

SAILING CHECKLIST

Preparation for sailing

Training

- Ensure that you can swim well
- **It is recommended before going sailing that you take part in a training course to develop the basic skills.** Learn the following skills:
 - How to jibe and tack
 - Sailing downwind
 - Capsize drills for dinghies
 - Man overboard drills
 - How to understand weather and tide

Safety

- Make sure that you are aware of the weather forecast and sea state for the area
- Do not sail alone, go with a friend or a group so that you can watch out for each other.
- For small craft / dinghies ensure that you have a rescue boat available
- Ensure that you have a **complete** change of clothes with you in case you get wet.
- Download a smart phone emergency application, which allows for direct and geographically pinged emergency calls.
- On the sea carry a VHF radio and learn how to use it. (Ensure that you have the appropriate license for your country)
- Plan any journeys carefully. Passage planning is essential for all seafarers under the International Convention on Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS)

Before sailing

Planning

- Plan any journeys carefully. Passage planning is essential for all seafarers under the International Convention on Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS)
- Check the weather forecast and be aware of changing weather when out.
- Work out your route taking into account any hazards, navigational dangers, tides and buoyage
- Always plan for the unexpected, such as changing weather, sea sickness or other illness, injury or equipment.
- Shelter: Identify sheltered water where you can escape the weather/sea state if necessary.
- Make sure that your boat and crew are capable of handling the proposed journey and that you have the all the requisite safety equipment needed



Eating and drinking

- Ensure that you are well hydrated (especially in warmer climates)
- Eat suitably beforehand so you have enough energy to handle the boat and maintain your body temperature.

Equipment

- Always wear a life jacket or buoyancy aid
- Ensure that you carry and/or wear a waterproof and windproof jacket and trousers
- Dress appropriately for the conditions. In colder climates layering with thermals/fleece can be important. Keeping warm and dry is essential as getting too cold impairs your judgement and physical ability. Gloves and a warm hat can be essential at sea.
- Pack the following minimum equipment:
 - A drinking bottle or flask and some food
 - A complete change of clothes and a warm hat
 - A mobile phone, navigation device
 - Medicine you might need, i.e. an inhaler for asthma
- A first aid kit with waterproof plasters / tape and bandages
- Use waterproof sun block cream and sun hat when the weather dictates it. Wear a warm hat in cold conditions.
- Carry flares and / or an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB).

Informing

- Tell a shore based contact how long and where you are going to paddle.
- Inform the coastguard about your passage / trip.

During sailing

Stops and resting

- Break your journey into stages and find appropriate sheltered areas for breaks. Taking a break can be as important for your mental wellbeing as physical
- Drink regularly

Seamanship

- Be constantly aware of your surroundings, your position, any changes no matter how small to weather and/or conditions as well as the people in your crew.

After sailing

- Inform your shore based contact and the coastguard that you have finished your trip and are safely off the water.
- Take off wet gear and put on warm clothes
- Rinse and store any equipment used.

