

SKIPPER TRAINING · EXAM PREPARATION

Theory exam syllabus

Everything to study for the restricted licence, the general supplement and the yachtmaster supplement.

Restricted

General

Yachtmaster

MCQ

Theory exam format

Multiple-choice questionnaire (MCQ). The exams are modular and progressive: each licence builds on the previous one.

Part	Restricted	General	Yachtmaster
Regulations	12	10	5
Navigation	10	10	18
Safety & manoeuvres	8	10	12
Total	30 questions	30 questions	35 questions
Pass mark	50% per part and 60% overall	50% per part and 60% overall	60%

Which parts should you book? Part 1 = restricted licence · Part 2 = general supplement · Part 3 = yachtmaster supplement. General licence: parts 1 + 2. Yachtmaster licence: parts 1, 2 + 3.

Part 1 – Restricted licence

Navigation

TIDES AND CURRENTS

- Notions: current, upstream, downstream

BUOYAGE

- Waterway marks, general principles of the European SIGNI system
- Marking objects: shape and top mark, colour, light, sign
- Categories of marks, danger points and obstacles, special marks

- Channel marking, harbour entrances

INSTRUMENTS AND COMMUNICATION

- Basics of the echo sounder and log
- Basics of VHF

WATERWAYS CHART

- IGN chart of the Belgian waterways (1:250,000) and information for inland and recreational navigation
- Scale, depth indications, distances (km) and speeds (km/h), symbols and abbreviations
- Voyage planning: position, distance A-B, navigability, depths, clearance under bridges, locks and level differences, DNG
- Calculating navigation time

NOTICES TO SKIPPER

- Which ones, where to get them, interruptions and restrictions

Manoeuvres, weather and safety

MANOEUVRES

- Basics, terminology and trends in pleasure boats
- Types of boats and propulsion, effect on handling
- How the propeller and rudder work, possibilities and limits
- Basic manoeuvres

WEATHER

- Basic weather bulletins and terminology
- Take account of visibility, wind and the navigation area

SAFETY

- Outboard and inboard engines: fuel, cooling, oil, lubrication, electrics and batteries; petrol vs diesel; safety stop
- Fire: prevention, fire classes A, B, C, D, F, extinguishers, fire blanket
- Gas on board, water ingress and bilge systems
- Compulsory life-saving equipment and ship's papers, safety measures
- Man overboard, distress signals on inland waters
- Pollution of inland waters, electrolysis and anodes
- First aid: cardiopulmonary resuscitation, drowning

Regulations

- General regulations for the waterways of the Kingdom
- General police regulations for navigation on inland waters
- Regulations for navigation on the common Meuse
- Police and navigation regulations for the Brussels-Rupel canal and the port of Brussels

Part 2 – General licence supplement

The restricted licence syllabus, plus:

Navigation

TIDES AND CURRENTS

- High and low water, water level, duration, range, chart datum, soundings, drying heights, turn of the tide, springs and neaps
- Tide tables and calculating the height of water with the rule of twelfths

BUOYAGE

- IALA system, region A

INSTRUMENTS

- GPS: position, waypoints, GOTO, MOB; COG, SOG, RNG, BRG, ETA, TTG, XTE
- Magnetic compass: influences, errors and corrections
- AIS: types, limits, settings, CPA and TCPA
- VHF and the limits of the mobile network at sea

NAUTICAL CHART AND NAVIGATION

- Geographic coordinates, Mercator projection, nautical mile, course, direction, distance, speed
- Chart key, scale, reference ports, chart datum (LAT), WGS 84, symbols, corrections
- True, magnetic and compass north; true, magnetic and compass headings; variation and deviation
- Course through the water and over the ground, current, leeway, estimated position (within 1 hour)
- Planning: compass course, ETA, engine range
- Bearings (true, magnetic, compass), fixing your position, sailing in a sector or on a transit

Manoeuvres, weather and safety

MANOEUVRES

- Anchoring: types of anchor, ground tackle and technique

WEATHER

- Weather sources for navigation, synoptic charts: anticyclones, depressions, isobars
- Air masses, wind and the Beaufort scale, rapid pressure changes
- Fog (radiation and advection), warm and cold fronts, thunderstorms and squalls (cumulonimbus)
- Sea and land breezes

SAFETY

- Engine maintenance: batteries, bleeding the diesel, thermostat, impeller, cooling-water filter
- Gas installation, cylinders, leak detection
- Life-saving equipment, documents, safety during works
- Man-overboard manoeuvres, distress signals and pyrotechnics, Belgian rescue services
- Towing, marine pollution (Marpol), fuel consumption and range, radar reflectors

- First aid: evacuation, bleeding, shock, wounds, fractures, hyper- and hypothermia, choking, seasickness

Regulations

- International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (excluding traffic separation schemes and radar)
- Navigation and police regulations for the Lower Sea Scheldt
- Belgian territorial sea, coastal harbours and beaches
- Ghent–Terneuzen canal
- Royal Decree on recreational navigation

Part 3 – Yachtmaster licence supplement

The general supplement syllabus, plus:

Navigation

- **Tides:** origin (moon, sun), effect of pressure and wind, swell and breaking waves; heights of water with standard and secondary ports, coefficients (SHOM), NAP datum
- **Instruments:** advanced GNSS (layline, VMG, CTE, TTG, DOP, SBAS/DGPS, waypoints, anchor watch), plotters and raster/vector charts, fluxgate compass, NAVTEX
- **Communication:** VHF-DSC, EPIRB and SART beacons
- **Charts:** approach, coastal and passage charts; foreign charts and publications (Netherlands, France, United Kingdom, Germany)
- **Plotting:** deviation curve, tidal stream atlas, interpolating tidal streams
- **Passage of several hours:** dead reckoning, successive courses, vector construction, ETA
- **Bearings:** relative bearing, three-bearing fix, running fix
- Logbook, time zones (UTC, BST, CET, CEST...)

Manoeuvres, weather and safety

MANOEUVRES

- Heavy-weather manoeuvres (engine and sail), how sails work
- Man overboard under sail, nautical etiquette

WEATHER

- Atmosphere, sun, pressure gradient, air masses, convection cells
- Geostrophic winds, Coriolis force, Buys-Ballot's law
- Clouds and precipitation, northern hemisphere depressions, typical summer / winter situations
- Regional Mediterranean winds (mistral, bora, tramontane, meltemi, sirocco...)
- Synoptic charts, GRIB files, marine weather bulletins

SAFETY

- 2- and 4-stroke engines, diesel, fault diagnosis, oil change, fuel filter
- Lightning, repairing leaks, 12 V electrics and batteries
- Stability: metacentre, centre of buoyancy, centre of gravity, righting moment; jacklines
- SAR, abandoning ship, recovering a castaway, communicating with a helicopter
- Long-distance towing, multi-day passages with night sailing, SOLAS
- Storm tactics, heaving to
- First aid far from help, radio medical advice

Regulations

- In-depth knowledge of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea: traffic separation schemes (rule 10), radar in restricted visibility, complex situations
- Lights and shapes, sound and light signals, distress signals (annexes II and IV)

Prepare for the theory exam with us

7 Tuesday evenings in Brussels or online (in French; separate session if there are enough registrations), with the exam simulation included (≈ 1,000 questions).

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