



Boat Handling Course

Introduction

Even with hundreds of sea miles most of us can only claim hours of experience on an irregular basis when it comes to many aspects of boat handling. This 3-day Boat Handling Course is designed for anyone with some sailing experience who would like to develop these skills. The course covers a range of activities especially close-quarter manoeuvres; and each of the 3 or 4 students gets the chance to work on aspects of boat handling that they would like to improve.

There are hands-on opportunities to gain experience and learn new skills and techniques. You will also gain a better understanding the characteristics of boats (particularly our 40 footer) and the effects of engine, tide and wind. You can't drive a boat like a car!

Each course is tailored to the ability levels and needs of students, taking account of the time available. The skipper and crew will share their experience, needs and plans at the beginning of the course.

Content is selected from a syllabus based on:

- RYA requirements for Day Skipper, Coastal Skipper etc
- CSD requirements for safe use of the boat for the crew's safety
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Please note: course content is governed ultimately by tide, weather and sea conditions.

Course outcomes

By the end of the course you will have improved your boat handling competence and confidence by:

- experiencing boat handling in the Solent and adjacent areas known for their strong tides, huge tidal range and popularity, all of which make a challenging environment
- practising straightforward and complex manoeuvres in a safe training environment
- focusing on at least one activity that is a personal challenge for you
- being more aware of the effects of engine, tide and wind
- identifying aspects of boat handling that you would like to develop further
- contributing to the communications, team work and problem solving needed to sail a boat safely and efficiently



Possible topics include:

Pre-departure

- 1 Safety, use of equipment in rough weather and emergencies
- 2 Introduction to the whole boat from stem to stern, its equipment and general rules
- 3 Need to communicate on a large yacht until everyone is familiar and proficient

Sailing

- 1 Sails, reefing, furling, sail changing and trimming controls and methods
- 2 Tacking, gybing, when to reduce/increase sail, lee-helm, hove-to
- 3 Man overboard drill by crash stop and figure of eight as a boat handling exercise
- 4 Sailing, tacking, gybing under just mainsail or just foresail only
- 5 Sailing up to a mooring buoy, various combinations of wind/tide strength/direction

Motoring

- 1 Starting, stopping procedures, gear changing, the gauges, operating revs
- 2 Response times of steering and throttle on a large yacht
- 3 Prop walk (paddle wheel affect)
- 4 Steering ahead and astern if calm, effects of short power bursts and coasting on steering
- 5 Wind on the side blows off the bow
- 6 Going alongside a pontoon, pointing into wind or tide
- 7 Turning in circles around a buoy, with a strong wind and or tide
- 8 Three-point turns with a wind, preferred orientation
- 9 Turning on the spot with helm held hard over and throttle forward/reverse bursts
- 10 Entry to finger pontoons, various combinations of wind/tide strength/direction
- 11 Picking up a mooring buoy, various wind and tides
- 12 Man-overboard drill by engine start, various tactics for the sails
- 13 Pile moorings, importance of wind and tide directions
- 14 The ferry glide in a strong tide

Activities

- 1 Mooring alongside correctly, use of warps and springs, use of cleats
- 2 Planning a marina entry or exit, tide and wind directions
- 3 Springing out of a berth, moving the yacht with warps
- 4 General use of shore transits to check course relative to land while manoeuvring
- 5 Anchoring under sail and motor. Use of check transits/bearings
- 6 The spinnaker, only covered if time, crew experience, wind conditions etc permit
- 7 Towing another vessel, at sea and in harbour
- 8 Heavy weather preparation and techniques. Preventers
- 9 Running aground and getting off