

**RYA National Windsurfing Scheme**  
**Start Windsurfing Teaching System**

**W4a**

Revision - May 2006

# Start Windsurfing Teaching System

## Start Windsurfing Basic Teaching System

The content of the Basic Teaching System is outlined below. The detail of each section is described fully in the subsequent text.

### LESSON PLAN

#### On Shore 1

- I Introduction to Kit
- II Getting Started
  - Secure Position
  - Static Turn
  - Sailing Position
- III Steering the board
- IV Tacking
- V Safety

#### On Water 1

Various short sessions encouraging the students to achieve goals and learn progressively, incorporating instructor demonstrations and students sailing across the wind

#### On Shore 2

- Recap on shore 1
- Upwind and Improving Tacking
- Downwind and Gybing

#### On Water 2

Incorporating various sessions to introduce these elements progressively:  
Upwind and improved Tacking  
Downwind and Gybing

#### Theory

*(To be taught as appropriate to teaching sequence)*

- Sail Safe
- Basic sailing theory and terms
- Appropriate rescue elements

#### Evaluate and Assessment

#### Teaching Sequence

The instructor individually demonstrates sections II and IV of **On Shore 1** on the simulator. At the end of a section, each student is given the opportunity to practice the section on the simulator before the instructor moves 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.

#### Definitions

- **TEACHING POINTS** confirm the procedure the instructor follows, key teaching points may be underlined
- **TEACHING SEQUENCE** is the order of delivery.
- **COACHING POINTS** are key, simplified, points that help to make a skill achievable.

## ON SHORE 1

### I INTRODUCTION TO THE KIT

**Aim:** To give a brief introduction to the course, outline the session plan, show the function of various components of the board and rig and if appropriate demonstrate rigging or tuning techniques.

#### **Ideal Teaching Environment**

**Location:** Sheltered, close to launch site.

**Teaching aids:** A student board with the rig (de-rigged or into whatever state the students will find their own.)

#### **Teaching Points**

The instructor explains the function of each component, being careful not to introduce new terms unnecessarily. The instructor demonstrates how the equipment is rigged and made ready to sail.

#### **Teaching Sequence**

1. **The Board:**
  - The front, back, top and bottom
  - Fin and daggerboard/ centreboard operation
  - Mastfoot fitting and towing eye
  - Centreline
  
2. **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)
  
3. **Completion:**
  - Wind awareness and how to pick up the rig and carry
  - 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**

This is the students' first introduction to the sport. Their enthusiasm should be tapped to ensure as much hands-on experience is gained during the instructor's demonstration. For most, the rig assembly is a complicated process, involving a number of crucial sequences. With many groups the rigging may best be done in stages, the instructor shows a small part, then the students' copy with their rigs, returning to the instructor for the next stage.

The board and rig used for the demonstration must be identical to that used by the students. Avoid introducing technical jargon if possible, but do use the proper terms for each item.

#### **Exercise and Games**

It may be appropriate to set exercises in carrying rigs to establish wind awareness, when carrying, and the safety of others.

## II. GETTING STARTED

Within this section we are going through several points, leading to the students being able to sail across the wind. This will be a combination of; the secure position, turning the board and the sailing position. Each demo should be clear and help to build progressive links.

### 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 board in the **secure position**.

#### Ideal Teaching Environment

**Location:** Clean wind and a soft surface.

**Teaching Aids:** Beginners simulator with board and rig.

#### Teaching Points

It is important to ensure that, when the students are on the simulator, they understand why the board must be manoeuvred and held in the SECURE POSITION.

The instructor demonstrates all stages and encourages candidates onto the simulator to ensure they understand the importance of key positions and key actions. Coaching points are emphasised to the candidates at the same time.

#### Teaching Sequence

1. **Approach the board from the opposite side to the rig.**
2. **Place hands on the centreline of the board (shoulder width apart, with the front hand near the mast foot) and pull body over board.**
3. **Place knees on the board, keeping weight over the centreline; reach and grab uphaul for stability.**
4. **Check wind direction (instructor may need to demonstrate or explain upwind rig recovery afloat).**
5. **Position feet equally either side of the mast foot on the centreline of the board, about a shoulder width apart**
6. **Hold the uphaul rope with straight arms and stand up. Lean back slightly**
7. **Keeping the mast at 90° to the centreline of the board, bend the knees slightly and using legs not back, pull the rig partially clear of the water.**
8. **Work hand over hand, up the uphaul, to pull the rig right out of the water. Grasp the mast below the boom with both hands, keeping arms extended.**
9. **Lean the rig towards the back of the board and the front will turn towards the wind.**
10. **Lean the rig towards the front of the board and the front turns away from the wind.**
11. **With the rig flapping freely and the board at 90° to the rig, this is the SECURE POSITION.**

#### Coaching points *(to be highlighted by the instructor during candidate simulator sessions)*

- Keep weight over the centreline of the board
- Maintain feet position
- Use legs, not back, to pull rig out of water
- Keep head up
- Maintain a comfortable relaxed position, arms extended, knees slight bent and head up, (a V shape will formed between body and rig)

## STATIC TURN

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

### Teaching Points

The instructor demonstrates the steering; once in each direction.  
Students should be encouraged to give feedback as a means of checking understanding.

**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. **Resume new SECURE POSITION having turned the board through 180°.**

### Coaching Points

Take small steps when moving feet around the mastfoot  
The further you incline the rig towards the back of the board the faster the board will turn  
Ensure that feet and body are correctly re-positioned in SECURE POSITION after each turn

***This demonstration can be altered and used to show a turn away from the wind if required.***

## THE SAILING POSITION

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

### Teaching Points

Two demonstrations are required; the first to show the actions and the second to show it as a flowing movement.

### Teaching Sequence - From SECURE POSITION

1. Select and look at a goal point ahead checking for obstructions.
2. Take your front hand off the mast moving it across your body and onto the boom.
3. Take your back hand off the mast.
- 4a. Step back with your back foot behind the daggerboard, sliding your front foot back behind the mastfoot facing forwards.
- 4.b At the same time turn your shoulders towards your goal point drawing the rig across your body and forwards by extending the front arm, taking the rig to the balance point.
5. Bend your back leg and drop body weight back.
6. Place your back hand on the boom and pull the sail in gently to create power.
7. Keep looking at your Goal Point, re-position feet, hands and body until comfortable.
8. To stop, let go with the back hand and return to the secure position.

### Coaching Points

(Coaching points to be brought out in a second demo)

Establish a goal point across the wind

Ensure that the rig is pulled to the balance point

Emphasise a smooth flowing movement throughout

The power generated by the rig has to be 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

### III. STEERING THE BOARD

**Aim:** To teach students to steer the board towards and away from the wind.

#### Teaching Points

The instructor need only demonstrate once. It should be explained that the purpose of this section is to make small adjustments in course as if to avoid an object in the water some distance ahead. Instructors should ensure that they keep their explanations simple.

**Teaching Sequence** - From the **Sailing position**

#### *Towards the wind*

1. Look upwind and choose a new goal closer to the wind.
2. Lean the rig back, extending the back arm. The front of the board will turn towards the wind.
3. When heading towards the new goal, return the rig to the sailing position, pulling in slightly with your back hand.

#### *Away from the wind: From new sailing position*

4. Keeping the body low lean the rig forwards and slightly towards the wind, extending the front arm. The front of the board will turn away from the wind.
5. When heading towards the original goal point, return the rig to the sailing position, and ease out slightly with the backhand.
6. The board should now be sailing to the original goal point.

#### Coaching Points

Looking at your goal point  
Awareness of wind direction  
Counter balance the rig with the body

#### IV. TACKING

**Aim:** To improve tacking while making the turn more effective and stable

**Teaching Points:**

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. **Choose and steer towards a goal point closer to the wind.**
2. **Return the rig to the correct sailing position, pulling in slightly with your back hand.**
3. **Check for obstructions.**
4. **Move the front hand to the mast and front foot in front of the mast.**
5. **Steer the board towards the wind, by the rig leant back and extending the back arm.**
6. **As the board turns into the wind, step-up with both feet in front of mast, transferring the backhand to the mast at the same time.**
7. **Keep the rig inclined and moving it over the back of the board until the turn is Completed.**
8. **Resume the SAILING POSITION on the opposite direction and move off.**

**Coaching point**

Wind awareness

Keeping 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.

## V. SAFETY

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

### Teaching Points

Instructors should describe the situation in which self-rescue should be considered and the alternatives available.

The methods can be demonstrated on the simulator or on the water, by the instructor. Candidates can practise on the water (if appropriate).

### Methods

#### Method 1 Butterfly

Instructors must be aware of the restrictions due to the development of shorter wide style boards and teach as appropriate.

In no wind, or light wind, an inability to sail can be easily and quickly remedied with the **Butterfly Method**

### Teaching Sequence

1. **Lie the sail on the back of the board** (if necessary lowering the boom first).
2. **Lie at the front of the board with feet resting on the sail.**
3. **Paddle back to shore.**
4. **Avoid any part of the sail dragging in the water – this will stop the board slewing from side to side and making paddling difficult.**

Advantages:

- Very quick and efficient.
- Good for short distances in little to no wind

Disadvantages:

- Difficult to: Maintain the sail's balance in choppy conditions
- Perform in medium to strong wind conditions
- Perform on shorter wide style beginners boards

#### Method 2 Flagging

An inability to sail downwind can be remedied by flagging downwind. This can also be an effective first introduction to guiding students to sail and steer the board downwind.

### Teaching Sequence

1. **Place the front and back hand on to the mast.**
2. **Lean the rig to the front of the board until the board points downwind and the sail flaps over the front of the board.**
3. **Place feet either side of the daggerboard, with the daggerboard down.**
4. **The wind-age of the body and rig carries you downwind**
5. **Steer by leaning the sail left or right**

Advantages:

- Possible in any wind strength
- Quick and easy.

Disadvantages:

Balance not easy in chop

### **Method 3 Full de-rig self rescue**

This method may be required to self-rescue, be towed or rescued by a boat. Use of the full derig to self-rescue should be considered as a last resort because re-rigging in open water is extremely difficult.

This method is as centres require on principals discretion and is not an essential part of the candidates course.

**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 fully explained.

**On Water One** should comprise a number of short sessions which encourage the students to achieve goals and learn progressively.

Make sure students’ goals are visible by USE of marker buoys.

Site specific safety brief – instructor should be encouraging safety awareness and an attitude of self responsibility among the students. The briefing **MUST** include the limits of sailing area and the very important signals for recall to the shore.

### **Coaching Points**

Balance Exercises can be used to begin the first on-water session. There are many purposes to these exercises:

- ‘Break the ice’ between a group of students
- Develop confidence in the water with a board
- Familiarise themselves with the stability of the board
- Discover how daggerboard/ centreboard works

### **Instructor demonstration**

The instructor should demonstrate sections II to IV of On-Shore 1 on the water. Section V (Safety) can be talked about before going afloat or during a break in the Sailing lesson 1.

### **Sailing Practice**

A period of sailing across the wind making use of all sections of On-shore 1 (with the instructor in close attendance) will follow. When the students are reasonably competent the instructor continues with On-shore 2.

### **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.

## **EXERCISE SUGGESTIONS**

**Exercise 1 Aim: Balance exercises (Centre Option)**

**Exercise 2 Aim: Static Turning exercises** - Either up/ downwind or both

**Exercise 3 Aim: Sailing Position-** Sailing across the wind using the static turn

**Exercise 4 Aim: Sail across the wind** - Holding ground using the tack

**Exercise 5 Aim: Sail across the wind - Steering**

Emphasis on steering - Basis steering towards and away from the wind  
A figure of 8 course may be useful for students.

### **Appropriate theory**

#### **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.

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

## **ONSHORE TWO**

*The two sections of On Shore 2 are best taught after students have received a Points of Sailing presentation.*

### **UPWIND AND IMPROVED TACKING**

At this point students need to be given a clear example of the concepts of wind awareness and The No Go Zone

#### **Aim:**

To introduce progressive sailing upwind and how this can be achieved by sailing closer to the wind and improving our tacks learnt from OnShore1.

#### **Teaching Points**

Recap On Shore 1 – Getting started, steering and tacking.

The students already know the principles of altering course and tacking; these skills now need refining and improving, focusing on sailing closer to the wind and holding course.

Demonstrate sailing upwind with clear progression and tacking twice, once in each direction. Identify a goal directly upwind and explain how progress can be made. Improved tacking and holding course on an upwind goal/ sailing line with relation to the NO GO ZONE.

#### **Teaching Sequence - From the sailing position**

1. Identify a **new goal closer to the wind.**
2. Look at the upwind goal and **steer the board towards the new goal** (as learnt in On water 1).
3. Hold this course - the board is now sailing and making progression closer to the wind, in the correct sailing position.
4. To tack, Check for obstructions.
5. Tack the board (As per On Water 1) resume **SAILING POSITION** in the opposite direction and move off.

**Repeat as required in both directions, showing progression** (and zig zagging) **upwind.**

#### **Coaching Points**

Making clear progression upwind  
No Go Zone  
Wind awareness  
Smooth and flowing movement  
Keep sail pulled in when close hauled

***See exercises written under On Water 2***

## DOWNWIND AND GYBING

### Aim:

To introduce the concepts of progression downwind and gybing

### Teaching Points

*ONLY the instructor demonstrates this section on the simulator, students must practice on the water.*

### Section A

This section of ON SHORE 2 contains separate concepts; sailing on a course away from the wind and gybing, running and steering on a run.

## GYBING

**Teaching Sequence** - From a **SAILING POSITION** across the Wind

### Gybing

1. **Steer the board away from the wind** (as per On water 1 and recapped below).
2. **Keep the body low, continue to steer away from the wind by leaning the rig forwards and slightly towards the wind, extending the front arm. The front of the board will turn away from the wind.**
3. **Hold this position until the board is on a run.**
4. **To Gybe - Ease the sail out with the back hand.**
5. Foot change - **Move your front foot back, just in front of the back foot, and your back foot forward towards the mast, keeping weight over the centreline**
6. Rig change – **Slide your front hand towards the mast, let go with the backhand and transfer it across your body and onto the new boom, releasing the front hand.**
7. **Look at new goal point across the wind and resume your sailing position.**

### Coaching Points

Instructor demonstrates a second time to reinforce,

Further coaching is developed on water, as there is no student practice on the simulator.

## **TO BE INCLUDED AT CENTRE REQUIREMENT:**

### **Section B**

#### **Aim:**

A centre may require or feel it of benefit to introduce the students to running and steering downwind. Students may find it easier to be introduced to running and steering on a run once experimenting with 'flagging' downwind with no power in the rig.

### **RUNNING AND STEERING ON A RUN - From the sailing position**

#### **Teaching Sequence**

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, keeping both feet either side of the centreline.**
3. **The sail is now across (at 90°) the centreline of the board. This is RUNNING.**
4. **By transferring bodyweight and/or leaning the rig to the left, the front of the board will turn right.**
5. **By transferring bodyweight and/or leaning the rig to the right, the front of the board will turn to the left.**
6. **If bodyweight and rig are kept over the centreline of the board, it will continue in a straight line.**
7. **In stronger winds, move bodyweight further back on the board and bend the knees to maintain balance and control.**
8. **To change direction; gybe and resume the sailing position.**

## ON WATER 2

### Coaching Points

Ideally the instructor should take to the water to demonstrate and subsequently with students to give coaching to individuals as they go about a series of upwind and downwind exercises. Once students have been taught downwind sailing, they will find a new freedom to travel large distances comparatively easily downwind.

Setting the limits of their sailing area, to prevent escapes, can be productively achieved by the introduction of a course, setting their new skills towards the ultimate goal at Start Windsurfing to be able to 'make progression upwind and downwind using tacking and gybing in light winds' this could be managed in the form of triangular course.

### Exercise and Games

Numerous specific tasks/goals will help student to achieve the desired skills. Upwind goal buoys are particularly useful, provided realistic distances are set.

**Exercise 1 Aim: Sailing across the wind recap if required**

**Exercise 2 Aim: Upwind and tacking combo**

**Exercise 3 Aim: Steering and power control towards or away from the wind**

Practising holding course and making steps towards and away from the wind

*Example: for a student struggling with power in the rig when steering downwind. For a gybe do progressively deeper steers downwind without actually doing a gybe. This way students build confidence and the instructor can increase the amount steered each time until students go through the downwind position and complete a gybe.*

**Exercise 5 Aim: Zig zagging downwind and gybing combo**

**Exercise 6 Aim: Downwind and introducing a run**

(Location Specific)

Steering downwind and gybing exercises

**Exercises 7 Aim: Follow my leader**

Particularly appropriate for developing and refining upwind work

**During these exercises, as the instructor, you should be on a board or in a Safety boat, many opportunities will arise for recapping the points covered during the course. Take every opportunity to emphasise the lessons learned.**

**Students are now armed with the skills to initially maintain their position, sailing across the wind and make way towards an upwind goal then return sailing downwind.**

### THEORY

The theory outlined in the Start Windsurfing syllabus should be covered as the course progresses. Every opportunity should be taken at this stage to recap on the principles of sailing and more essentially on safety aspects.

However good your instruction, you may never see your students again and it is worth reiterating all the safety points which they must bear in mind when going windsurfing without the protection of an instructor.

Run through the points outlined in the Start Windsurfing Logbook and Syllabus of the course. In addition you may wish to discuss aspects of correct rigging, stressing the importance of continuous "maintenance", checking of equipment and buying your own equipment.

**Towards the end of the course you should take the opportunity in making the students aware of what steps they can take next and the opportunities available to them.**

### **Model for RYA Windsurfing Instructor Simulator Demonstrations**

As with all presentations there is a common formula to be followed to construct the whole of a meaningful demonstration. This model has four distinct stages.

#### **1. Introduction. 2. Demonstration. 3. Student attempt. 4. Summary**

**1. Introduction**

Introduce task to be completed, include the reason for doing it and how it fits into the overall programme.

**2. Demonstration**

Instructor demonstrates using simple, uncomplicated language.

**3. Student attempt**

Each student attempts each manoeuvre, corrective feedback is provided by the instructor, who uses each student to emphasise important Coaching Points.

**4. Summary**

Off the simulator the Instructor provides a final summary of what has been achieved and how it fits the overall programme.