



American Red Cross

American Red Cross Lifeguarding Course Descriptions

The newly updated Lifeguarding program trains lifeguards to act with speed and confidence in emergency situations both in and out of the water. Topics include water rescue skills, surveillance and recognition, first aid, breathing and cardiac emergencies, CPR, AED and more. The new program reflects the latest ECC science and findings from the 2011 United States Lifeguard Standards Coalition Report.

Learn more at redcross.org/previewkits



Core Courses

Course options are available as traditional in-person training or new combination courses, which include a mix of online and in-person training.

Lifeguarding

For entry-level participants at all facility types

- Certification: Lifeguarding/First Aid/CPR/AED – valid 2 years
- Length: 25 hours, 20 mins

Prerequisites:

- Must be at least 15 years old
- Swim 300 yards continuously demonstrating breath control and rhythmic breathing
- Tread water for 2 minutes using only the legs
- Complete a timed event within 1 minute, 40 seconds
 - Starting in the water, swim 20 yards
 - Surface dive, feet-first or head-first, to a depth of 7 to 10 feet to retrieve a 10-pound object
 - Surface and swim 20 yards on back with both hands holding object
 - Exit the water without using a ladder or steps

Shallow Water Lifeguarding

For entry-level participants at facilities or attractions with water less than 5 feet

- Certification: Shallow Water Lifeguarding/First Aid/CPR/AED – valid for 2 years
- Length: 24 hours

Prerequisites:

- Must be at least 15 years old
- Swim 100 yards continuously demonstrating breath control and rhythmic breathing
- Tread water for 2 minutes using only the legs
- Complete a timed event within 50 seconds
 - Starting in the water, swim 20 yards
 - Submerge to a depth of 4 to 5 feet to retrieve a 10-pound object
 - Surface and walk or swim 20 yards on back with both hands holding object
 - Exit the water without using a ladder or steps

See more options on next page



Optional Add-On Modules (must be certified in one of the core Lifeguarding courses first)

Modules available as traditional in-person training only.

Waterpark Skills

For waterpark environments and multi-attraction facilities

- Certification: Waterpark Skills – valid 2 years
- Length: 3 hours, 40 mins

Prerequisites:

- Must be at least 15 years old
- Swim 300 yards continuously demonstrating breath control and rhythmic breathing
- Tread water for 2 minutes using only the legs
- Complete a timed event within 1 minute, 40 seconds
 - Starting in the water, swim 20 yards
 - Surface dive, feet-first or head-first, to a depth of 7 to 10 feet to retrieve a 10-pound object
 - Surface and swim 20 yards on back with both hands holding object
 - Exit the water without using a ladder or steps

Waterfront Skills

For nonsurf, open-water areas at public parks, resorts, camps and campgrounds

- Certification: Waterfront Skills – valid 2 years
- Length: 5 hours, 40 mins

Prerequisites:

- Must be at least 15 years old
- Swim 550 yards continuously demonstrating breath control and rhythmic breathing
- Tread water for 2 minutes using only the legs
- Complete a timed event within 1 minute, 40 seconds
 - Starting in the water, swim 20 yards.
 - Surface dive to 7 to 10 feet to retrieve 10-pound object
 - Return to surface and swim 20 yards to starting point
 - Exit the water without using a ladder or steps
- Swim 5 yards and retrieve 3 dive rings from bottom, resurface and swim 5 yards

Instructor Course

Lifeguarding Instructor Course

Become certified to teach the American Red Cross Lifeguarding, Shallow Water Lifeguarding, Waterfront Skills, Waterpark Skills, CPR/AED for Professional Rescuers and Health Care Providers, Administering Emergency Oxygen and Bloodborne Pathogens. This course prepares instructor candidates to use course and presentation materials, conduct training sessions and evaluate the progress of candidates in a professional-level course. *Note: To be eligible to teach Waterfront Skills, candidates must also possess a current Waterfront Skills certificate (or equivalent).*

- Certification: Lifeguarding Instructor – valid for 2 years
- Length: About 2 hours, 30 mins online; about 18 hours, 30 mins in class, including precourse session (21 hours total)

Prerequisites

- Must be at least 17 years old
- Possess one of the following:
 - Current American Red Cross Universal Certificate for Lifeguarding/First Aid/CPR/AED
 - Current American Red Cross Universal Certificate for Lifeguarding/First Aid and either an American Red Cross Universal Certificate for CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer or CPR/AED for Lifeguards
 - Equivalent certificate from another approved organization
- Successfully complete the Online Session for the Lifeguarding Instructor course, which consists of the following prerequisites:
 - Orientation to the American Red Cross
 - Orientation to the Lifeguarding Instructor course
 - Lifeguarding Instructor Precourse Exam
- Successfully complete the precourse session
- Obtain the *Lifeguarding Instructor's Manual* and *Lifeguarding Manual* prior to entering the first regular session of the instructor course