

Skills Definitions

IMPORTANT: Ohio law requires boaters born on or after **January 1, 1982**, to successfully complete either a boating course or a proficiency exam in order to operate a boat powered by more than 10 horsepower. Follow this link to further information.

NOTE when registering for boating event, your levels may change if signing for power vs sailboat.

Four levels are defined

- Novice
- Crew
- First Mate
- Co-Skipper

NOVICE

Novices are those who have no to minimal sailing or boating experience. NCSS welcomes those with all skills including those new to boating.

CREW

Crew are those who have:

Have a fundamental understanding of boating safety

- Use of life jackets
- Use of fire extinguishers
- Awareness of risks such as rotating propellers or catching clothing, fingers, etc. in control lines and winches
- Signaling for assistance
 - Basic use of VHF radio to call for help on Ch 16
 - Basic use of day and night visual distress signals
- Basic Man Overboard (MOB) procedures:
 - Throwing flotation to MOB
 - Assigning, or performing, responsibility to maintain constant uninterrupted line of sight of MOB
 - Assist in retrieving MOB.

Some boating experience.

- Can helm boat on steady course in open water under supervision
- Some awareness of basic instrumentation, i.e. reading Depth gauge, compass bearing, wind direction, etc
- Aids the helmsman in avoiding other boats and/or hazards
- Understands basic right of way rules, i.e. port vs starboard
- For Sailboats:
 - Understands how to luff or lower sails to stop boat from sailing
 - Can assist with flaking sails or furling head sails
 - Can tack the headsail and main sail
- Can cleat off dock lines on boat and on dock cleats
- Can attach fenders to the boat effectively
- Can step off boat when needed to handle the docking process

FIRST MATES

First Mates are those who have all the skills of the Crew plus:

- Have an advanced understanding of boating safety
 - Can comfortably use VHF radio to:
 - Understand and use Security, Pan Pan and May Day calls
 - Issue a distress call
 - Communicate GPS coordinates of vessel
 - Contact other vessels, towing companies, etc for non-emergency assistance
 - Contact other vessels for routine communications

- Significant boating experience:
 - Can helm boat to a set course, through channels and in the vicinity of other vessels
 - Understand the safety requirement for particularly gasoline engines during start and stop
 - Can proficiently control boat course and speed,
 - Can return to MOB position
 - Competence in using electronic navigation aids i.e. wind speed, direction, boat speed over water vs over ground, basic chart plotter use, basic autopilot operation, etc.
 - On Sailboats:
 - Understands how to control sails to allow boat to change course such as tacking, heading up/falling off, jibing.
 - Understands how to control sails i.e. depower head sail and mainsail during gusting winds.
 - Competent to assist in reefing various types of sails, roller furling jib vs traditional slab reefed mainsail.
 - Can bring the boat to a dock in an emergency situation
 - Understands how to secure a boat to different types of docks including effective use of spring lines
 - Understands the basic rules of the road and aids to navigation.

CO-SKIPPERS

Co-Skipper are those who have all the skills of First Mate plus:

- Operate the boat without skipper's assistance
 - Preparing to depart dock
 - Leaving dock
 - Docking
 - Securing boat
 - For Sailboats
 - Can direct crew with sails raising, trimming furling and removing
- Full knowledge of all USCG-mandated navigational and safety regulations.
 - Ensures safety requirements are complied with, i.e., life jacket for every person on board.
- Can navigate with GPS or charts

WHEN REGISTERING, **BASED ON YOUR SKILLS**, ALWAYS TAKE THE HIGHEST SLOT FOR YOUR SKILLS.

I have "**Co-Skipper**" skills - can sign up for Co-Skipper, First Mate, Crew and Novice slots.

I have "**First Mate**" skills - can sign up First Mate, Crew and Novice. Take the highest skilled open slot

I have "**Crew**" skills - can sign up Crew and Novice. Take the highest skilled open slot

I am a "**Novice**" - ONLY sign up for Novice.
