about it!

- **Format documentation as requested**

Upload your cover letter, resume, and trip log as one pdf document.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT INSTRUCTOR_ENGAGEMENT@OUTWARDBOUND.CA

