

Training syllabus for RYA Inland Waterways Helmsman Course

Duration: 2 days



These are the subjects covered over the two days of the course. It's quite a lot to do, particularly if boating is all or mostly new to you. We can't cover it all in detail so you will see that the topics are split into three levels which shows you how much depth you can expect each item to be covered.

These three levels are:-

Knowledge of: The subject will be explained, and you will be pointed to other resources to find out more if you want to.

Understands: We will cover the subject in more depth, and you will be required to show a basic understanding during the course.

Can: These are the key practical elements of the course. We will spend time practising these and you will need to demonstrate the required level of skill to complete the course.

1. Personal Safety

Understands

- The risks involved with ending up in the water, including cold water shock
- Avoidance of personal injury, including crush injuries when fending off
- Special risks to children

Can

- Correctly fit a buoyancy aid or life jacket

2. Engines

Understands

- Checks to be undertaken periodically

Can

- Undertake checks to be carried out before and whilst running

3. Deckwork

Knowledge of

- Common boating terms

Can

- Handle warps and fenders
- Throwing a heaving line or coiled rope
- Tie the following knots: clove hitch, round turn and two half hitches, bowline
- Secure to bollards, rings, cleats, mooring stakes

4. Helmsmanship and Boat Handling

Knowledge of

- Berthing and unberthing between piles

Understands

- Loading and weight distribution
- Inter-action and canal effect
- Anchoring
- Pivot points

Can

- Carefully steer a vessel
- Turn a vessel around
- Berth alongside
- Recover a man overboard dummy

5. Locks

Understands

- Maintenance of levels

Can

- Operate a lock
- Tend lines in a lock

6. Bridges and Tunnels

Understands

- Bridge operations
- Use of tunnels

7. Collision Avoidance

Knowledge of

- The rules of the road

Understands

- By-laws and local traffic regulations
- National regulations
- Publications to be carried

8. Boat Safety

Knowledge of

- Use of fire extinguishers
- Watertight integrity

Understands

- Fire hazards, particularly gas and petrol

- Refloating after grounding

9. Care of the Environment

Understands

- Avoiding damage to banks, boats, flora and fauna
- Pollution avoidance
- Consideration for water users