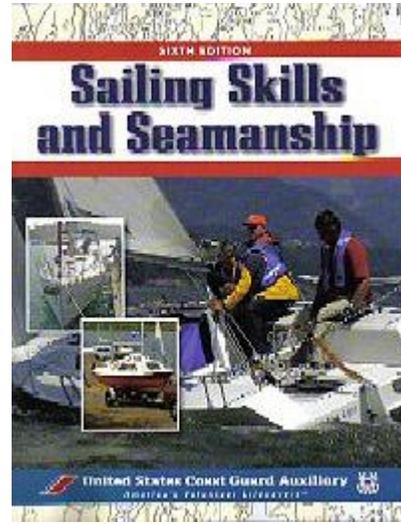


# Sailing Skills & Seamanship - Course Description

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary's *Sailing Skills and Seamanship Course* (SS&S) is a comprehensive course designed for both experienced and novice sailboat operators. The course, now in its 6th edition that was published in 2008, is divided into parts: 10 core requirement two-to four-hour lessons plus 6 elective lessons that will enhance the skills required for a safe voyage in all conditions. These courses can be taught in addition to the core courses.



## TOPICS INCLUDE

**About Sailboats** - Language of the sea; components of a sailboat; standing and running rigging; sails; types of sailboats; boat building materials; guidance on selecting and purchasing a boat.

**How A Boat Sails** - Reading the wind; points of sailing, running, close hauled, reaching, sail shape; sail adjustments; when the wind picks up.

**Basic Sailboat Maneuvering** - Tacking; jibbing; sailing a course; stability and angle of heel; knowing your boat.

**Rigging And Boat Handling** - Stepping the mast; making sail; hoisting the sails; leaving the dock; mooring; controlling the sails; anchoring; weighing anchor.

**Equipment For Your Boat** - Requirements for your boat; your boat's equipment; legal considerations.

**Trailer Your Sailboat** - Legal considerations; practical considerations; selecting your trailer; the towing vehicle; handling your trailer; pre-departure checks; launching; retrieving; raising the mast; storing your boat and trailer; theft prevention; aquatic nuisance species; float plan.

**Your Highway Signs** - Protection of ATONS; buoyage systems; waterway marks; how waterways are marked; light characteristics; chart symbols; light structures; lights on bridges; electronic aids to navigation; navigation publications.

**The Rules Of The Nautical Road** - Two sets of rules; to whom do the rules apply; the general responsibility rule; general considerations; conduct in narrow channels; traffic separation schemes; vessel traffic services; stand-on or give-way; rules for special vessels; risk of collision; bend signals; restricted visibility; vessel lights and shapes; vessels at anchor; diving operations; distress signal; drawbridge signals; penalties.

**Inland Boating** - Types of inland waters; inland navigation; inland seamanship; river currents; maintaining inland waterways; dams; locks; river charts; commercial traffic; before you go (This lesson typically will not be taught in coastal courses).

**Sailing Safety** - Small boat safety; man overboard; cold water immersion; sharing the water with other boats; fueling; carbon monoxide poisoning; sources of weather information.

**More On Sail Trim And Boat Handling** - Tuning sailboat rigging; lee and weather helm; headsails and headsail trimming; handling in heavy weather, reefing sails, knock down, or a capsized; disabled rudder.

**Introduction To Navigation** - Piloting tools; maps and charts; chart features, chart information block; other charted information; your magnetic compass; position on earth's surface; locating a point on the chart; distance on the earth's surface; measuring distance; course plotting; sources of compass error; correcting a compass reading; positioning; speed-time-distance; dead reckoning; practicing your art.

**Engines For Sailboats** - Outboard engines, two and four cycle; trouble shooting and maintenance; inboard auxiliary engines; diesel engine maintenance and trouble shooting; batteries; propellers; galvanic action; basic tool kit.

**Lines And Knots For Your Boat** - Line or rope; rope materials; kinds of rope; measuring rope; selecting your ropes; care of ropes; making up line; knots, bends and hitches; splices; securing lines; dipping the eye.

**Weather And Sailing** - Sources of weather information; wind and boating; wind and waves; weather and heat; fog; non-frontal weather.

**Your Boat's Radio** - Radios used on boats; functions of radios; licenses; selecting your VHF-FM radio; installation; operating your VHF-FM; maintain a radio watch; channels have special purposes; some "no no's"; copies of rules; calling another station; procedure words; phonetic alphabet; routine radio check; distress, urgency, and safety calls; crew training.

**Insurance companies** - Many Insurance companies will offer discounts on boat insurance to individuals who successfully complete this course. Individuals who successfully complete the course and exam are awarded certificates and cards.