

US Sailing Safety at Sea Planning Guide for Host Organizers 2025-26



Safety at Sea Planning Guide

How to Plan a Successful Safety at Sea Course

Congratulations, and thank you for deciding to host a US Sailing sanctioned Safety at Sea Course. Your decision as an “*Organizer*”* to embark upon this process may be motivated by any number of things: Race requirements, your own experience with a safety at sea course, or simply your organization’s desire to provide a meaningful resource to your local sailing community that will help those that go out on the water do so in a safer fashion. Much like planning for a successful voyage, the more organized you are in the planning phase the smoother the trip is likely to be, even if you encounter some heavy weather. Know that we at US Sailing are here to help you run a first-class event, and by following the guidance below, you’ll be well on your way.

This document provides guidelines to help you plan a successful US Sailing Sanctioned Safety at Sea Course. Racers and cruisers in your area will benefit from the knowledge of experts and local presenters during sessions about training crew, preparing boats, selecting equipment, and handling offshore conditions. You will find information about facilities, attendance, budgets, committee assignments, as well as marketing and promotion. Please keep in mind during the planning process your Moderator* would be pleased to provide information and assistance. Their experience is a valuable resource.

US Sailing Approved Moderators

One of the first and most important aspects of running a Safety at Sea Course is the selection of a Moderator. YOU MUST UTILIZE A US SAILING APPROVED MODERATOR IN ORDER FOR YOUR COURSE TO BE CONSIDERED A SANCTIONED EVENT AND TO HAVE CERTIFICATES ISSUED to participants. Moderators are up-to-date safety experts, experienced public speakers, and have mastery of their subjects. Starting in 2025, US Sailing is playing a more active role in pairing Moderators with Organizers. Organizers should reach out to Jonathan Kabak, the Chair of the Moderator Working Group via email jkabak@gmail.com (and cc safetyatsea@ussailing.org) to schedule a call to discuss their course and a potential Moderator(s) from the list of approved Moderators on the US Sailing website <https://www.ussailing.org/education/adult/us-sailing-approved-moderators>. US Sailing recognizes that you as the Organizer may have a particular preference or long standing relationship with a Moderator and we will endeavor to honor that while we also work to ensure that you are provided with a Moderator who is best suited to your particular Safety at Sea Course. Once the Organizer and US Sailing have agreed on the Moderator, you can complete the Host Agreement* and once your course landing page where information about the course is posted for potential attendees has been approved by US Sailing staff, the course will be listed on the US Sailing website.

Your Moderator should provide ongoing support as well as organizational guidance in the months preceding the course. S/he handles one or more of the key presentations, is the link between lectures and presentations, and hands-on experiences where applicable. Moderators work to connect the training with participants’ experiences on the water. They are

the Emcee, and will strive to keep participants energized and focused, while also ensuring that the other presenters, instructors, and coaches provide accurate information in an engaging fashion.

In addition to a Moderator, Organizers are required to engage an Assistant Moderator* who supports the Moderator in their duties by doing the following:

- Serving as a second strong speaker and instructor who can present on a multitude of topics
- Support the logistics needs of the Organizer in the immediate lead up to and throughout the Safety at Sea course
- Step up into the Moderator role in the event the Moderator cannot lead the course.

Assistant Moderators are normally selected in consultation with each of the assigned Moderators. These individuals are either approved Moderators themselves, Moderator candidates who are in the process of training to be Moderators or selected from a list of pre-vetted individuals that US Sailing maintains.

*If the Organizer believes that they have an internal candidate who can serve as the Assistant Moderator, they may submit their name and resume to US Sailing for consideration.

**Please see Moderator to Participant Ratios for Hands-On Courses in the back section of this document on page 15.

As mentioned previously, Moderators and Assistant Moderators are highly skilled individuals and should be compensated at the following standard rates:

Moderators	\$1200 for a ½ day Coastal in-person course \$2500 for a single full day course \$3000 for a two-day course Plus, related expenses to include Travel and Lodging
Assistant Moderators	\$1000 for a single day course \$1500 for a two-day course Plus, related expenses to include Travel and Lodging

It is expected that the Moderator will be on site at minimum one full business day in advance of the course to assist the Organizer with final details. Assistant Moderators can be expected to arrive the day before the course.

US Sailing Safety at Sea Course Types

US Sailing offers three courses for coastal and offshore sailors. The courses are available using online training, in-person lectures, and hands-on sessions.

Safety at Sea: Coastal Course

- This course is for Inland and Coastal racers as well as the inshore cruising sailor.
- This course can be taken either in-person or on-line
- Topics include:
 1. Giving Assistance
 2. Personal Safety Gear
 3. Crew Overboard Rescue
 4. Emergency Communication
 5. Search and Rescue.
- The course takes approximately four (4) hours to complete.

Safety at Sea: Offshore Course:

- This course is for Crew Members of Offshore Races, Long Distance Cruising Sailors, or any sailor looking to improve their sailing skills and hone up on safety protocol and procedures.
- This course can be taken either in-person at a one-day Offshore Safety at Sea Course or can be completed online by taking the Safety at Sea: Offshore Course and completing ALL fifteen (15) modules listed below.
 1. Giving Assistance
 2. Personal Safety Gear
 3. Crew Overboard Rescue
 4. Emergency Communication
 5. Search and Rescue.
 6. Crew Health
 7. Marine Weather
 8. Cold Exposure
 9. Care and Maintenance of Safety Gear
 10. Signals
 11. Heavy Weather
 12. Storm Sails
 13. Damage Control
 14. Firefighting and Pyrotechnics
 15. Liferaft and Survival

International Offshore Safety at Sea with Hands-On Training:

- This course is for Crew Members participating in International Races or where a World Sailing certificate is required, as well as Long Distance Cruising Sailors, and any other sailor who wishes to be safer on the water and gain practical experience with aspects of safety listed below.
- This Certificate can be earned in four ways:
 1. Complete an in-person two-day International Offshore SAS with Hands-on Training.
OR
 2. Complete a One (1) day in-person Offshore Course followed by a separate one-day Hands-On course.
OR
 3. Complete the Safety at Sea: Offshore Online Course (Units 1-15) followed by a Hands-On in-person course. Proof of completion of all 15 Units is required.
OR
 4. Complete an approved Hands-On Day as a Refresher Course for the International Safety at Sea Certificate. The participant who originally completed online modules 1-10 must take and complete online units 11-15 (if not previously completed) prior to the course and their certificate must be currently valid. There is a two year grace period after expiration where participants can still renew without taking the entire course

To conduct a successful course, we suggest you consider the following steps:

1. Decide whether you are hosting a Coastal, Offshore, or International Offshore course.
2. Form a Safety at Sea Organizing Committee
3. Select a date for your course.
4. Check the US Sailing website to ensure that you're not in direct conflict with an already scheduled course in your area.
5. Email Jonathan Kabak to Identify a Moderator.
6. Fill out the Host Agreement and submit it to US Sailing
7. Create a marketing and promotion plan.
8. Based on your anticipated audience size, select an appropriate facility.
9. Create a budget for your course using the US Sailing spreadsheet
10. Select how you'll handle registration. If desired, seek local sponsorship.
11. Work with your Moderator to select local and national presenters, and to assign topics. Create a schedule for each day of the course with assistance from your Moderator.
12. Ask for guidance and help from US Sailing regarding any details or questions.

Questions or suggestions about the US Sailing Safety at Sea Courses should be directed to:

US Sailing Adult Programs

safetyatsea@ussailing.org

1 Roger Williams University Way, Bristol, RI 02809

Phone: 401-342-7900, ext. 7914 or 7934

Fax: 401-342-7940

Detail of Action Items

1. Decide whether you're going to offer a Coastal, an Offshore, an International Offshore, or a Hands-on only course.

The decision to hold a particular type of course may factor in whether your course is held prior to a race where Safety at Sea training is required. Many transoceanic races now require the International Offshore Safety at Sea Course for 30-50% of the crew, including the skipper or watch captains.

Other races may require the Safety at Sea: Offshore Course, while coastal races frequently require the Safety at Sea: Coastal Course. By knowing the safety requirements listed in the Notice of Race for races in your area, you can best meet the needs of the sailors.

Recently, the International Offshore Safety at Sea with Hands-On training has become the most requested across the country. It is now considered the "standard" course that most people want to take. While it's more complicated logistically to manage, sailors who experience it are frequently the best salespeople for it, since they appreciate the value of the hands-on training. This can be offered in the traditional 2-day in-person format, or by offering a stand-alone one day Hands-On training day that compliments previous on-line or in-person training. If you are contemplating only offering the one day of Hands-On training, you may want to consider offering it twice over the course of a weekend to accommodate more participants.

The standard US Sailing Safety at Sea: Offshore In-person Course is a one-day lecture-style event. This format allows each presenter to give one presentation on a subject to the entire group at the event. Many courses include a demonstration by a U.S.CG rescue helicopter and COB rescue if the waterfront venue permits. This demo requires that the course group move outdoors. If your demonstration includes a Lifesling or Quick-Stop rescue method demonstration, arrange, and practice it with your crew before the event. Several courses have struggled with this part of the program. It takes careful planning and practice to ensure that it is presented professionally and that the attendees understand the process. Please contact US Sailing's office or your Moderator if you have any questions.

If you are planning to host a Safety at Sea: Offshore In-person Course, consider adding a second day that includes a Hands-On Training Day to your course. This will enable some participants to acquire the International Offshore certificate which is needed for crew participating in a sailboat race where the International Offshore course is a requirement for some portion of the crew. If your event is being held before the race that has this requirement (check with local race organizers), we encourage you to add this second Hands-on day. This Hands-On day greatly expands the amount of information presented to attendees but also increases the complexity of logistics. For example, a pool is necessary for the life raft training and in-water life jacket practical, and several classrooms are needed for the sessions. You may have to pay to have a lifeguard on duty and/or have additional insurance to cover the in-water training. But for those locations where the sailors require the additional certification, it makes sense to offer it.

Note that Appendix G of World Sailing Offshore Special Regulations recommends a class size of 20 for Hands-On training. It can be expanded if logistics can accommodate multiple groups rotating through a variety of stations at the same time. As always, consult your Moderator to discuss the appropriate number of total participants. In the U.S., the trend is to use groups of 12-20 students who rotate through various “stations” during the second day.

Completion of the classroom lecture (first day) and Hands-On training (second day) within the same calendar year earns the participant a World Sailing Approved International Offshore Safety at Sea Certificate that is valid for five years.

There are online versions of the courses that are complementary to the traditional “in-person” courses. The following charts illustrate the ways that students can get their certifications.

Type of Course (In Person)	Method of Delivery	Time and Number of Topics	Comments
Safety at Sea: Coastal	Lecture	4 hours, 5 topics	Ideal for boat shows, yacht clubs, and community sailing organizations.
Safety at Sea: Offshore	Lecture	8 hours, 8-10 topics	Ideal before offshore races.
International Offshore Safety at Sea	Day 1-Lecture Day 2-Hands-On	16 hours, 15 topics	Generally held over a weekend.
International Offshore Refresher course	In-Person Hands-On only Day	8 hours, 6-8 topics	For International Offshore certificate holders who want to renew. Certificates that were earned in the past 5 years

Type of Course	Method of Delivery	Time and Number of Topics	Comments
Safety at Sea: Coastal	Online	4 hours, 5 topics	Ideal for near-shore, coastal racers, or short-distance cruisers
Safety at Sea: Offshore	Online	12-14 hours, Chapters 1-15	Ideal prior to offshore races. All 15 Units must be completed to be eligible to take a hands-on course.

2. Form a Safety at Sea Organizing Committee

While there have been many successful courses planned and executed by a dedicated individual, planning and hosting a successful course is best accomplished via an organizing committee. Including others from the sailing community will enhance the experience of your attendees by adding a diverse range of expertise. Ideally, planning should begin 9-12 months before a course.

- Consider seeking out sailors for the committee with experience in a specific area and assigning responsibilities as well as dividing the labor. Aside from a planning committee, organized volunteers will be needed to help with the actual event.
- It is beneficial to designate a committee member as the volunteer coordinator.
- Other committee member responsibilities may include budgeting, presenters, marketing and publicity, equipment, signage, registrations, materials distribution, facilities, presenter support, food & beverages, audio/visual, safety, cleanup, and security.
- Please note this is not a comprehensive list. Each event will have many other details that require attention. Your sailing community's local yacht clubs are excellent places to solicit assistance.
- Once your Moderator has been assigned, use them as a resource as your committee works on various aspects in the planning of your course.

A planning timeline might look like this:

1 year ahead: form your committee, conduct market research, and establish a budget.

9-12 months before the event: set the date of the event, request a Moderator, fill out the [Host Agreement](#), and begin selecting presenters, create a marketing plan, and find and select your venue.

6-9 months: work with the Moderator to establish a rough schedule, and arrange for presenters, for U.S. Coast Guard assistance and set up the registration process.

4-6 months: start taking registrations and begin marketing push.

3 months out: finalize the agenda with your Moderator, rent any required equipment you need, concentrate on marketing, and ensure the moderator's travel & lodging arrangements are made.

2 months out: Communicate with US Sailing staff regarding your expected attendance. Some of the support materials need to be mailed and require some lead time to ship. You will receive banners from US Sailing. US Sailing has a new Safety at Sea book available through our online store.

1 month out: make a final push to fill your course/venue.

1 week out: Ensure all equipment is ready and available for use. Double check venue, finalize and food and beverage orders. Check the weather forecast and make contingency plans as necessary.

1 Day out: Walk venue with Moderator. Meet with volunteers, instructors, etc. and review the plan of the day and any emergency action plans for the event.

3. Select a Date for your Course

It is important to check the US Sailing posted list of scheduled Safety at Sea Courses to make sure that your course does not conflict with another course in your area. You don't want to have to compete for participants on the same dates as another local or regional event unless the demand is high.

4. Moderators and Presenters

As mentioned previously, for your course to be sanctioned, you must use an approved Moderator. The Moderator must be involved in the scheduling to ensure all the required topics are covered and can provide invaluable feedback on what works and doesn't from their experience of past events. In addition to the Moderator and Assistant Moderator, you will want to bring in "experts" for specific topics. Keep in mind that not everyone is a good public speaker even if they are very knowledgeable about their subject matter. Try to observe a presentation by a prospective presenter before committing. Consult with your Moderator with your suggestions for local presenters of topics.

Work with your Moderator to be sure that the time allotted is appropriate to the subject matter. Encourage any new presenter to present their material to your committee first, and to consult with the Moderator. Even with an experienced team of presenters, it is common for Moderators to conduct a training session for presenters the evening before a course.

All presenters should be provided with a copy of the US Sailing's "Safety at Sea: A Guide to Safety Under Sail and Personal Survival ". They should also be given a copy of the Learning Objectives for the chapter they will be presenting. The Moderator will work with each new presenter to make sure they are "on topic". One trap to be avoided is having the local "pro" speak on a topic that seems to be appropriate, but on which s/he may not follow the recommended sub-topics or learning objectives. "Pros" often rely on sea stories to make their points and end up not providing actionable information. This often happens during presentations on Marine Weather, Heavy Weather, and Damage Control.

Presenters should be encouraged to review the U.S. Sailing website, in particular the Safety Information / Safety Reports section at the web link below so they are aware of the latest US Sailing Information, as it relates to their topic.

<https://www.ussailing.org/competition/offshore/safety-information/safety-reports/>

Presenters on marine medical topics should fully understand the issues that directly affect sailors, which generally require that they are active sailors themselves. We find that emergency room doctors and nurses who sail offshore, as well as doctors and nurses with wilderness medicine experience, do an excellent job. It's even better when the same professional can speak to the issues of Crew Health as well as Drowning and Cold Exposure. IT IS CRITICAL TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS A SESSION ON MEDICAL CARE AND MANAGEMENT, NOT A RAPID FIRE FIRST AID COURSE.

In addition to the compensation for the Moderator and Assistant Moderator outlined above, you may want to offer other presenters, instructors, and coaches an honorarium for their participation. It is

suggested that this be somewhere between \$200-1000/day plus expenses depending on the individual and whether they are simply providing a lecture for thirty minutes to an hour or standing outside in the elements for most of a day running a hands on station.

If possible, obtain advance copies of any materials that are to be handed out. US Sailing suggests distributing digital versions posted to your website rather than printing hard copies. This practice reduces the use of paper and saves time and money. Moderators will make available either their own or the standard US Sailing slides and presentations related to each of the topics presented.

5. Fill out your online [Host Agreement](#)

Consult the existing Safety at Sea Calendar to verify that there is no other SAS Course in your area on the same date that is being considered. A signed US Sailing Sanctioned Safety at Sea Course Host Agreement must be submitted for US Sailing to add an event to the official calendar and national advertisements. If your agreement is not complete or not signed, the course will not be sanctioned, and the participants will not receive the necessary certificates.

US Sailing recommends that a Host Agreement be executed and returned 9-12 months before an event. However, for those courses that are 'last-minute events, we recognize that this may not be possible.

6. Marketing and Promotion

Marketing is usually critical to fill an event. Consider hiring someone to help with this if you don't have an experienced volunteer. Note: Keep in mind that many courses will have a burst of registrations in the last two weeks. Make sure that you have a maximum number of attendees in mind and avoid overselling the event.

National promotion of the event will be done through US Sailing and will include advertising in publications and/or digital media, as well as on the US Sailing website. US Sailing recommends robust grassroots promotion to fill your course. Suggestions Include: targeting local yacht clubs, fleets, sailing websites, blogs, and Facebook.

Create an event page and use a landing page through your registration host. Meet with your local sailing publications to create a marketing strategy that includes plenty of repetition. Schedule a monthly press release to local newsletters and buy advertising. Create posters (US Sailing and other organizers can provide photos & logos) and place them in stores, yacht clubs, and other chandleries.

These should be posted 2 to 3 months before the event. Some courses associated with a specific offshore race will have a "built-in" potential audience. In those cases, work closely with race organizers to be sure the course is promoted on the event website, within race promotional materials, and in written communications.

Contact local race organizers and celebrities that might be willing to help with promotion. Contact clubs and other organizers of related events; ask them if you can give a five-minute promo before their event. Many yacht and cruising clubs are looking for monthly presenters and topics of discussion. Become a promoter. Use fleet newsletters and local races to publicize. Try using public service announcements on the radio and TV.

7. Facilities

In-person courses are offered in many different types of facilities. Beyond everyone that attends needing to be able to see and hear the presenters, depending on the course, the facility may need to provide for the effective delivery of lectures, small group breakouts, and in the case of a hands-on course, will need to include a pool, large open area for flares and firefighting training, running water for simulators, etc. Community colleges work well for courses, as do large yacht clubs, community centers, and theaters. Plan to have enough room for everyone to be able to be comfortable for a full day, including any last-minute walk-ins at registration.

An ideal facility will have:

- an auditorium or ballroom-type space allows for:
- the use of high-quality audio & projection equipment,
- ability to darken room with window treatments or darkened windows,
- plenty of seating and legroom,
- temperature control,
- adequate lighting, and
- a space for vendors if you choose to include them.
- It is helpful if there is enough space for “on deck” presenters to prepare and display safety equipment.
- easily accessible restrooms,
- male and female locker rooms / changing areas if doing in water training
- convenient parking
- Have a dedicated Registration table staffed with volunteers whose job is to check in attendees each day of the course, and who will verify and note Offshore or Online completion certificates for the Hands-on Day only attendees.

Consider having a clock visible to the podium. The Moderator will do his/her best to keep the presentation on schedule, but a visual cue is helpful. Audience members will appreciate an event that keeps to the schedule and the Moderator will appreciate assistance in keeping lectures within the time frame permitted.

If you are including any On/In Water demonstrations, be sure to incorporate the following guidance:

- Plan to have adequate, properly certified lifeguards and rescue boat operators available.
- Consider bringing everyone involved in the demonstration together before the event to practice working together on this portion of the event. Use handheld radios to communicate.
- Obtain appropriate permits from local authorities and the U.S. Coast Guard, especially if you need to control other vessels in and around the demonstrations.
- Contact the local U.S. Coast Guard, law enforcement, fire departments, and 911 operators before demonstrating visual distress signals. If you wait to call on the day of the event, you may be told you cannot hold your demonstration.
- Have an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) in the event of a real emergency.

Audio/Visual Equipment and Testing

Audio/visual equipment is an important component (and significant expense) of any course although many facilities can provide A/V equipment as part of the facilities rental. A large screen, as well as a projector and laptop cables for the Moderator and presenters, will be needed. Be sure to set up and test all equipment thoroughly with each presenter to avoid a course that fails due to technical problems. A common problem is embedded videos in presentations and playing the associated sound through the PA system.

NOTE: The need to be able to darken the room sufficiently is often overlooked. Ambient light from windows, especially in the morning and afternoon, can overwhelm any projector. Make sure your facility can be made dark enough. Use black drop cloths over windows if no curtains are present. Also make sure that the projector you intend to use has enough light output to provide bright, crisp images. Presenters should be reminded their slides need to be legible from the back of the room, and bright slides with lots of contrast tend to work best.

Hands On Course Facilities

Every year more organizers choose to offer either a two-day course which incorporates a hands-on day or a one-day hands-on course (paired with completion of the on-line training) so that participants earn an International Offshore Certificate. The facilities for a successful Hands-On course are more comprehensive but can often be found within a large community center, yacht club, or similar.

***NOTE There is no requirement to have waterfront access or to have participants get underway as part a Hands-On Course.**

Hands-On Facility Requirements:

1. **A large lecture hall** as outlined above.
2. **Classrooms or other spaces** for small group work.
3. **Deep water pool** where participants can enter the water in inflatable life jackets and have the automatic inflator activated, and enter a life raft from the water without standing on the bottom
4. **Large Open Outdoor Area** that can accommodate live firefighting exercises with a fire pit and extinguishers, AND an area where at minimum handheld pyrotechnics can be used by participants, ideally at the same time.
5. **Running Water** for damage control trainers
6. **Storage Area** for participants wet gear (or better an area to let it dry)
7. Male and female locker rooms / changing areas

More information about the facilities and performance standards for Hands-On Courses can be found at the end of this document.

Training Beyond the Scope of the Course

Often Organizers want to include additional experiences and information in their Safety at Sea Courses that go beyond the required curriculum set out by US Sailing. We at US Sailing think that any well organized and safely executed training is a value to the sport, however, since Safety at Sea in its various iterations is offered nationally, it is important that you as the Organizer make a clear distinction in your marketing materials and during the course if there is content which is being offered in addition to the US Sailing requirements. This may include asking participants to complete pre-course materials that are not official pre-requisites, incorporating on water training, etc. Keep in mind that the inclusion of non-sanctioned course requirements and activities may present a liability exposure to your organization. It is imperative that if you are considering bonus content that you discuss this well in advance with your Moderator.

8. Budget

Successful courses are those that establish a budget with a minimum goal of breaking even for the event. Keep in mind that there are fees due to US Sailing for processing the certificates, see the [Host Agreement](#) for pricing. It is recommended that you build in the cost of the “[Safety at Sea, A Guide to Safety Under Sail and Personal Survival](#)” for each participant. Contact US Sailing for pricing.

Use the US Sailing SAS Course budgeting spreadsheet (or one of your own) to make sure that all expenses have been anticipated, including speakers’ fees, travel, food, etc.

It is important not to undervalue the cost of the training being offered. A typical mistake is to charge too little. Include equipment rental in the budgeting process. Often, the equipment can be borrowed from local clubs, but it is important to ensure it works before the event. Another significant expense will be lunch, snacks, and beverages for the attendees. Box lunches and a big coffee maker have worked well in the past. Catering costs can break any budget if not controlled. Be sure to have plenty of trash and recycling containers.

9. Registration and Certification Requirements

US Sailing recommends hosts use an online registration process through a provider. Online registration will prevent errors and streamline the process. Posting an FAQ page is also recommended. Having a specific and explicit registration process will lighten the workload and prevent the host from answering the same questions over and over.

Make sure that the registration process allows for credit card purchases (and make sure to budget for credit card fees).

Consider a discount for early registration to help boost the number of registrations. Offering discounts for couples or multiple members of a crew encourages increased safety training for each boat and adds attendees quickly. Accepting registrations on the day of the event slows down the process and is cumbersome. Prior hosts have found that requiring pre-registration works to prevent delay and avoids overwhelming the facility and staff. If you plan on accepting registrations at the door, consider imposing a late fee.

Not only is it imperative to have complete information from each attendee to produce US Sailing certificates and maintain the US Sailing online lookup tool, but it is also critical that a host volunteer verify attendance and participation on each day of the course. Full participation is mandatory for attendees to receive certificates. The format for submitting this information in Excel is provided '[here](#)'. US Sailing will issue certificates within 2-weeks of receiving your course spreadsheet.

10. Sponsorship

As stated earlier, US Sailing will do its best to publicize your sanctioned course in select magazines and/or any other digital media that it advertises Safety at Sea Courses.

Sometimes US Sailing can secure national sponsors for Safety at Sea which may be able to assist with demonstration equipment. It is best to check with the office when you submit your [Host Agreement](#) to see if any assistance might be available.

Alternatively, you may want to contact a local life raft service center and offer them a sponsorship role in exchange for a raft and repacking. Since using a life raft for hands-on demonstrations can be expensive and a little complicated, don't leave this detail until the last minute.

Your organization may decide to include local vendors and sponsors. Keep in mind that merchandise sales at a Safety at Sea Course are discouraged, however, vendors can take orders and fulfill them later. Adding vendors will change the type of facilities you'll require. Some courses charge a nominal fee for vendors to cover the related expenses. Other courses offer space to local businesses in exchange for local support of the event. In either case, vendors should be low-key and specifically targeted to the audience and curriculum. Avoid including businesses that are not directly associated with marine safety.

11. Curriculum

Most courses run from 8 am to 5 pm and have a 15-minute morning and afternoon break, and a 30-45-minute lunch break. The breaks can be put to good use by scheduling the helicopter, COB, or pyrotechnics demonstration during these times.

There is a total of fifteen topics that can be covered in a Safety at Sea Course, depending on several factors:

1. Whether you're sponsoring a Coastal, Offshore, or International Offshore course. Longer courses allow more topics.
2. What your local sailing conditions are, and what would be of the greatest benefit to your sailors, e.g., areas with cold water may want to emphasize Cold Exposure.
3. Availability of speakers on specific topics.

***For Hands on Courses the mandatory and optional curriculum as well as the performance standards can be found at the end of this document.**

Each of these topics can be presented by your Moderator, but hearing from multiple presenters and especially local experts makes for a better course. Discuss this with your Moderator. Ideally, your Moderator and Assistant Moderator each present one or two topics, and other speakers would

present additional topics based on their areas of expertise. If no local speaker is available, hosts should consider bringing in a nationally recognized presenter who can handle multiple topics in addition to the Moderator Team. Your Moderator can help you identify good candidates if this is the case.

Helicopter Demonstrations

You may be considering asking the US Coast Guard to demonstrate a helicopter rescue as part of your course. Be forewarned that this is a time consuming and logistically complicated undertaking, however that being said, when implemented effectively it is often considered a highlight of the course. If the U.S. Coast Guard is unable to accommodate your request or a last-minute NO GO is issued due to weather conditions or an active SAR case, if you have internet access, we can provide the links to two great YouTube rescue videos done by CCA and the USCG.

12. US Sailing Support

US Sailing has been involved with hundreds of Sanctioned Safety at Sea Courses and is familiar with what is and is not effective. US Sailing's team and your Moderator are available to help answer questions and help when needed. Don't forget to communicate with US Sailing about expected attendance, support materials that need to be mailed to your course, and how US Sailing can help in the final push. **Requirements for Hands-On Safety at Sea Training for World Sailing Certificate**

One Day Hands-On Training

The One Day Hands-On Training is the companion to either on-line or in person content which together meets the requirements for a US Sailing International Offshore Certificate. By definition "Hands-On" must be Hands-On, and every effort should be made to ensure that course participants have opportunities **to do** rather than watch.

While there is some degree of flexibility in regard to the content offered in a Hands-On Training Day, at minimum it shall consist of the following:

- a. A standalone experience, where participants can safely complete the required Hands-On skills demonstrations without needing any prerequisite training.
 - a. It is encouraged that participants complete either the on-line or in person training in advance of the Hands-On course, it improves the value of the course
 - b. A US Sailing International Offshore Certificate will not be issued unless both the theoretical and hands-on training requirements have been met within the required time
- b. Combined with classroom-based instruction in a unified multi-day experience.
 - a. If combined, the Hands-On components and the classroom-based instruction can be intermixed across both days of programming.

Moderator to Participant Ratios:

All in person Safety at Sea courses shall have at minimum a Sanctioned Moderator, a Co-Moderator or Assistant Moderator*, and may require additional Instructors to maintain appropriate trainer to participant ratios.**

Hands-On Training:

<30 participants	Moderator and Co/Assistant Moderator
30-50 participants	Moderator and 1 Co/Assistant Moderators, 1 Instructor
50-75 participants	Moderator and 1 Co/Assistant Moderators, 2 Instructors
75-100 participants	Moderator and 1 Co/Assistant Moderators, 3 Instructors

***A Co-Moderator is defined as another fully approved US Sailing Moderator. An Assistant Moderator is defined as someone that is formally in the US Sailing Moderator training pipeline. If in agreement, the Organizer and Moderator may petition US Sailing to allow other individuals to serve in lieu of additional Assistant Moderators for groups larger than 30 persons. Ideally this would be individuals from the US Sailing Endorsed Speaker/Presenter/Instructor/Coach list.**

Expectations of Organizers:

- A. Submission of the Host Agreement to US Sailing
- B. In person courses of less than 30 persons must have an official Point of Contact (POC) and a designated alternate.
- C. Courses of more than 30 persons must provide a Primary POC and identify an organizing committee of at least three other people.
 - a. The following roles must be identified on the committee:
 - i. Registrar
 - ii. Logistics Manager
 - iii. Program Support

Hands-On Safety at Sea Seminars: Facility Requirements and Performance Standards for Sanctioned Training.

By the nature of the activities involved, Hands-On Safety at Sea seminars require the bringing together of first-class facilities that can provide a variety to learning spaces both large and small, inside and out, with quality coaches and instructors, all working under the auspices of thoughtful and proactive risk management.

Participants are asked to perform in challenging environments, with equipment that is often foreign to them, and in collaboration with individuals in groups whom they may not know. There are any number of ways that this can result in at best challenging circumstances, or at worst, serious injury to individuals and damage to equipment and facilities. It is of the utmost importance that the guidance below is followed, and that Organizers work to ensure that the requirements and performance standards outlined are met in their entirety.

Facilities:

Hands-On Safety at Sea seminars must be conducted at facilities that provide the following:

1. Large classroom or auditorium where the entire cohort of participants and instructors can gather safely. This is imperative not just for general instruction, but for the dissemination of safety related information to all parties in a unified fashion in advance of training exercises.
2. Classrooms, or other meeting spaces where small group work can be conducted. At minimum there should be tables and chairs for all participants, with a whiteboard or flip charts available as directed by the Moderator.
3. Deep water pool with adjacent locker rooms and staffed by certified lifeguards. The deep end should be above standing height to allow participants to enter the water and have their inflatable life jackets activated via auto inflation by hydrostatic or other firing mechanism, and permit entry into a life raft without pushing off on the bottom. In the event a pool is not available, and a waterfront location is intended to be used, it must also be under supervision of a certified lifeguard.
 - a. The pool does not need to be located at the same facility as the rest of the training.
 - b. In the event a lifeguard is unavailable. An additional designated individual shall be identified as the Safety Officer and will be the person in charge of executing the emergency response plan for a medical or other issue taking place in the pool/beach area.
 - c. US Sailing encourages Organizers to discuss the requirements for aquatics training and use of a lifeguard with their insurance agent.
4. Location for dry and wet gear storage.
5. Audio/Video equipment-In addition, you may need a PA system for outdoor use if there are large format demonstrations, briefings, or if the Moderator or Instructors have a concern about being heard due to ambient noise. Keep in mind that in most Hands-on Safety at Sea Seminars you are asking Instructors to run multiple evolutions of a learning station and will be speaking to participants for several hours by the end of the day.
6. An open outdoor area that can allow for a group of up to 20 people to rotate through lighting and observing others igniting handheld pyrotechnics at the same time. It is preferable that the area be suited for aerial pyrotechnics as well.
7. A second outdoor area where a group of 20 people can rotate through using fire extinguishers to put out a fire or utilize a commercial fire extinguisher or fire extinguisher simulator.

Optional Additional Facilities:

1. Waterfront access with vessel(s) moored to allow for:
 - a. Life sling/COB reboarding training
 - b. Storm sail demonstration
 - c. Jack line exercise
 - d. Safety Diagram scavenger hunt
2. An open area with running water for a flooding simulator.

***NOTE There is no requirement to have waterfront access or to have participants get underway as part a Hands-On Seminar.**

Minimum Performance Standards for Sanctioned Hands-On Seminars

In addition to having the appropriate facility/facilities, a Hands-On Safety at Sea Seminar must be exactly that and provide participants with the opportunity to train on and demonstrate basic competency with various types of equipment. The demonstration of safety equipment for the audience does not meet this performance standard and as such Organizers should be prepared to ensure that barring exceptional circumstances (severe weather, fire bans, etc.) Participants themselves have the opportunity to utilize equipment under the direct supervision of Instructors.

A sanctioned Hands-On seminar shall be comprised of:

1. One (1) all hands session led by the Moderator that includes the following topics: Safety Ethos, Leadership, Lessons Learned, and how to implement training aboard your own vessel. *If not covered elsewhere, this session shall also cover crew overboard recovery procedures.
2. Six (6) required training modules: Life Jackets and Life Rafts, Pyrotechnics (Flares and Smoke), Firefighting, Distress Communications, Damage Control. Crew Overboard Recovery (either hands on or lecture)
3. Minimum of one (1) additional module from the menu below such that there are no less than seven approved participatory modules offered.

The following is required of all Sanctioned Hands-On Seminars:

Note: Participant to instructor ratios outlined below are specific to how many persons are participating in a given module at a particular time. As an example, a seminar with one hundred (100) participants divided up into four (4) groups would be 25 participants at a given time per evolution of a module.

1. In Water (pool/waterfront) Training
 - a. All training taking place in a pool must be under the supervision of a certified lifeguard (* see note 3.b above).
 - b. All training shall maintain a participant to instructor ratio equal to, or less than 30:2
 - i. The Lifeguard(s) may not be counted for this purpose.
 - ii. Assistant Instructors and volunteer coaches can be used for this purpose if they have been briefed on appropriate safety procedures.

- c. Participants must enter the pool in an inflatable life jacket/harness, it is encouraged that they also enter the water in foul weather gear.
 - i. **All life jackets must be armed and in full working order to the best of the participant's knowledge.**
- d. With life jackets inflated, participants shall -
 - i. demonstrate the HELP (Heat Escape Lessening Position) individually and in a group huddle.
 - ii. Enter and egress an OFFSHORE or TRANSOCEANIC (double sponsons and canopy) life raft
 - iii. Participate in the righting of an inverted life raft
- e. Optional training with inflatable life jackets can include:
 - i. In water doffing and donning including deflation and manual reinflation.
 - ii. Form a chain (centipede, caterpillar, etc.) and swim from one end of the pool to another.
 - iii. Form a raft aligning head to toe and practice passing individuals from one end to another.
 - iv. Entry and exit from life raft from/to simulated vessel (poolside?)

2. Training in the use of Pyrotechnics (Flares and Smoke Signals)

- a. Organizers shall-
 - i. Be responsible for alerting appropriate local authorities in advance as well as maintaining communications with them before, during and at the conclusion of pyrotechnics training. This includes the issuance of "Sécurité" calls on channel 16. Note: Local authorities may include USCG, fire departments, police, harbor masters, marine police, etc.
 - ii. Ensure that there is a safe and environmentally responsible location to dispose of consumed pyrotechnics and those that misfired.
 - iii. Endeavor to have both USCG and SOLAS approved pyrotechnic devices available for training. At minimum one SOLAS flare must be available for demonstration to every training group.
 - iv. Provide high gauntlet welding gloves and eye protection in multiple pairs for each individual igniting/holding a pyrotechnic device at a given time, plus a pair for each instructor and safety officer.
 - v. Provide two metal pails filled with sand for disposal of used flares
 - vi. Maintain a ratio of 15:2 participants to Instructors
 - vii. Ensure that 80% of participants ignite at minimum a handheld pyrotechnic device.
 - viii. Where appropriate also provide aerial flares for demonstration and training.
 - 1. Participants deploying an aerial flare can be considered as part of meeting the 80% requirement in item vii.

3. Training in Fire Fighting

- a. Organizers shall
 - i. Provide participants with the opportunity to utilize a dry chemical (ABC or BC) or CO2 fire extinguisher and fire blanket to extinguish a fire with
 - 1. due consideration to the environmental impact of the extinguishing agent
 - 2. Minimal likelihood of inhalation

3. Minimized likelihood that the fire can spread to the surrounding area.
4. While maintaining a 15:2 Participant to Instructor ratio
5. Ensure that 80% of participants can participate directly in the training.
6. Appropriately dispose of any oily and/or hazardous waste resulting from the use of extinguishing agent and fuel.

4. Training in Distress Communications

- a. Maintain a 15:1 Participant to Instructor ratio
- b. Given private frequency handheld radios, participants can demonstrate a distress call as performed on channel 16 including the transmission of position by latitude and longitude, the description of the vessel, and nature of the distress.
 - i. Participants are encouraged to utilize a case study where the information above has to be gathered and organized in advance of the radio call.
- c. 50% of participants must be directly involved in the transmission of or response to the distress calls.
- d. Utilizing a training device 80% of participants must successfully demonstrate cumulatively the deployment of an:
 - i. EPIRB
 - ii. PLB
 - iii. AIS/MOB device
 - iv. VHF DSC

5. Damage Control Simulation/Exercise

- a. Maintain a 15:1 Participant to Instructor ratio for each station
- b. Flooding Simulation
 - i. Working in teams of no more than 8 persons and ensuring that 80% of participants are actively engaged in the scenarios, given a set of Hands-On problems (leaking hose, cracked fitting, etc) participants work to stabilize the situation utilizing materials provided
 1. Multiple flooding simulators can be employed side by side as long as the participant to instructor ratio is maintained as well as the team size and participation percentage.
- c. Rigging Failure
 - i. 80% of participants actively are engaged in cutting rigging, jury rigging a mast, etc.
- d. Additional hands-on stations beyond the first may be used to meet the requirements in Minimum Performance Standards (3) listed above.

6. Crew Overboard Rescue

- a. Maintaining a 10:1 Participant to Instructor ratio
- b. Utilizing a crew recovery sling, 80% of participants demonstrate effective techniques for reboarding which may include:
 - i. 11-foot knot
 - ii. Hoisting tackle
 - iii. 20' knot
 - iv. Nighttime rigging of the Lifesling
 - v. Assisted rescue with harness

- c. This may be incorporated in a underway training evolution. (See Note Below)
- d. In the event that facilities preclude the demonstration of life sling recovery, this may be presented in lecture format and included in the Moderators presentation to the entire group.

***NO SEMINAR WILL BE CONSIDERED A SANCTIONED EVENT UNLESS ALL six MODULES ABOVE ARE PROVIDED AS OUTLINED**

Menu of Additional Modules:

1. Hands-On Tabletop Exercise in Crisis Management and Communications
 - a. Maintain a 40:1 Participant to Instructor ratio
 - b. Working in teams of no more than ten (10) people, participants are presented with a scenario where they are required to outline their crew's response to the given situation.
 - c. Each group is required to present their plan at the end of the exercise and debrief with the larger group

2. Medical Evaluation
 - a. Maintaining a 20:1 Participant to Instructor ration
 - b. Given either a case study or examination of a "patient", 80% of participants complete one aspect of the following evolution of care
 - i. Complete a SOAP note
 - ii. Formulate and transmit a call for assistance to an outside entity
 - iii. Modify the voyage plan in consideration of the condition of the patient

3. Jack Line Obstacle Course
 - a. Maintain a 10:1 Participant to Instructor ratio
 - b. 80% of participants successfully navigate around an obstacle course while demonstrating appropriate techniques for transitioning between hard points and jack lines, using double ended tethers.

4. Safety Diagram Scavenger Hunt
 - a. Maintain a 10:1 Participant to Instructor ratio
 - b. Utilizing a moored vessel, participants have to draw a safety diagram including:
 - i. Thru Hull fittings
 - ii. Ditch Bag
 - iii. Damage Control Kit
 - iv. Fire Extinguishers
 - v. Transducer
 - vi. Medical Kit
 - c. Given an existent safety diagram, answer questions related to items or conditions found at the locations of various items listed.

5. Heaving Line

- a. Using a throw bag or heaving line, 80% of participants hit a target at a distance of at least 25'

Evaluation

In addition to the successful demonstration of the skills outlined above, sanctioned Hands-On seminars require some type of end of course evaluation of participants which can be a scenario-based group tabletop exercise, or a written examination.

Additional Content

The training as outlined above is the standards required to hold a sanctioned Hand-On Safety at Sea seminar. Other Hands-On and lecture material may also be included however a determination should be made if any of that content falls outside the scope of a US Sailing sanctioned course.

Note: Having participants get underway in any type of vessel on open water is not considered a necessary part of any US Sailing Sanctioned Safety at Sea curriculum and should be clearly noted as such. We encourage individuals to practice aboard their own vessels and where appropriate for seminar organizers to pair a Hands-On Safety at Sea Seminar with an organized training event under the auspices of a local club or organization.