

Newhaven Yacht Club - Crewing Opportunities



The Newhaven Yacht Club's Crew List is designed to give a taste of sailing to new clubmembers, and to provide opportunities to go sailing for members who don't own boats. The scheme brings together club members who own boats (skippers) with those wishing to go sailing. When you join the scheme, you might be invited to sail with a number of skippers on a variety of boats. In time, you might end up as a boat owner yourself, or as regular crew for one or more skippers.

The Organiser warns all applicant crew and skippers that in providing this list it is not warranting the seaworthiness of boats or the competence of crew or skippers. Applicants should satisfy themselves as to sea-worthiness and competence and should also make their own insurance arrangements.

WHAT TO EXPECT

When you join the Newhaven Yacht Club's crew list, you'll be asked to provide some information about yourself, such as your contact details, and whether there are any medical issues a skipper should be aware of. That information will be added to the club's crew list, which is circulated to the club's skippers who have registered their interest in crew.

Any information held by the club will be in strict compliance with our data protection policy as outlined on the website: <https://newhavenyc.org.uk/clubstuff/privacy-policy-1.html>

From time to time, you'll receive invitations to go sailing from skippers, usually for a day sail. Because sailing is more fun in the right weather, and the weather is hard to predict, skippers will usually be unable to give you very much notice.

How often you'll get to go sailing will depend on many things, including how flexible you are with your free time, and what the weather's like (you'll get fewer invitations in a lousy summer).

WHAT TO TAKE?

Generally, your skipper will ask you to bring a packed lunch for a day sail, or maybe a pie or pasty that can be heated up. You should always take a soft drink (plain water is fine). You'll be out in the wind and, on a good day, the sun and you'll dehydrate quite quickly.

On sunny days, put on plenty of high SP factor sun cream. You get a double dose of UV when out on the water, directly from the sun and reflected from the water. Follow the manufacturer's instructions about repeating the creaming up.

Always wear more clothes than you think you need. The air over the sea is generally cooled by the water, and the wind has a cooling effect. It's best to wear or bring lots of layers, so that you can adjust how many layers you wear once you've experienced the conditions.

When you start sailing, there's no need to invest in expensive sailing gear. Delay that investment until you are sure you're going to do lots of sailing. However, some waterproof outer layer is going to keep you more comfortable if rain starts, or if spray comes over the boat. Talk to your skipper about what to wear.

WHAT TO LEARN?

There's a lot to learn about sailing (the skippers you sail with will probably tell you they are still learning). However, you don't need to know it all, or even very much, to have fun on the water, and to be a useful crew member. You'll be a big help to your skipper if you can play an active part in leaving a berth and in coming alongside again later. Here are some skills you'll need.

Following orders

There are usually several safe ways to achieve any particular boating manoeuvre, such as coming alongside at the end of a sail. For safety reasons, it's important that someone chooses just one approach, and that the whole crew follow this one approach.

First, don't try to carry out an order you don't properly understand. If you're not sure what the skipper wants you to do, ask for clarification. (The one exception to this rule is when an emergency arises and there's no time to discuss a plan. Tell the skipper you don't understand, but be ready to do the best you can.)

Secondly, if you're not confident to do something the skipper asks you to do, say so. Perhaps a little bit of explanation, or a short demonstration, will increase your confidence. If not, it's the skipper's job to make an alternative plan.

What next?

When you're new to sailing, you can feel a little bit overwhelmed by the number of new things you see and hear. Each time you go out sailing, it should all make a bit more sense, and feel more familiar to you.

Once you begin to feel a little more confident about the basics - helming, and helping to get on and off a berth - it's time to move on.

Terminology

The Royal Yachting Association (RYA) publishes a helpful training booklet entitled *Competent Crew*. Your skipper might have a copy on board for you to look at. You can buy it from the RYA's website, or from onshore or online chandleries.

The booklet is about 80 pages long. Don't let the amount of information it contains overwhelm you. Study it slowly. Look at it after each trip to see what else you now know. As a guide, you could expect to learn most (but not all) of what's in the book if you went on a 5-day intensive sailing course.