



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: RYA 5-DAY YACHT CRUISING COURSE

Where do I find the yacht?

The yacht is based on pontoon E berth 17 at Town Quay Marina. On the first day of your course, please head down to the marina and meet your instructor in the reception area. Courses usually start at 09:30am but if you are running late, no worries just drop your instructor a call, text or email!

After you turn into Town Quay from the main road, you go past the Red Funnel ferry terminal and the Steam coffee shop on your right, then you go past Starbucks coffee shop and Waterside House (NHS) offices both on the left, the entrance to the marina is the next set of double automatic opening doors on the left. If you get to the Red Jet high speed catamaran terminal also on the left, you've gone slightly too far!

[Town Quay Marina](#)

Town Quay
Southampton
SO14 2AQ

Phone 02380 234397

<http://www.townquay.com/marina>

What facilities does the Marina have?

The marina has lots of facilities including WiFi, toilets, showers and laundry; you can find more information on their website as above. Within a 3 minute walk you have Starbucks, Co-Op, Wetherspoons, and a large pharmacy. The city centre is an 8 minute walk.

How can I get to the Marina by public transport?

The marina is very well served by public transport. Southampton Central railway station is about a 20 minute walk, but with heavy bags and equipment you may want to catch the Quay Connect bus that runs every 30 minutes between Southampton Central railway station and the Town Quay, it is free for ferry ticket holders.

There are numerous additional bus services to Town Quay:

Unilink bus numbers U1, U1N and U6 all stop just outside the Town Quay, visit <http://www.unilinkbus.co.uk/>

Southampton City Red bus numbers 2, 3, 6, X4 and X5 all stop within a 4 minute walk of the Town Quay, visit <https://www.firstgroup.com/southampton>

Blue Star bus service also runs into Southampton city centre which is an 8 minute walk away, visit <http://www.bluestarbus.co.uk/index.shtml>

People coming from the Isle of Wight have the Red Funnel ferry or Red Jet high speed catamaran service, and those coming from Hythe have the Hythe Ferry. All of these services bring you straight into Town Quay.

Can I park my car at Town Quay?

Car parking is limited and it can be a challenge to find a space, especially during the week. If you would like to drive, please contact the instructor for the latest situation on parking, a couple of days before the course starts.





What will we be doing on the course?

The RYA Yachtmaster Scheme Syllabus and Logbook (G158) explains the entire scheme from Level 1 Basic Skills right up to Yachtmaster Ocean, and covers everything in between. It covers everything that we will be doing on your course. If you have already completed an RYA sail cruising course here at the University or elsewhere, you may well have a logbook already. If you are a Competent Crew candidate, you will be issued with a book included in the course fee.

Most University RYA sail cruising courses are made up of a variety of short to medium length passages around the Solent area between Chichester and Poole Harbours, with time to practice sailing, seamanship and navigation skills and drills in between, followed by in-harbour exercises and boat handling, with some theory sessions over breakfast, lunch, dinner and coffee breaks. We aim to have a great deal of fun whilst learning together in a relaxed, supportive and dynamic environment. The instructor will regularly debrief you on your progress during the week.

How safe is sailing?

Despite all the sensationalist stories you may have heard in the media, sailing is essentially a safe activity, despite having there being an element of risk. Your safety is our number one priority. On the first day of your course you will receive a safety briefing and introduction to the yacht, and a second-in-command will be identified in case the instructor becomes unable to remain in command, for example due to falling overboard (this is unlikely but it is standard practice to plan for any such eventuality).

Weather and tides

The instructor will be looking at the weather and tides in the days prior to the course starting, and making an outline plan for the course, in terms of which harbours and marinas we may visit during the course. If you want an idea of the weather for the next few days, go to the following site and search for Southampton, this will give you a fairly good idea if it's going to be windy and/or cold or sunny:

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast>

For a more accurate marine-specific weather forecast for the Solent area for the next 48 hours, visit:

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/marine/inshore-waters-forecast#iw7>

Sleeping and washing!

You will be sharing accommodation and living space on the yacht with the other students and instructor. There are plenty of bedrooms (cabins) and beds (bunks) on board and the instructor will coordinate allocation of sleeping space and storage space on the first day of your course. There is a toilet (heads) on board as well as a sitting/dining area (saloon) and a kitchen (galley). Most evenings and every overnight stop we will be in a marina, and you will be able to go ashore for showers and to use the toilet, and of course maybe a visit to the local pub for a drink! Although the course starts and finishes at Town Quay Marina, it's likely that the other nights during the course, we will stay away in various other different marinas, within the Solent area.

Smoking/Vaping

You can smoke on the yacht however we would ask you to only smoke above decks at the back of the yacht's cockpit (near what is called the pushpit) and downwind so the smoke blows away. Never open the lazarette (large rear locker adjacent to the pushpit) whilst smoking as we store Gas and fuel in the locker. Please NEVER smoke below decks as we have Gas on board for cooking, as well as other hazards, so please no smoking below decks.

Swimming ability and confidence on the water

On the first day of your course, the instructor will coordinate the delivery of a safety brief, part of which they will find out who can swim and who cannot. It's no problem, as those who cannot swim will have a life jacket issued to them, which in the unlikely event that they fall in the water, the lifejacket will automatically inflate and bring you head up, airway open to facilitate breathing. The boat will immediately throw additional floatation to you, and immediately come around and pick you up, so you can just remain nice and calm. In fact, all crew (even strong swimmers) will be issued life jackets and asked to wear them at all times whilst underway, unless the instructor risk assesses it as completely safe not to wear them, then the crew member can choose. You will understand why as we talk through safety and seamanship during your course.

On board catering/meals

On your booking form, you have already told us of any special requirements that you have, including special diets and any allergies. If you have any very specific requirements, we would request that you help by providing some items that you can have.

Every day except the first day Breakfast is offered as Cereal(muesli/porridge/others) and toast/preserves. Sandwiches are offered for Lunchtimes and there will be one evening meal provided and prepared by the crew onboard the yacht (typically a vegetarian or meat Spaghetti bolognese). The other three nights there is an opportunity to eat ashore at pubs, restaurants or takeaways or else, you may source ingredients and cook on board.

Drinking water, squash, tea, coffee, milk, hot chocolate, crisps, biscuits and fruit on board.

End of course

After receiving a full debrief from your instructor, and discussing your next step in terms of sailing, and hopefully receiving your certificate (!) we will all help each other (including the instructor) to wash down the boat, clean inside and take any unused perishable food away. This is part of yachting and part of the course! If we all work together, we can achieve this in good time, and maybe have a celebratory drink afterwards!

Learning resources

If you are feeling super keen to get learning before the course, then we can recommend the following RYA books in paper form or e-book available from the RYA website:

- Competent Crew Skills
- Day Skipper Handbook Sail
- Sail Trim
- International Regulations for the Preventions of Collisions at Sea
- Sea Survival
- Weather

You will also find loads of online videos that people have done and also free apps to help you learn, search for the above topics on YouTube or in the Apple or Google app store

Feedback and Complaints

Following completion of the course you will be contacted by email with a link to our online feedback portal and your comments are greatly appreciated and do lead to improvements in our future courses. There is a University complaint procedure in place which we would encourage you to use if you feel dissatisfied with any aspect of your experience.



Course Cancellations/Transfers

We retain the right to cancel a date and transfer your booking or offer you a refund if the weather is unsuitable to run the course on the basis of health and safety. As part of this decision we will be looking at wind, temperature and sea state. Where possible we will give you 24 hours' notice when a clear and accurate weather forecast comes through.

On the rare occurrence of staff sickness we will endeavour to cover the staff shortage and continue to run the course. This would also be grounds for a refund or date transfer.

The bookee cancelling the booking:

More than 7 days before the course: We are happy to offer a full refund or transfer your booking to another date upon request.

More than 48 hours before the course: We will give a 50% refund or a full refund upon the presentation of a current doctor's note. No transfers are available at this point.

24 hours before the course or less: We are not able to offer a refund or transfer.

Please [download](#), print and complete and bring with you a medical form to inform the staff of any impairment that may affect their ability to complete the course. Where staff feel that candidates are unable to complete sections of a course this will be discussed with them in a mid course de-brief.

Contact details:

- Sport and Wellbeing 023 8059 2119
- University Watersports Centre 023 8067 6875
- Watersports Mobile 07770 703599

Address:

University Watersports Centre
Mead Crescent, Southampton
SO18 2JL



SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

Items	Notes
Passport size photograph	Only needed for Day Skipper Practical and Coastal Skipper Practical and Yachtmaster Exams. NOT needed for Level 1, Level 2, Start Yachting or Competent Crew.
Warm base layers (several)	Ideally technical fabrics but other fabrics like cotton or polyester will do, think thermal bottoms or leggings and t-shirt type tops. Decathlon is an excellent and cheap source of sailing and technical gear, highly recommended!
Warm middle layers (several)	Fleece jackets, fleece jumpers and fleece tracksuit type bottoms.
Waterproof outer layer	The best is a set of waterproof sailing salopettes and jacket, which we have available for hire and if you ordered these on your booking form they will be on the yacht waiting for you. Alternatively skiing or outdoor walking/hiking trousers and jacket sets would do the job.
Deck boots and thermal socks	Rubber type boots with a good grip should be fine, preferably sailing type if you have them, if not don't worry, and preferably a nice pair of thermal socks to go on your feet!
Deck shoes	If you have boaty deck shoes great, otherwise a decent pair of robust trainers with good grip will be fine.
Woolly hat	If the weather forecast looks like its going to be cold, worth having.
Warm gloves	If the weather forecast looks like its going to be cold, worth having.
Deck gloves	Some people like to have half finger leather type gloves for handling ropes etc to give their hands some extra protection, this is personal choice.
Cap or hat	If the weather forecast looks like its going to be sunny, worth having.
Lip protection	If the weather forecast looks like its going to be sunny, worth having.
Sun cream	If the weather forecast looks like its going to be sunny, worth having.
Sun glasses	
Towel	Microfibre type best as they dry very quickly but any towel will do the job.
Toiletries	We will be stopping in marinas most nights so there will be access to showers and toilets ashore.
Medications	Any regular medications you are on.
Sea sickness remedies?	If you would like to bring some tablets then please do discuss the best ones for you with a pharmacist and purchase them over the counter to bring with you. Other options include acupressure bands, vitamin C tablets, caffeine, ginger, and controlled breathing techniques.
Phone/tablet chargers	Both 12 volt and 240 volt if you have them would be handy. We will only have 240 volt in the evening whilst hooked up to pontoon shore power.
RYA Logbook G158	If you have completed an RYA sail cruising course previously and you have a log book it would be helpful if you could bring it along.

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST CONTINUED

Items	Notes
Evening clothes	A set of comfortable casual clothes for the evening in case we visit the pub!
Nightclothes	Can help keep you warm at night.
Sleeping bag	A nice warm one in the colder months!
Ear plugs?	Some people might snore!
Pillow	For extra comfort
Squashable bag	Bringing a rigid wheeled case is a bit of a no-no on a yacht, due to lack of space and not easy to store away. A squashable sports type holdall, canvas bag or rucksack is better.
Cash/credit card	Its possible to spend very little money during the course as breakfasts, lunches, one evening meal and non-alcoholic drinks are included however sometimes you may want to eat out or visit the pub, in that case please bring some funds!!
Waterproof container	Some people use a waterproof case or container for their phone/tablet, if you have one then bring it along!
Torch	There is a torch provided in each cabin however some people prefer to bring their own, especially useful is a head torch

