

RYA Dinghy Sailing Level 3 – Better Sailing

Course Duration: 2 days (approximately 16 hours)

Pre-course requirements: RYA Level 2 – Basic Skills (or equivalent experience)

Minimum age: Centre dependent (usually 8+)

Assumed knowledge: Able to rig, launch, sail, and recover a dinghy in light to moderate winds

Course ratio: 1 instructor to 3 students (maximum 6 per instructor in double-handers)

Course Aim

To enhance and build upon the skills learned at Level 2, enabling sailors to sail more efficiently, make confident decisions on the water, and try new techniques such as using spinnakers, racing starts, and advanced boat handling.

By the end of this course, sailors will be capable of sailing in a variety of conditions with greater independence and control.

Course Outline / Programme

Day 1 – Refining Technique & Expanding Knowledge

Morning Session

- **Introduction & Safety Briefing**
 - Course aims and objectives
 - Review of sailing theory and the 5 Essentials
 - Weather and tide interpretation
 - Fine-tuning rig and sail settings for performance
- **On-Water Session 1: Sail Trim & Boat Balance**
 - Refinement of upwind and downwind technique
 - Balancing and trimming for speed and efficiency
 - Introduction to rudderless sailing (balance and sail trim steering)
 - Improving tacking and gybing techniques

Afternoon Session

- **On-Water Session 2: Advanced Manoeuvres**
 - Sailing around a triangular course with precision
 - Refining mark roundings
 - Heaving-to and controlled stopping
 - Introduction to sailing in stronger winds (if conditions allow)
 - Boat handling drills and mini challenges

- **Debrief & Discussion**
 - Performance feedback and goal setting
 - Review of sail controls and balance adjustments
-

Day 2 – Developing Independence & Exploring New Skills

Morning Session

- **On-Water Session 3: Spinnakers & Advanced Sailing Skills**
 - Introduction to asymmetric and symmetric spinnakers (if available)
 - Hoisting, gybing, and dropping techniques
 - Understanding apparent wind and downwind sailing angles
 - Refining teamwork and coordination
- **Optional Session:**
 - Sailing single-handed or in different boat types
 - Experimenting with different rigs and sail settings

Afternoon Session

- **On-Water Session 4: Introduction to Racing & Seamanship**
 - Starting sequences and simple race rules
 - Short course racing and tactics
 - Man overboard recovery under sail
 - Independent sailing session / mini adventure sail
 - **Course Completion & Debrief**
 - Personal progress discussion
 - Recommended next steps (Advanced Modules: Seamanship, Spinnaker, Racing)
 - Certificate presentation
-

Assessment

Assessment is continuous and practical. Students must demonstrate:

- Independent sailing in moderate conditions
- Good understanding of sail trim, balance, and course choice
- Competent use of the 5 Essentials
- Awareness of rules, safety, and seamanship

Outcome

By the end of the course, students will:

- Demonstrate improved confidence and independence afloat
- Sail efficiently in varying conditions
- Perform advanced manoeuvres with control and purpose
- Understand and use spinnakers or racing techniques (as appropriate)
- Be ready to progress to **RYA Advanced Modules** such as Seamanship Skills, Day Sailing, or Sailing with Spinnakers