



RYA Competent Crew Practical Course

The Competent Crew course introduces the complete beginner to cruising. You will learn about personal safety, seamanship and helmsmanship to the level required to be a useful member of the crew of a cruising yacht.

Duration: 5 days or 8 x 3 hr sessions

Syllabus:

1. Sea terms and parts of a Boat, her Rigging and Sails

Understands:

- Orders given concerning the sailing and day-to-day running of the boat

2. Sail handling

Can:

- Bend on, set, reef and handle sails
- Use sheets and halyards and their associated winches

3. Ropework

Can:

- Handle ropes, including coiling, stowind, securing to cleats and single and double bollards
- Handle warps
- Tie the following knots and knows their correct use: figure-of-eight; clove hitch; bowlinne; round turn and two half hitches; reef knot, rolling hitch, single and double sheet bend

4. Safety on board

Can:

- Fire precautions and fighting - what the particular hazards are, and actions to be taken to prevent and in the event of fire
- On board alarms, including gas and carbon monoxide

5. Personal safety equipment

Understands:

- How to comply with guidance for the wearing of safety harnesses, life jackets and personal buoyancy aids

6. Man overboard

Understands:

- The action to be taken to recover a man overboard
- How cold-water shock can affect a casualty in the water

7. Emergency equipment

Understands:

- How to launch and board a life raft
- Distress flares and knows when they should be used



8. Manners and Customs

Understands:

- Accepted practice with regard to: use of burgees and ensigns; prevention of unnecessary noise or disturbance in harbour including courtesies to other berthed craft
- The responsibility of the boating community to protect the environment

9. Rules of the road

Can:

- Keep an efficient lookout at sea

10. Tender usage

Understands:

- The loading rules and complies with them
- The use and importance of a kill cord
- Safety equipment for tenders

Can:

- Handle a dinghy under oars

11. Meteorology

Knowledge of:

- The Beaufort Scale

Understands:

- The forecasting services and where to obtain a forecast

12. Seasickness

- Working efficiency is unaffected/partially affected/severely affected by seasickness

Understands:

- How to reduce the effects of seasickness (e.g. steer, look at the horizon, take anti-seasickness tablets before going afloat)

13. Helmsmanship and sailing

Understands:

- The basic principles of sailing

Can:

- Steer and trim sails on all points of sailing
- Steer a compass course, under sail and power

14. General duties

Can:

- Carry out general duties satisfactorily on deck and below decks in connection with the daily routine of the vessel



RYA Day Skipper Practical Course

The Day Skipper course is taught on board a cruising yacht and you will learn pilotage, navigation, seamanship, and boat handling up to the standard required to skipper a small cruising yacht by day in waters with which you are familiar.

Duration: 5 days

Syllabus:

1. Preparation for sea

Knowledge of:

- Basic stability and buoyancy for small vessels

Can:

- Prepare a cruising vessel for sea, including engine checks, securing and stowage of all gear on deck and below
- Selection of sails

2. Deck work

Can:

- Prepare an anchor, mooring warps and take charge on deck when mooring alongside, coming to a buoy, anchoring, weighing anchor and slipping from a buoy or an alongside berth
- Reef, shake out reefs and change sails to suit prevailing conditions

3. Navigation

Knowledge of:

- The uses and limitations of AIS

Understands:

- Working up Dead Reckoning (DR) and Estimated Position (EP)
- Use of a lead line, or similar
- How to work out a course to steer to allow for set, drift and leeway

Can:

- Take and plot visual fixes
- Use electronic navigation equipment or position fixing
- Use secondary means of position fixing
- Estimate tidal heights and tidal streams
- Use waypoints and routes
- Use knowledge of IALA buoyage
- Maintain navigational records
- Use an echo sounder

4. Pilotage

Can:

- Prepare and execute a pilotage plan for entry into, or departure from, harbour
- Use leading and clearing lines
- Use transits and soundings as aids to pilotage



5. Meteorology

Understands:

- How to interpret shipping forecasts and use a barometer as a forecasting aid

Can:

- Source forecast information

6. Rules of the road

Can:

- Demonstrate suitable awareness of other water users both at sea and in close-quarter manoeuvring
- Demonstrate a practical understanding of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea

7. Maintenance and repair work

Knowledge of:

- The properties and uses of common synthetic-fibre ropes

Understands:

- Maintenance tasks and how to carry them out

8. Engines

Has a working knowledge of the prevention of common engine faults and is competent in the following areas:

Understands:

- The need for periodic maintenance checks on engines and electrical installations
- Requirements for tool kits, spares and lubricants
- The location of filters and bleed points for fuel
- The tension of drive belts and how to adjust or replace them

Can:

- Carry out checks before starting, while running and after stopping
- Clean water filters and knows the location of impellers
- Estimate fuel consumption at various speeds and knows the effects of fouling
- Carry out basic troubleshooting

9. Victualling

Understands:

- How to victual a cruising vessel appropriately for the planned passage

10. Emergency situations

Understands:

- How to issue distress signals by all available means, including distress flares and a VHF radio, in an emergency
- How to use a life raft
- How to secure a tow
- Rescue procedures including helicopter rescue
- The effects of cold-water shock on a casualty in the water
- The aftercare requirements of a casualty who has been in the water



Can:

- Carry out the correct action as skipper for the recovery of a man overboard

11. Handling under power

Knowledge of:

- Effects of waves on boat handling and crew comfort

Understands:

- Differing styles of hull and propulsion systems
- How to moor and leave a bow/stern-to mooring (practical experience where possible)
- How to identify and take into account wind and current conditions when planning and executing manoeuvres (practical experience where possible)

Can:

Carry out the following manoeuvres under power:

- Steer a straight course
- Turn in a confined space
- Anchor at a predetermined position
- Berth alongside
- Leave an alongside berth
- Pick up a mooring buoy

12. Yacht handling under sail

Understands:

- The characteristics of different types of keels
- How to identify and take into account wind and current conditions when planning and executing manoeuvres and choosing appropriate sail plan (practical experience where possible)

Can:

- Bring a boat safely to and from a mooring buoy
- Anchor
- Steer and trim sails effectively on all points of sailing

13. Passage-making

Knowledge of:

- Marina locks

Understands:

- The practical benefits and limitations of a chart plotter or GNSS

Can:

- Plan and make a coastal passage, taking into account relevant navigational hazards and limitations imposed by the type of boat and the strength of the crew

14. Night cruising

Knowledge of:

- Has experienced cruising at night, including leaving and entering harbour

Understands:

- Special considerations for pilotage plans, keeping a lookout and identifying marks by night



RYA Coastal Skipper Practical Course

The aim of the course is to teach the skills and techniques required to skipper a cruising yacht, of seven metres LWL to 15 metres LOA, safely on coastal and offshore passages by day and night. Students will gain practice in planning and skippering longer passages with a significant number of night hours where watch-keeping rotas become relevant. At the end of the course a successful candidate would be awarded a course completion certificate.

Duration: 5 days

1. Passage planning

Knowledge of:

- The effects of fouling on boat speed and fuel consumption

Understands:

- Fuel consumption at different speeds and can calculate fuel required for a passage including reserve
- Customs procedures
- Stability

Can:

- Plan a coastal passage, taking into consideration the capability of the vessel, navigation, victualling, weather, ports of refuge, tidal heights and tidal streams, publications required, and strategy

2. Preparation for sea

Understands:

- What safety equipment is required for offshore passages

Can:

- Prepare a cruising vessel for sea, including stowage, safety briefing, watchkeeping, delegating responsibilities, equipment, and engine checks.

3. Pilotage

Can:

- Prepare a pilotage plan, taking into consideration soundings, transits, clearing bearings, buoyage, port or harbour regulations, and tidal factors
- Pilot a cruising vessel by day and at night

4. Passage-making and Ability as Skipper

Understands:

- The practical uses of integrated electronic aids to navigation, including AIS, radar, electronic navigational charts (ENCs), and raster navigational charts (RNCs)

Can:

- Take charge of a yacht and direct the crew
- Organise the navigation, deck work and domestic duties of a cruising vessel on passage
- Be aware of the significance of meteorological trends
- Be aware of crew welfare on passage
- Use electronic navigational equipment for planning and undertaking a passage, including the use of waypoints and routes



5. Yacht Handling under Power

Understands:

- How to identify and take into account wind and current conditions when planning and executing manoeuvres (practical experience where possible)

Can:

- Control the cruising vessel effectively in a confined space under power, including all berthing and unberthing situations
- Pick up a mooring bow- or stern-to
- Avoid excessive use of power
- Additional for twin-engined vessels: berth and unberth in simple situations using one engine, including the correct use of lines

6. Yacht Handling under Sail

Understands:

- How to identify and take into account wind and current conditions when planning and executing manoeuvres (practical experience where possible)

Can:

- Use the sails to control the yacht in a confined space
- Consistently pick up a mooring
- Sail effectively on all points of sail, including downwind techniques

7. Adverse Weather Conditions

Understands:

- How to handle a cruising vessel in strong winds
- General conduct in restricted visibility

Can:

- Prepare a cruising vessel for heavy weather
- Navigate in restricted visibility

8. Emergency Situations

Understands:

- The actions to be taken when abandoning to a life raft, and during helicopter and lifeboat rescues
- How to carry out the aftercare requirements on a casualty who has been in the water

Can:

- Describe to a crew member the effects of cold-water shock on a casualty who has been in the water
- Recover a man overboard under power
- Recover a man overboard under sail