

Enjoy Sailing – Stay Safe

“We have no plan – so nothing can go wrong” (Spike Milligan Irish Comedian)



Galway City Sailing Club is committed to promoting safety on the water and to providing a safe environment for amateur club sailing. However, members and guests from the public or other clubs must take their share of responsibility for their own safety and that of other club members. Any aquatic leisure activity contains a certain level of risk therefore GCSC has implemented operational procedures and safety measures to minimise the risk of accidents and incidents. GCSC recommends our ISA certified course “Start Sailing” for developing required skills and knowledge -for more details see our website www.galwaycitysailingclub.com

[For more details please read our Safety Statement](#)

Take responsibility for your own safety! Please remember and follow safety principles:

Plan your day out sailing - Prepare

- Consider Environment Hazards
- Check weather forecast for suitable sailing conditions (we recommend www.windguru.com)
- Check tidal forecast – during low tide rocks and under water obstacles are dangerous for vessels
- Make a responsible decision – If you feel that the weather conditions are above your skill level postpone your sailing for a better day
- Prepare yourself and your boat carefully
- Wear suitable gear, stay warm -wetsuit and keg prevent hypothermia, wear hats and gloves in cold weather
- Always wear a personal floating device (PFD)/Life Jacket
- If you bring a radio (VHF) ensure that you have charged the batteries and know how to use it
- Communicate with the safety boat officer before sailing, follow his/her instructions before and during sailing
- Be careful when rigging your boat. Ask a club member to help you if you are unable to set up your boat alone for sailing
- If you think you should reef your sail, reef it! Once on the water it is more difficult and risky to reef your sail at sea.
- Take care while you transport your boat from the dinghy park down to the water.
- Secure your rudder and your dagger board onto the boat before launching. If you lose dagger board or rudder your boat becomes unmanageable and you will depend on rescue

- Check your boat and equipment for faults. Functionality is key to staying safe. Don't forget to tie a figure eight knot at the end of your main sheet.

Code of Conduct – Behaviour on the Water

- Don't take unnecessary risks – avoid unsafe manoeuvres, know your limits and ability
- Alcohol and Sailing is a dangerous mix! Don't sail intoxicated
- Wait until the safety boat is in position before you launch your boat
- Stay within the sailing area marked by GCSC buoys
- Watch out for sudden weather changes – return to shore once you notice that the conditions become unsafe
- Stay in contact with GCSC Safety Boat – follow instructions of the Safety Officer
- Watch the time – leave enough time to return before sunset
- If you capsize – stay with the boat; before recovering your boat turn your boat into the wind and ensure that your main sheet is not cleated
- Be mindful of obstacles in the water, such as rocks near the shore, avoid getting caught in the line of lobster pots
- Watch out for other sailors, avoid collision with other boats -follow "the rules of the road"

Return to Shore – after care

- Lift dagger board and rudder close to shore to avoid damage to the boat
- Assist your fellow sailors to recover the boat – look out for the wellbeing of your fellow man
- Be careful during transport of your boat back to the dinghy yard
- Be careful while you un-rig your boat, if you need help ask your fellow sailors to assist you
- Store the equipment carefully avoiding damage
- If you discover damage to the boat and equipment, please report. Clearly indicate/mark nature of the damage so other club sailors will know in advance before using the gear again.
- If you are the last person in the dinghy yard, ensure you have locked the container and the gate

Third Party, Try Sailing – Guest on board

- Non-club members can come as crew for try sailing with a member but must follow all safety guidelines. Non-club members are not allowed to take out club boats on their own
- Club member on the helm is responsible to instruct safety guidelines and supervise the guest during sailing
- Non-member needs to sign a GCSC consent form before sailing
- Communicate and consult with the Safety Boat officer before sailing

Remember:

The risk tension model illustrates how the set of multiple hazards increase the risk – thorough preparation, functional equipment and responsible behaviour will minimise the likelihood of accidents.