



Elite Sailing
training and adventure

Sailing Weekends / Start Yachting

Course Outline

Sail Training Weekends are ideal for beginners to experience sailing a cruising yacht and complete the RYA 'Start Yachting' Course – the first step on the RYA Sail Training pathway. These weekends can also be used to complete RYA Competent Crew or Day Skipper practical courses and they are suitable to refresh or extend sailing skills or have coaching and an assessment for the International Certificate of Competence, or complete a Day Skipper tidal conversion. Weekends start and finish at Chatham Marina on the River Medway in Kent – less than 1 hour from Central London.

Format for the weekend

You join the yacht at Chatham Marina at 1800 on Friday and meet the skipper/instructor and up to 4 other crew. The other crew may be first timers, or doing a series of weekends as a competent crew or day skipper course.

You will be shown around the boat, allocated a berth and, after a safety briefing by the skipper we will usually sail that evening. You will be involved 'hands-on' from the beginning and might even find yourself helming the boat down the river at night. This will be a short trip of about 2 or 3 hours to a mooring or anchorage in the Medway and a well-earned, convivial dinner around the saloon table.

Rising for an early breakfast the following day, you will spend a day at sea 'learning the ropes', how to steer the yacht, set and trim sails, tack and gybe and lots more. Lunch will be 'on-the-go'. On Saturday night you will find yourself perhaps at another anchorage, or alongside a landing. In any event we usually aim to be able to get ashore to a pub at some stage. After another memorable meal aboard and a good night's sleep there is another early start for an exhilarating sail back to Chatham. After lunch and a clean-up of the boat you will be saying goodbye to the others at about 1500 on the Sunday.

Our skippers are chosen for their experience, patience and understanding. Your skipper will show you how to do everything from the beginning so that you are able to participate right from the start. Although you will be working and exercising as part of a crew you will be given individual guidance and instruction. As each hour and day passes you will acquire new skills and grow in confidence.

The atmosphere aboard is relaxed and the emphasis is on having fun – exactly what sailing is supposed to be. At the same time there is lots to learn and some work to put in. At the end of a weekend you will be tired – yes – but also fulfilled and refreshed.

Our stylish, modern, well-equipped yachts offer exciting sailing performance and comfortable, heated accommodation. Meals are all prepared from good quality and mostly fresh ingredients so you will eat really well. If you enjoy wine or beer with an evening meal you can bring your own or contribute to a 'kitty' to buy some before leaving harbour.

We want you to enjoy your experience and of course we hope that you are going to want to continue with your sailing. If you wish, you can book two further weekends to complete the RYA competent crew course – the first step along a challenging and fascinating path as you learn about this wonderful sport. Alternatively you can switch to a 5 day course or even an adventure sailing holiday. Whatever you decide, we will be there to offer help and advice as you pursue your goals – be they boat ownership, charter, racing or cruising with us to new destinations.

Age:

No minimum or maximum age limit.

Achievement

RYA Start Yachting Course Certificate. You will have made a big step towards the RYA Competent Crew standard.

What will I need to bring

We can provide wet weather clothing hire so the only things you may need to buy are a sleeping bag and suitable footwear (deck shoes or sea boots – although trainers are OK). For a complete suggested packing list see Downloads.

Books

There is no essential reading before you come on the weekend. However, if you have never sailed before you might want to read through the RYA Competent Crew Course notes booklet. You might also want to buy a personal RYA Log Book. These books are available to buy at our base – or you can obtain it from the RYA website.

Next Steps

Go on to complete the [RYA Competent Crew course](#). You can do this by booking 2 further 2-day weekends, or one 3-day weekend, or a 5-day competent crew course or an [Adventure sailing holiday](#).

Downloads

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

Costs and availability

One place on a two-day weekend costs from £220 in low season up to £256 in high season. This price includes a berth, instruction, all meals aboard from dinner on the Friday to Lunch on Sunday, beverages and snacks and all yacht operating expenses. The only extra is wet weather gear hire at £10 a session and any personal expenses ashore. Great value for a full weekend away with accommodation, food and top-quality training.

We sail every weekend throughout the year. You can see availability directly at the top right of this page. If you would like to enquire about or book a specific date just click on the date and then complete and send the enquiry form. If you are buying it for someone as a gift, its usually simpler to give them an open dated certificate and then they can choose their own dates.

Go to [Gift Certificates](#) for details.



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