

COACHINGFUNDAMENTALS

Safety

Heading to a coastal RYA Training Centre or a windsurfing club with safety cover is a really rational thing to do at first. A lot of windsurfers, however, may not have access to such a facility yet have the skills to take on the sea. From this point on then, I will be promoting independence by assuming that no infrastructure such as a building or safety boat is available.

One thing I was once taught that always stayed with me is the little-known WETTCOD method of remembering the Seven Common Senses used by Royal Yachting Association (RYA) instructors. These are seven things to be considered to make a session as safe as possible and are especially relevant for coastal spots.

Weather

Get several forecasts from reliable, windsurf-friendly websites/apps such as windy.com, windfinder.com or windguru.cz Some areas have real-time weather information systems on beacons at sea, like chimet.co.uk or specific webcam weather stations that you can tap into. Do your best to decide if the forecast and actual weather looks right for you then monitor it when you are out.

Equipment

Check that you have packed the right kit, making sure it is in good shape and rig it properly (no loose fins, frayed ropes or cracked UJs please!) Ensure that your personal kit (wetsuit, boots etc.) is in good order and will keep you warm and happy (top tip: a warm, happy person windsurfs better!)

Tell someone

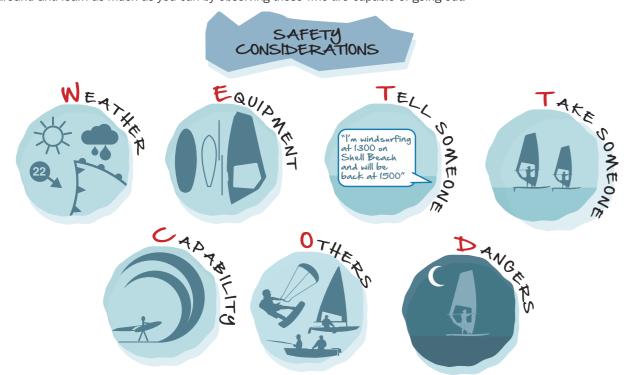
Tell someone ashore when you are going out and what time you expect to be finished. Also remember to tell them when you are actually back - to avoid unnecessary worry or a wasted search by the emergency services.

Take someone

Take a buddy out on the water with you. If you're new to the sea then one with more experience than you is a must. Windsurfing with others is safer and way more fun. You can look out for your mates, push them to improve and get help if needed whilst all the time they will do the same for you.

Capability

Be honest about whether you can handle the conditions on the day. Yes, some experts/stunt-doubles may venture out into a stinging sea of insanity yet not all conditions will suit everyone. Like I have done many times, never be too proud to give it a miss if the wind or waves are too big or it just feels too scary for you. If this happens don't go home... hang around and learn as much as you can by observing those who are capable of going out.



Get all of these things right and the sea becomes a safe and enjoyable place to windsurf



Other water users

Be courteous and respectful to others using the water, whatever reason they have for being there. You can keep an eye out for them if they get into trouble and they will hopefully do the same for you. Greeting someone as you walk or sail past will make you come across as a nice person which will help to nurture respect for our windsurfing community (top tip: a nice person windsurfs better!) You can ask for local advice too.

Dangers

There are three types of danger to consider:

- 1) Strong tides avoid rips and water accelerating through narrow exits to/from a bay or around a headland.
- 2) Offshore winds avoid the wind direction that will push you away from the safety of the land should something go wrong. Flat water and lighter winds by the beach can mask rough water and stronger wind further out.
- 3) Poor visibility not windsurfing in fog or at night should be obvious but remember that staying out too late on a summer's evening or a winter's afternoon could leave you with the lights out if the wind drops or you break something.

Choosing your tidal window

Unlike the Med, large volumes of water move around the UK coastline creating a horizontal tidal flow (or current) which, if strong, could carry you away from the land and into danger. A way of minimizing the effects of tidal flow is to choose your session time carefully and an understanding of the rule of twelfths can help with this.

The tidal range is the total drop of water height down the beach (ebbing) from high tide to low tide (also called high and low water) and vice versa [flooding]. This tidal range will be larger during spring tides and smaller during neap tides and there are two of each of these per month. It takes roughly six hours to get from high water to low water and vice versa. Like pouring a quantity of water from a bucket - where it comes out slowly at first, speeds up mid-flow and slows down again at the end to leave a bit in – the flow is not uniform over the six hours so let's see how it works.

Using the illustration, let's say that the tidal range is three metres, Divide 3m by 12 to get 0.25m and multiply this as

1000-1100 - in the first hour the tide ebbs 1/12 of the range = 0.25m

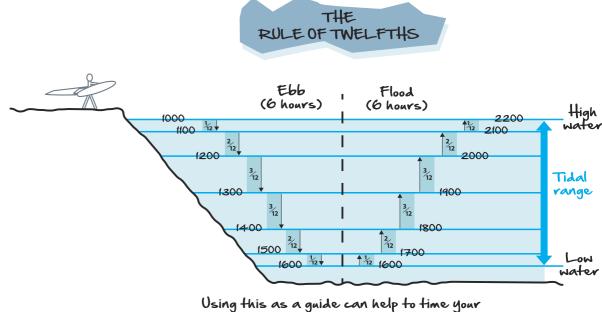
1100-1200 - in the second hour the tide ebbs 2/12 = 0.50m

1200-1300 - in the third hour the tide ebbs 3/12 = 0.75m

1300-1400 - in the fourth hour the tide ebbs 3/12 = 0.75m

1400-1500 - in the fifth hour the tide ebbs 2/12 = 0.50m

1500-1600 - in the sixth hour the tide ebbs 1/12 = 0.25m



Using this as a guide can help to time your session to best advantage



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This is an endless process which also applies when the tide is flooding back again, so: **1600-1700** - in the seventh hour the tide floods 1/12 of the range = 0.25m **1700-1800** - in the eighth hour the tide floods 2/12 of the range = 0.50m

1800-1900 - in the ninth hour the tide floods 3/12 of the range = 0.75m and so on...

So the question to ask yourself is, "If I had two hours available what time would I choose to go windsurfing to experience the least tidal flow?" From the illustration here are a few options:

- **0900-1100** 0.25m of tide in, plus 0.25m of tide out = 0.00m (no change)
- **1000-1200** 0.25m+0.50m = 0.75m (25% of all the movement of water)
- **1200-1400** 0.75m+0.75m = 1.50m (50% of all the movement of water)
- **1400-1600** 0.50m+0.25m = 0.75m (25% of all the movement of water)
- **1500-1700** 0.25m of tide out, plus 0.25m of tide in = 0.00m (no change)

Neither of the options in BLUE are ideal as you would have to deal with a quarter or a half of the tidal flow during your sail. But look at the option in GREEN. By windsurfing in the last hour of the tide going out plus the first hour of the tide coming back in, each of these hours cancels each other's already minimal flow out. The ORANGE option is perfect too. Here you get the last hour of the tide coming in (not shown in the illustration) plus the first hour of the tide going out where, again, each of these hours cancels each other's already minimal flow out.

So, with both the GREEN and the **ORANGE** options there is effectively no tidal flow during your two-hour session.

Being out with a buddy is safer and way more fun: Simon and Tez ride Storm Eleanor





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Wind with/against tide

It's not always possible, however, to avoid being in a bit of tidal flow. If the wind is blowing in the same direction as the tidal flow then the resultant benefit can be a flatter water state. When the wind blows directly against the tidal flow then the water can get agitated and become choppy. A further, very important consideration here is our choice of sail size.

Have a look at the twin illustration where a 19-knot (Force 5) wind is blowing and a strong three-knot tide is running. In the first one the rider is being moved by the tide away from the wind. As the wind hits the sail the windsurfer is moving away from it at three knots. This means that the sail only feels 16 knots as the Force 5 has effectively become a Force 4 in the sail. If the rider has rigged for a Force 5 then they might be underpowered, unable to get planing and be carried down tide like driftwood. Another way of looking at it is this: if you pushed someone who was moving away from you then they would not feel as much of a push/impact as they would if they were standing still.

In the second picture the rider is being moved by the tide into the wind. As the wind hits the sail the windsurfer is moving towards it at three knots. This means that the sail now feels 22 knots as the Force 5 has effectively become a Force 6 in the sail. So, if the rider has rigged for a Force 5 then they might be overpowered and unable to control the kit. Again, another way of looking at it is this: if you pushed someone who was moving towards you then they would feel a stronger push/impact than they would if they were standing still.

So this time we looked at safety, choosing a tidal window and the relationship between wind and tide. Maybe it's time to grab a mate and get out there with some kit to feel the energy of the sea. Have a plan, be safe and have fun. Just keep one eye out for those pirates...

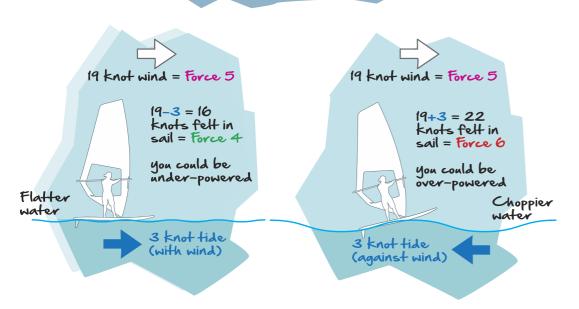
Simon Winkley is a RYA Advanced Windsurfing Instructor and a RYA Windsurfing Trainer actively coaching and running instructor courses in the UK and overseas.

He is supported by Starboard, Severne, Bray Lake Watersports and Spinlock.

2018 dates: Vass Coaching Weeks with OE 17 & 24 June; Weymouth Coaching Weekends at the OTC 17/18 March, 28/29 April, 28/29 July; Queen Mary Try Foiling Sessions 31 March, 20 April. Limited places.

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WIND WITH/AGAINST TIDE



The relationship between wind and tide can alter the amount of power in your sail



SIMON WINKLEY 2018 WINDSURF COACHING WEEKS VASSILIKI, GREECE



Simon Winkley, Advanced Instructor and Starboard/ Severne Team Rider, returns to deliver two weeks of intermediate to early-advanced coaching in Vassiliki, the magical windsurfing location.

"Simon is a brilliant coach. Two seasons of frustration, crashes and general confusion were overcome within days." (chris, 2017)

> "I had the best windsurfing holiday ever... Simon's enthusiasm and constant energy for coaching is so



inspiring... looking forward to 2018!" (Maria, 2017)











✓ FREE MTBs & bike guiding

✓ FREE use of dinghies & SUPs

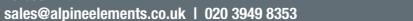


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HOLIDAYS INCLUDE:

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✓ Beachfront hotel

✓ FREE use of windsurf kit

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