



HAVERSHAM SAILING CLUB

RYA Affiliated | RYA Recognised Training Centre | MKBYSA Racing

A guide to training courses at HSC 2026

What is involved in each course?

RYA Level 1 – Start Sailing

You will be guided through the basics of rigging the boat, launching, sailing along a straight course, and turning the boat through the wind – tacking and gybing. You will learn how to land the boat safely at the end of a session. You will learn basic knots and the “rules of the road”. You will be shown capsize recovery but there is no obligation to perform a capsize recovery on the Start Sailing course.

RYA Level 2 – Basic Skills

This will build on the skills learnt in Start Sailing. You will improve on the basic manoeuvres of tacking and gybing and you will learn in more detail the points of sailing and the five essentials. You will practice how to recover a man overboard (using a dummy) and how to come alongside buoys and boats. You will build on the theory of the Start Sailing course, covering weather, tides and basic sailing theory. You will perform a capsize drill towards the end of the final session.

Should I do Level One or Level Two?

If you have never sailed before or have very little experience, then you should start with Start Sailing (Level 1). If you have done a Start Sailing course or have some experience of sailing then you can do the Basic Skills course (Level 2). Discuss with the training team which is the right course for you.

Each course takes approximately 16 hours, either over 2 Saturdays and 2 evenings, or 5 evenings.

How much does a course cost?

The course fee for Level 1 is £110. This includes the purchase of the RYA National Sailing Scheme Syllabus and Logbook and the RYA Start Sailing Beginners Handbook.

The course fee for Level 2 is £90.

Payment for courses is via the booking form on the website

If you would prefer to pay in cash, please speak to the lead instructor.

The course fee covers the running costs of the course including maintenance of the training boats. The instructors and assistants are volunteers, regular members of the club who enjoy passing on their knowledge and have been trained and qualified as RYA sailing instructors.

Courses are only available to Haversham Sailing Club members.

What time does the course start?

Level 1 courses are usually run over two Thursday evenings and two Saturdays. The times will be confirmed close to the start of your course. Thursdays are usually 19:00 – 21:00 and Saturdays are 09:00 – 17:00.

Level 2 courses are sometimes run on Thursday evenings, 18:00 - 21:00. If these timings are difficult for you, let the training team know and we will try to accommodate.

What happens at the course?

The Level 1 course starts on a Thursday evening. The evening sessions are usually land based where you will learn the theory elements. During the first session, you will usually be shown how to rig a boat, and be talked through sailing kit. The second session covers the theory of points of sailing, “rule of the road” and weather.

Saturdays are mostly spent on the water. On arrival, you will be introduced to your instructor, who will explain basic concepts and give an opportunity to practice on land. Most of the day will be spent on the water. There will be regular breaks on shore and you may cover some land drills and short theory sessions throughout the day. You will need to bring your own lunch. By the end of the second Saturday, you will have covered the syllabus for the course.

The course can be physically demanding. If this could be an issue or you find yourself struggling during the course, please speak to one of the instructors so we can work to find a solution.

Different methods are used for teaching and learning including writing, verbal and demonstration. If there is anything we can do to aid your learning, please let us know.

If there is adverse weather forecast on either or both Saturdays then the second Thursday may be spent afloat. If there are plans to go on the water on a Thursday, you will be informed in advance so you can come prepared.

What if I can't attend a course I'm booked onto?

If you find you can no longer attend a training course you are booked onto, please let the training team know as soon as possible by emailing training@havershamsc.org. If you cancel more than 14 days before the start of your course, you will be entitled to a full refund of the course fee or the option to move to another course if places are available. If it is less than 14 days before the start of the course then a refund cannot be guaranteed.

If we have to cancel a course for any reason, you will be entitled to a full refund or a place on another course subject to availability.

What should I wear?

It is highly recommended you wear a wetsuit as it is likely you will get wet. This is not always necessary for summer courses if the weather is very warm.

It is possible to buy wetsuits and other specialist watersports clothing relatively cheaply in local sports and outdoor shops or online.

If not using a wetsuit, then wear warm outdoor clothing. Shorts are fine for warmer weather. Do not wear jeans.

A waterproof top is useful, especially if rain is forecast. Wetsuits do not always provide a lot of warmth.

Your feet will get wet so please bring appropriate footwear. Wetsuit or dinghy boots are ideal if you have them. If not, an old pair of trainers you don't mind getting wet will be sufficient. Avoid wellingtons with hard heels as these can slip in a boat.

You may spend a lot of time kneeling in the boat so knee pads can be useful. Helmets are provided by the club. These will be required when the wind speed is above 15mph when the risk of being struck by the boom is higher. You are welcome

to use one at any time.

It is a requirement to wear a buoyancy aid any time you are on or near the water. These can be provided by the club if you do not have your own.

Further advice on clothing for dinghy sailing will be given in a theory session.

What boats do we sail?

Level 1 courses are usually taught in large stable “double-handed” boats built to carry at least 3 people. There will usually be 1 or 2 students on board, and there will always be an instructor with you. There may be the opportunity to try a smaller “single-handed” boat towards the end of the second Saturday.

Level 2 courses are taught in a mixture of “double-handed” and “single-handed” boats depending on the number of students and instructors.

What happens if the weather is bad?

If there is too much or not enough wind to cover all of the practical parts of the course we will try to cover those parts on the other Saturday or on the Thursday evening session. If we can't get through the whole syllabus by the end of the course due to the weather, then an extra session may be arranged. In the rare circumstance of high winds over the whole course, we may have to cancel the course.

Courses do run in the rain, unless it is exceptional. Please come prepared to be outdoors for most of the day in any weather.

How do I make a complaint?

We work hard to ensure you have a safe and enjoyable experience on our training courses. If you have any issues during the course we will strive to rectify them at the time. If you feel that your experience was less than satisfactory then please speak to the Senior Instructor at your course in the first instance. You may also wish to raise a complaint with the Training Principle or the Club Commodore. Contact details for each can be found on the club website: <https://www.havershamsc.org/contacts.html>

If you feel that Haversham Sailing Club has not dealt with your complaint in a satisfactory manner, you may wish to raise the issue with the RYA. Details can be found on their website:

<https://www.rya.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/comments-and-complaints>

What happens after I complete a course?

At the end of the second Saturday, you will be issued with a certificate. If you have completed Start Sailing (Level 1), you may wish to sign up for a Basic Skills (Level 2) course if you haven't done so already.

You will be asked to complete feedback about the course.

Improver sessions are run on Tuesday evenings between April and September. The safety boat is on the water and there are usually instructors and experienced sailors around to help with rigging and give advice. The club boats can be hired on these evenings. They are an ideal opportunity to practice your new skills.

If you have any more questions, do not hesitate to ask. You can ask an instructor at your course or email training@havershamsc.org.