



Sailing Rules (last updated April 2026)

General Principles

Safety on the water starts with us all as sailors. We each make the decision to sail based on our experience, health, familiarity with the boat we are sailing and the weather conditions and accept that we do so entirely at our own risk.

Sailors on the water are also responsible for each other's safety. For example, this can be a quick check to confirm that the sailors of a capsized boat are safe and in control of the situation.

Safety cover can be provided from one or more of the Club's power boats manned by at least one person who is Appropriately Qualified. It is the responsibility of the Officer of the Day, a Sailing Safety Officer or, in the absence of these, the sailors themselves, to determine the number of safety boats that should be on the water, based on the risks involved. Safety Boats should be manned by Appropriately Qualified people. Appropriately Qualified means that one of the team has completed Powerboat 2 or has been assessed by a power boat instructor as having adequate power boat handling skills.

In lower risk situations, Buddy Sailing may be adopted. This will depend on the number of boats and the sailors concerned but factors that impact on the risks include the sailor's experience, health, familiarity with the boat being sailed and the weather conditions.

The principals of Buddy Sailing are that the sailors must be capable of helping their buddy or, in emergencies, sailing to shore and driving a power boat out to help. Buddy Sailing requires:

- More than one boat on the water – no boat may ever sail alone.
- Safety Boat ('Lizzie' fuelled and ready meets this requirement) to be moored to pontoon, fuelled and ready to use.
- Each sailor (in the case of single-handed boats) or a sailor in each boat (for double handed boats) to be appropriately Safety Boat Qualified. This is so that each boat can be sailed back to shore to pick up the Safety Boat, if required.
- All boats to sail in the same area of the lake, so they are able to monitor each other closely.



Chelmarsh Sailing Club

Buddy sailing is not appropriate in heavy winds because the risk of capsize or injury is too high. Examples to illustrate the Buddy Sailing policy:

BUDDY SAILING APPROPRIATE	BUDDY SAILING NOT APPROPRIATE
TWO experienced sailors sailing boats they are or are not familiar with in light or medium conditions	TWO novice sailors – may not have the skills to return to shore quickly or the necessary powerboat skills
TWO intermediate sailors, sailing boats they are familiar with in light or medium conditions	SIX intermediate sailors in medium conditions – risk of multiple incidents is higher
A group of experienced sailors practicing their boat handling skills together in light to medium conditions	TWO experienced sailors sailing boats they are not familiar with in heavy conditions – risk of injury or not being able to right a capsize is too high

Rules

1. Safety

- a. Personal floatation devices (PFDs) must be worn at all times by anyone on the pontoons or on a boat.
- b. No sailing may take place unless a safety boat is on the water and manned by Appropriately Qualified crew. For the purposes of this clause:
 - i. “Appropriately Qualified” means that one of the team has the RYA Powerboat 2 qualification or has been assessed by a power boat instructor as having adequate power boat handling skills;
 - ii. Where Buddy Sailing is taking place, provided the Buddy Sailing rules in the principles set out above are being complied with, the safety boat is deemed to be manned;
- b. Boats used at other locations than Chelmarsh must be washed and dried for 48 hours before launch to prevent spread of invasive species;
- c. All boats shall keep at least 1m away from the inlet and outlet towers;
- d. Use of the water is prohibited if a Met Office weather warning of any colour is in place for the reservoir, and in the event of a thunderstorm

2. Insurance

- a. It is the responsibility of every person launching a boat on the reservoir to insure it against Third Party claims to a minimum of £5,000,000.00. The Club provides insurance for all boats hired in accordance with the rules in place from time to time.