

The content of the RYA Start Windsurfing basic teaching system is outlined below. The detail of each section is described fully in the subsequent text.

Instructors should demonstrate sections **I** through to **IV** of **On Shore 1(a&b)** on the simulator. At the end of each teaching section, provide the students with the opportunity to practice on the simulator before moving on to the next.

When students have a reasonable grasp of sailing across the wind, they should proceed to **On Shore 2**. The two sections of **On shore 2** may be split depending on conditions and the group's ability.

Students should be encouraged to give feedback as a means of checking understanding.

Delivery ashore:

On Shore 1 (a)

- I. Introduction to Kit
- II. Getting Started: Secure Position, Static Turn, Sailing Position, *followed by On water practice and consolidation*

On-shore 1 (b)

- III. Steering the board
- IV. Tacking
- V. Safety

Instructors may break this down even further to aid learning dependent on group level and environment

Delivery afloat:

On Water 1 (a&b), aim: Various short sessions encouraging students to achieve goals and learn progressively, incorporating instructor demonstrations and students '**sailing across the wind, steering and using the tack**'. Instructors may also wish to include elements of safety afloat.

Once students have a reasonable grasp of these skills, they should proceed to On Shore 2.

Delivery ashore:

On Shore 2:

- I. Recap on shore 1.
- II. Upwind Sailing.
- III. Downwind sailing and gybing

Delivering this afloat:

On Water 2, aim: Incorporating various sessions to introduce these elements progressively:

- I. Upwind Sailing
- II. Downwind sailing and gybing.
- III. Sailing Safely

- The two sections (upwind and downwind) of On Shore 2 may be split, depending on conditions and the group's ability
- **All** teaching demonstration for Start Windsurfing, on shore 1 & 2 should be utilising a Beginners' simulator with board and rig.

Safe sailing should be covered during the course but fully recapped as the 7 Common senses before completion.

Definitions

- Session Consideration, confirms the procedure to be followed and any considerations
- Teaching Sequence, is the order of delivery, key teaching points are underlined
- Coaching Points are additional input from the instructor that students may benefit from whilst on the simulator (and water) and help to make a skill achievable

ON SHORE 1

Session 1: Introduction to the kit

Aim: A brief introduction to the course, the function of various components of the board and rig and, if appropriate, demonstrate basic rigging and tuning techniques.

Session Considerations

- Instructor brief and introduction
- Utilise a student's board with the rig
- Equipment used for the demonstration should be identical to that used by the students.
- Use proper terms for each item, keeping technical jargon to a minimum, only introducing new terms if necessary
- Cover the function of each component
- Demonstrate how the equipment is rigged and made ready to sail.

Remember: Ensure the process is simple, best done in stages, with the instructor showing a small part, then the students copying with their rigs and returning to the instructor for the next stage.

During the instructor's rigging demonstration, as much hands-on experience as possible should be gained by the students. This may not include a full rigging process, but as a minimum show attaching the rig, daggerboard movement and how to carry the board/rig.

Teaching Sequence

The Board:

- The front (nose), back (tail), top and bottom
- Fin and daggerboard/ centreboard operation
- Mastfoot fitting and towing eye
- Centreline

The Rig:

- The mast, boom, sail, mastfoot and uphaul
- Sail onto mast and attach mastfoot
- Boom height (chest)
- Tensioning of the sail (Downhaul and outhaul)

Completion:

- Wind awareness
- How to pick up and carry the board and the rig, separately
 - Ways to work in pairs especially with children
- Connecting the board and sail together
- Storing the rig

At this point you may wish students to rig their sails, or later, just before they go on the water.

- Rigging may be optional depending on centre requirements

Coaching Points

- Wind Awareness
- Picking up the board and carrying it to the water's edge, then picking up the rig and carrying it
- Connecting board and rig together

Session 2: Getting Started – Secure position

Aim: To teach the student how to climb onto the board, pull the rig out of the water, get into and maintain the secure position.

Session Considerations

- Instructor to provide a clear demonstration ashore to help build a progressive sequence
- Utilise a beginners' simulator with board and rig.
- It is important that when the students are on the simulator they understand why and how the board and rig must be manoeuvred and held in the SECURE POSITION.
- After the instructor demonstration, encourage candidates onto the simulator to ensure they understand the importance of key positions and actions by 'copying' the instructor themselves.

Teaching Sequence

1. Approach the board from the opposite side to the rig, wind coming from behind the sailor
2. Place hands either side of the mastfoot, climb on, placing knees on the board and keeping weight over the centreline.
3. Grab hold of the uphaul and check where the wind is coming from
4. Keep hold of the uphaul and stand up, keeping feet comfortably either side of the mastfoot on the centreline.
5. With straight arms, lean back slightly to break the seal of the sail on the water and allow the water to drain away.
6. Keeping the legs flexed, work hand over hand up the uphaul, eventually holding the mast below the boom with extended arms.
7. By leaning the rig either backwards or forwards (if necessary), position the rig at 90 degrees to the board to find the SECURE POSITION.

Coaching points:

- Weight on centreline
- Take time over the uphaul process to drain water off rig and keep back straight
- Keep arms extended
- The instructor will need to show an upwind rig recovery when afloat
- The final position should be relaxed with flexed legs, and a V shape between body and rig

Session 3: Static Turn (Basic tack)

Aim: To turn the board through 180° either towards or away from the wind, once completed returning to the SECURE POSITION.

Session Considerations

- Instructor to demonstrate the turning sequence twice, always turning towards the wind.
- The instructor should be confident that their teaching environment is suitable and take into consideration downwind drift

Teaching Sequence – From SECURE POSITION (Turning the board towards the wind)

1. Lean the rig towards the back of the board.
2. As the front of the board turns towards the wind take small steps around the front of the mastfoot.
3. Keep the rig inclined and move the sail across the back of the board.
4. Having turned the board through 180°, resume the new SECURE POSITION

Coaching Points

- Importance of taking small steps
- Allow the board time to turn, by moving the rig slowly
- The lower the rig is leaned towards the back of the board, the faster the board will turn.
- After each turn, ensure that feet, body, rig and board are correctly re-positioned in the SECURE POSITION

Note: This demonstration can be altered and used to show a turn away from the wind if required, which some students may find easier at first.

Session 4: The Sailing Position

Aim: To teach the student how to get into the SAILING POSITION

Session considerations

- Instructor to provide two demonstrations
- The second demonstration should show Steps 3, 4 (a & b) as a flowing movement, with specific coaching points brought out

Teaching Sequence

From the Secure position

1. Identify a goal point across the wind, in line with the front of the board
2. Take the front hand off the mast and place it on the boom, let go with the back hand
3. Remaining on the centreline, step back with the back foot, behind the daggerboard, sliding the front foot behind the mast base, foot pointing forwards
4. **a.** Turn the shoulders towards your goal point and with an extended (and flexed) front arm, bring the rig to the 'balance point'
4. **b.** Simultaneously, drop body weight down on a flexed back leg, place the back hand on the boom and pull in gently to create power
5. Continue looking at the goal point and adjust hands & feet to become comfortable
6. To stop, release the boom with the back hand and return to the 'Secure position'

Coaching Points

- The Balance point is where the rig is placed in a position where the mast is taken beyond a vertical position, so that it does not require support when released momentarily
- Pick a goal point across the wind.
- Ensure that the rig is pulled to the balance point, emphasising a smooth flowing movement throughout.
- The power generated by the rig *is* counter balanced by body weight.
- Power can be released by easing out with the back hand, and increased by pulling in.
- Increase body weight on the back foot as the power increases

Session 5: Steering the board

Aim: To steer the board towards and away from the wind, making small adjustments in course, (perhaps) to avoid an object in the water

Session Considerations

- Instructor to provide one demo
- Explanations should be kept simple
- Depending on the students grasp of techniques so far, steering may be introduced within the first water session before being recapped on the simulator (if necessary).

Teaching Sequence

Towards the wind

1. From the sailing position, look at a goal point slightly closer to the wind
2. Lean the rig back extending the back arm
3. Once heading towards the new goal, return to the sailing position, pulling the rig in slightly with the back hand

Away from the wind

1. From the current sailing position look towards the original goal, keeping low.
2. Keep the back hand pulled in, lean the rig forwards and towards the wind, extending the front arm
3. The board will turn away from the wind
4. Once heading back to the original goal, return to the sailing position and ease out the back hand

Coaching Points

- The leaning of the rig, forwards or backwards, should be a diagonal action across the board,
- Look at your goal point.
- Awareness of wind direction.

Session 6: Tacking

Aim: To introduce a tack, developing on the static turn, making turning more effective and stable

Session Considerations

The students already know the principals of a static turn, these skills can now be refined and improved. Demonstrate the turn twice, once in each direction.

Teaching Sequence

From sailing across the wind

1. Pick a new goal point further upwind and steer towards it, returning to the sailing position, remembering to pull in with the back hand.
2. Check for obstructions, place front hand on the mast and front foot in-front of the mastfoot
3. Steer the board towards the wind-by leaning the rig back
4. Once into wind, place both feet in front of the mast and both hands on the mast
5. Continue turning, just like a static turn
6. Once back across the wind, return to the sailing position

Coaching point

- Checking for obstructions
- Steering to an upwind goal.
- When tacking, keep the rig moving across the back of the board.

Exercise and Games

Specific tasks/ goals will help the student to achieve the desired skills. See the exercises in On Water One for appropriate examples.

Session 7: Safety

Aim: To make students aware of safety issues and methods of self-rescue.

Session Considerations

- Instructor's delivery to provide situations where self-rescue should be considered, and the alternatives.
- Instructor demonstration of self-rescue ashore or afloat
- Candidates can practise on the water (if appropriate).
- Introduction to 7 common senses and CHECK|CHECK|CHECK

Method 1- Flagging

A simple and easy route to get back downwind, as well as an effective first introduction to guiding students to sail and steer the board downwind.

- Advantages: possible in any wind strength, quick and easy
- Disadvantages: Not easy to balance in chop, will only take sailor downwind!

Teaching Sequence:

1. From the secure position, lean the rig over the nose of the board
2. Gently lean the sail from side to side to help guide downwind by steering
3. By leaning and holding the sail over one side of the nose the board will steer in the opposite direction

Method 2 – Butterfly Method

In no wind or light wind, an inability to sail can be easily and quickly remedied with the butterfly method.

- Advantages: Very quick and efficient, Good for short distances in little or no wind.
- Disadvantages: Difficult to maintain the sail balance in choppy conditions.

Teaching Sequence:

1. Make sure the boom is lowered, and rest the sail onto the back of board
2. Sailor lays on front of board and uses feet to balance sail whilst paddling.

Method 3 – Clew drag

In more difficult conditions, or if the sailor is experiencing difficulty in returning to shore, the Clew Drag allows the sailor to travel across the wind, controlling the power using a partially raised rig

- Advantages; can be used in stronger winds/choppier conditions, sailor is able to regulate the power from the rig, will allow the sailor to travel 'across' the wind
- Disadvantages; Relies on the sailor raising the rig to the appropriate height to provide sufficient power

Teaching sequence

1. Ensure that the rig is positioned downwind of the board/sailor
2. Ensure that the mast is closest to the direction of travel required and that the daggerboard is down
3. Using the uphaul, partially raise the rig (as for the 'secure position'), so that the 'clew' end of the boom remains in the water.
4. Control the power by either raising or lowering the rig
5. Steer the board by leaning the rig back (upwind) or forwards (downwind)

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT STUDENTS SHOULD SAIL AT AN RYA CENTRE OR WHERE SAFETY COVER IS PROVIDED, THE STUDENT SHOULD ALSO BE GIVEN INFORMATION ABOUT PROGRESSING ON TO THE RYA INTERMEDIATE COURSE.

ON WATER ONE

Students should be issued with the relevant clothing, told how to wear it and have the importance of such matters as “doing up” buoyancy aids and wetsuits explained before heading out on to the water.

Session Considerations

- Instructor to recap session
- Teaching Aids: Instructor equipment, buoys, powered craft
- Laying an across wind course can aid group control
- A safety boat should always be afloat and ready to use
- On Water One should be delivered as a number of short sessions, mixed in with simulator sessions, encouraging students to achieve goals and learn progressively.
- Make sure students' goals are visible, such as the use of marker buoys.
- Before going afloat, the instructor should provide the students with a brief including sailing area, safety signals and any hazards.

Teaching Sequence

Instructor demonstrates sequences afloat in sections

- I. Sailing across the wind
- II. Secure Position
- III. Static Turn
- IV. Sailing Position
- V. Steering
- VI. Sailing across the wind with a 'Tack'

Section V (safety) can be talked about before going afloat or during a break in the Sailing lesson 1.

Allow the student's time to practice sailing across the wind, allowing mistakes and providing encouraging refinement and coaching, when students are competent, continue to onshore 2.

Coaching Points

Once students are on the water, they will progress at differing rates. The instructor should take care to spread time fairly between all students. Because of the now varying abilities of the group, the decision of when to bring students off the water for On-shore 2 may be difficult. After a break students should be ready and able to progress on to the next stage or further practise.

Possible Exercise Suggestions

- Static turning exercises – Either up/downwind or both
 - Students to experiment how leaning of the rig turns the board slower or faster.
 - This can be done in both directions and could be developed into a challenge to see how many static turns they could do in a set amount of time.
- Sailing position – Sailing across the wind then using the static turn to return.
 - Mark out a small sailing area free of obstructions with some clear goal points for students to aim to.
 - Keep attempts short so students can stay in the sailing area and also get more input from the instructor.
- Sail across the wind, add in Steering,
 - A figure of 8 course may be useful for students (S - TURNS)
- Tacking
 - Develop the tack from a small amount of steering with a static turn, to slowly steering further into the wind as the students wind awareness improves.

Powered Craft

Instructors needing to teach from a powered craft should remember that it is a coaching tool to be used conservatively when in close proximity to the students. When towing or returning a student from downwind the opportunity should be utilised to provide the student with constructive feedback and fault analysis.

When the students are reasonably competent the instructor continues with On-shore 2

Session 9: Onshore Two – Upwind sailing

Aim: Making progress upwind and how this can be achieved by combining sailing closer to the wind and the tacks learnt in On Shore One.

Session Considerations

- Instructor provides background theory to upwind sailing
 - No Go Zone
 - Upwind points of sailing
 - Our sailing line to help us make progress
- Instructor demonstration
 - Sailing upwind with clear progression and tacking, **once** in each direction
 - Introduce and explain the concept and reason for 'zig zagging' upwind
 - Identify a **target** directly upwind and explain how progress can be made by holding course on an upwind sailing line with relation to the no go zone.

Teaching Sequence

(From the Sailing Position)

1. Identify and steer towards a goal closer to the wind
2. Once heading towards your goal, return to the sailing position and pull in with the back hand, hold this course
3. *You are now making progress upwind*
4. Once good progress towards an upwind goal has been achieved, tack and repeat the process until the target is reached.

Coaching Points

- Awareness of the No Go Zone
- Show rig position when sailing upwind
- The importance of zigzagging upwind to make upwind progression to a realistic target

Session 10: Gybing downwind

Aim: To introduce Sailing Downwind and Gybing

Session Considerations

- Instructor should demonstrate twice to reinforce
- ONLY the instructor demonstrates this section on the simulator.
- Students only practise on the water.
- Utilise a beginners' simulator with board and rig for the instructor demonstration
- Further coaching should be provided on the water

Teaching Sequence

from a Sailing Position across the Wind

1. Check that the area down wind is clear of obstructions.
2. Step back with the back foot, keeping the body low, steer the board away from the wind
3. Keep leaning the rig across the board until on a run
4. Once on a run, open the rig, by easing out with the back hand so that it's square across the board, keeping the head up

TO GYBE

1. Foot change: move the front foot back in-front of the back foot, and the back-foot forwards, keeping weight over the centreline.
2. Rig Change: slide front hand next to the boom clamp and release the back hand, allow the rig to move over the front (nose)
3. As the board turns upwind from a run and when comfortable to do so, place the new front hand on the other side of the boom releasing the 'old' front hand
4. Complete the gybe by leaning the rig backwards so that the board is pointing towards the new goal (*across the wind*). Resume into the 'sailing position' and sail away.

Coaching Points

- Reinforce steering
- Keep weight low
- Stepping further back in stronger winds
- Keep weight over centreline on foot change
- Importance of keeping the head up to check area is clear and identify a new goal

Student must not practice on the simulator with an actual sail, however if needed students could practice the gybe with a 'ghost' rig.

Session 11: Sailing on a run (To be included at centre requirement)

Aim: Steering downwind

Session Considerations

- A centre may want instructors to introduce the students to running and steering downwind. Students may find it easier to run and steer on a run once they have experimented with 'flagging' downwind with no power in the rig.
- Instructor demonstrates this section on the simulator,
- Students practise on the water.

Teaching Sequence – (Running and steering on a run, from the sailing position)

Running:

1. Steer the board away from the wind, holding this position until the board is pointing downwind and on a run.
2. Ease the sail out with the backhand. At the same time, move the front foot back, placing both feet either side of the centreline.
3. The sail is now across (at 90°) the centreline of the board. This is running.

Steering:

4. By transferring bodyweight and/or leaning the rig to the left, the front of the board will turn right.
5. By transferring body weight and/or leaning the rig to the right, the front of the board will turn to the left.
6. If body weight and rig (*centre of effort*) are kept over the centreline of the board, it will continue in a straight line.
7. In stronger winds, move body weight further back on the board and flex the legs to maintain balance and control.
8. To change direction; gybe and resume the sailing position

Coaching Points

- Reinforce steering
- Keep weight low
- Stepping further back in stronger winds
- Whilst on a run, feet should be either side of the centreline pointing forward

Session 12: On water two

Aim: Consolidation of all manoeuvres learnt, sailing on all points of sailing, tacking and gybing as needed

Session Structure

- Instructor to provide on-water demonstration
- Provide individual coaching during a series of upwind and downwind exercises.
- Set a an effective sailing area to help group control and enable your students to use their newly learnt techniques which enables them to make progress:
 - Upwind
 - Downwind
- Use tacking and gybing as needed
- The limits can be achieved by setting a course or point to aim for, such as a simple journey or course covering all points of sailing, requiring both tacks and gybes

Having completed this exercise, demonstrating these techniques, students should demonstrate their skill to maintain their position, sail across the wind, make way towards an upwind goal and return sailing downwind.

Teaching Sequence

- Instructor to demonstrate sequences afloat in sections:
 - i. Sailing upwind
 - ii. Sailing downwind and gybing
 - iii. Sailing on a Run

Provide students with time to practice, allow mistakes and encourage refinement and coaching

Exercise and Games

The following exercises will assist students in practicing the desired techniques:

1. Upwind buoys as targets are useful, provided realistic distances are set.
2. Sailing across the wind. (Recap if required).
 - a. *Clear markers will help students identify good goal points as they sail across the wind.*
3. Upwind and tacking combination
 - a. *Start with shallow upwind angles, helping students identify goal points well clear of the no go zone. These goal points can be made progressively closer to the no go zone as students develop.*
4. Steering and power control towards or away from the wind.
 - a. Practising holding course and making steps towards and away from the wind zig-zagging downwind and gybing combination.
5. Steering downwind and gybing exercises.
6. Follow my leader – Particularly appropriate for developing and refining upwind work

Top Tip: Power control downwind: A student is struggling with power in the rig when steering downwind. To achieve a gybe do progressively deeper steers downwind without actually gybing. This helps students build confidence and the instructor can increase the amount steered each time until students go through the downwind position and complete a gybe