

RYA Day Skipper Practical Course (Sail)

Course Outline

The day skipper practical course will consolidate your sailing and deckwork skills and prepare you to be the skipper of a yacht and crew. You will learn how to handle a yacht under power and sail, including manoeuvres at sea and in harbour, berthing, anchoring and man overboard recovery. You will learn real practical navigational and pilotage skills which work at sea. You will learn about weather, tides, rules of the road and how to plan and execute a simple passage. Most of all we will help you to develop confidence in taking charge of a yacht. You will live aboard the boat with the instructor and 3 or 4 other students/crew. Each day will involve a mixture of short passages from port to port and intensive exercises. We will be in harbour or anchorage every night, but you should also get a few hours experience of night sailing. There is no formal examination at the end, but your progress will be assessed and your instructor will discuss this with you during the course. If at the end of the course you achieve the required standard (most people do), you will be awarded the RYA Course Completion Certificate (Photo ID Cert). If you are not at the required standard your instructor will discuss the reasons with you and explain what you need to do to reach the standard for the certificate. The courses are always great fun. On residential courses all meals are provided aboard but there will be opportunities to go ashore during some evenings.

Format Options

Residential Courses: (crews live aboard. Meals provided from lunch on Day 1 to lunch on the final day. Yachts may stay away from base overnight)

- 5 Day Course (0900 Monday to 1600 Friday or 0900 Wednesday to 1600 Sunday)
- 3 X 2-day Weekends (2000 Friday to 1600 Sunday)
- 1 X 2-day weekend and 1 X 3 day weekend (2000 Friday to 1600 Sunday or Monday)

Essential Pre-Course Knowledge/Experience

[RYA Competent Crew Course](#) and [RYA Day Skipper Theory course](#) or equivalent knowledge or experience. If you are not sure if your experience is sufficient, please contact the office for advice. Further advice is available here: [Which Course](#).

Locations

5 day and weekend courses run from Chatham, Kent – less than 1 hour from central London. Sailing areas are the River Medway and the Thames Estuary. 5 Day courses take you as far as the Essex and Suffolk coasts or the North Kent coast. Weekend courses run in the Rivers Medway and Swale and the near Thames Estuary within a range of about 30 Miles of Chatham.

Age

No minimum or maximum age for the training course but the minimum age is 16 for issue of the certificate.

Achievement (certificate awarded and ability after the course)

You will be able to skipper a yacht on short passages in familiar/sheltered waters by day. Most charter companies will accept your Day Skipper Course certificate as evidence of competence to charter a small yacht in sheltered waters.

You will also qualify for issue of an [International Certificate of Competence](#).

What's Included

For residential formats the price includes a berth on the yacht, all meals aboard from dinner on the first evening to lunch on the last day, tea, coffee etc and all operating expenses. Water from the boat's tanks is drinkable. Alcoholic drinks, bottled water or other soft drinks are not included but you are welcome to bring your own. Often people contribute to a 'kitty' to buy some wine with dinner. Wet weather clothing hire (jackets and trousers) is available at £7 per day capped at £25 for a 5 day course. There are no other essential extras but you may want to buy one or two books (see below) and bring a little pocket money for use if you go ashore.

Facilities Aboard

The training yachts are all designed and certificated for 8 persons but we operate RYA courses with a maximum of 5 students to one instructors. Each yacht has 3 double cabins (2 aft and one forward), a saloon that seats up to 8 and converts to provide 2 single berths (on port and starboard sides), a galley with twin sinks, a twin burner gas stove and a refrigerator, and a single toilet/shower compartment. Berth allocations are made by the instructor when you join. Two of the crew may be asked to share a cabin.

The yachts all have 12 volt dc electrical systems including a limited capacity to charge mobile devices via a 12 volt USB socket. 230 volt ac power is available only when the yacht is alongside in a marina and connected to shore power.

What will I need to bring?

The only specialist requirement is a sleeping bag and some suitable footwear – deck shoes (trainers will do) and in case of rain we recommend sea boots. Further information is provided in the suggested packing list – see below under Downloads.

Books

There is no essential pre-course reading, but we recommend the following books prior to or during the course:

RYA Day Skipper Practical Course Notes

RYA Day Skipper Handbook

Day Skipper for Power and Sail (Alison Noice)

These are available online from the RYA website or you can buy them in our reception at Chatham.

Downloads

- [Recommended Packing List](#)
- [Directions to Elite Sailing at Chatham Marina](#)

Next Steps

Build up experience – as both crew and skipper – by sailing as much as possible. We recommend that you get your [VHF/Short Range Certificate](#) and take an [RYA First Aid Course](#). Consider joining one of our [Adventure Sailing Holidays](#) which offer superb experience and further training in varied locations and conditions.

