

Skipper Certification Test

To ensure the safety of all our Club members, members must have skipper privileges to take out a Club boat on their own. A test has been developed to help members gain their skipper privileges. A Member's skills and knowledge are assessed through the Club's Learn-to-Skipper modules or by challenging the Certification Test.

Skipper Certification Test Prerequisites:

1. Recommendation of a Fleet Captain Skipper or Sail Club Coach, or
2. Discretion of the Director of Sailing Operations. It is normally granted to experienced skippers from another NY harbor sailing club or an experienced Melges 24/J80 skipper.

Key Components:

Part A: Personal Equipment Requirements For Skippers

Part B: Knowledge Assessment

- Understanding of local knowledge
- Safety awareness – weather awareness and crew abilities
- Club rules and protocols

Part C: Practical Assessment

- Ability to safely leave and return to dock
- Basic sailing ability and boat specific operation
- COB and basic spinnaker handling

The Skipper's test is the same for the J80 and Melges 24. Melges 24 skippers are certified to take out the J80 or Melges 24. Racing Skipper Privileges and Fleet Captain Skipper certifications are separate tests.

Uncertain About Challenging the Certification?

If you are uncertain as to whether you have sufficient experience to challenge the test, please use this as a guide. However, we strongly suggest that you take a few Fleet Captain sails and the Learn-to-Skipper modules before requesting to challenge the test. The Certification test is structured so that members are assessed through the process. Upon assessment completion, Certifiers will identify potential areas of improvement regardless of whether Club skipper privileges are granted.

New Members	Suggested Preparation	First Time Certification Success With Preparation
Skipper from another NY Harbor club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand Club protocols • Understand local knowledge • Helm practice on Melges 24 or J80 	Highly Likely
Experienced Melges 24/J80 skipper/owner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand Club protocols • Understand local knowledge 	Highly Likely
Experienced ONE15 Brooklyn Sail Club Fleet Captain Crew	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helm practice on Melges 24 or J80 	Likely but we suggest taking Learn-to-Skipper modules to strengthen skills sets
Experienced Crew	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand Club protocols • Understand local knowledge • Helm practice on Melges 24 or J80 • Fleet Captain cruises 	Possible but we suggest doing some Fleet Captain sails and taking Learn-to-Skipper modules to strengthen skills sets

Part A: Personal Equipment Requirements For Prospective Skippers

When you take your certification test, you must bring along your:

1. A fully operating handheld VHF radio
2. An up-to-date chart of the harbor (this can be borrowed but we want you to familiarize yourself with NY Harbor Charts 12334, 12335, & 12327). If electronic charts are used – the app must be working.
3. A copy of the current Eldridge Tide Book (this can be borrowed but it is a good reference book) or working app.
4. Wearing proper sailing shoes
5. You can bring your personal PFD

Failure to bring these items (except personal lifejacket) will result in automatic failure of the certification test but the certifier may opt to perform other parts of the test.

Part B: Knowledge Assessment

This portion of the test can be performed independent of Part C. It may be used as part of a written test and also checked by oral examination.

Question	
Local Knowledge	
1. Where would you get chart updates?	
2. Explain how to determine if chart is in fathoms or feet	
3. Identify on the chart: shallow/reef areas around	
4. Identify these specific markers Buttermilk Channel (GC 5 and GC7), Ellis Island (G35), Statue of Liberty (G35), Bay Ridge Flats Anchorage (YA), Battery Channel (G1, G3, R2), South of Governor's Island (G1, G11)	
5. Calculate distance from Verrazano Bridge to Battery and describe how you arrived at this	
6. Identify normal traffic lanes for major traffic users: Staten Island Ferry, NY Waterway Ferry, Circle Line, Water Taxi, Governor's Island Ferry & cruise ships, DEP tankers, Atlantic Highlands Ferry. Describe color of vessels.	
7. What type of vessels generally come out of Erie Basin?	
8. What type of vessels generally dock alongside the Atlantic Basin?	

Rules of the Road	
9. Referring to channel markers above. Describe what a cargo ship would do around each buoy.	
10. Explain the meaning of 1 horn, 2 horns, 3 horns and 5 horns from another vessel	
11. According to navigation rules, which vessels should sailboats give way to?	
12. Who is the stand-on vessel? Vessel under sail or kayaker?	
13. Explain the sail-to-sail rules: port-starboard, windward-leeward, overtaking	
14. Explain when a sailboat is considered a powerboat	
15. Explain the fundamental power to power rule: danger zone or passing port side to port side	

Tides and Currents	
16. Determine the next and most recent high and low tide using the Eldridge Tide Book	
17. Calculate and explain method for determining direction and strength of current at Battery for the next 12 hours.	
18. Estimate speed of the current in the Buttermilk Channel	
19. Estimate how long it would take to get to the Verrazano Bridge through Buttermilk Channel under power	
20. Explain how you will exit the marina entrance based on direction of current	
21. What is the range of the fuel supply for the engine?	
Safety	
22. What are the skipper's responsibilities?	
23. Explain what to do if the boat runs aground or hits an object	
24. Explain what to do if there is rigging failure	
25. Explain what to do if the engine cannot start	
26. Explain what to do if you see other mariners in distress	
27. Explain what to do in an medical emergency situation on board	

28. Demonstrate how to set up for a tow	
29. Explain liability for towing	
30. Who is responsible for getting the boat back to the Community Dock? (towing)	
Club Protocol and Operations	
31. Explain where to get Club Protocols and Rules	
32. Explain procedure for making boat reservations	
33. Describe the check-in and check-out procedures with Club Dockmaster	
34. Explain under what weather conditions a Club Boat may go sailing	
35. Explain penalty for not getting a boat back to dock before a thunderstorm, squall or darkness	
36. Explain when an incident report should be made	
37. Explain how the Fleet Sailing Program works	

Part C: Practical Assessment

Weather Update – Anticipating Weather	
38. Provide weather briefing and time of sunset for Certifier	
39. Demonstrate how to check weather conditions at the docks	
40. Demonstrate on how to obtain weather forecast	

for NY Harbor on VHF radio	
41. Describe a sailing plan for the next 6 hours based on weather conditions and river current conditions	
VHF Radio - Knowing Your Own Equipment	
42. Explain to another crew member how to operate radio without looking at crew member (turn on/off, adjust volume, select channel, transmit message)	
43. What VHF Channel is used for ONE°15 Brooklyn Marina/Club operations, US Coast Guard emergency, bridge-to-bridge communication and NY Vessel Traffic Control?	
Personal Life Jacket - Knowing Your Own Equipment	
44. Demonstrate correct wearing of PFD	
45. How old is your PFD?	
46. If PFD is inflatable, is it manual, auto or hydrostatic? What are the service requirements?	
Boat Equipment – Review	
47. Direct crew to bring items on deck before getting underway. Lifejackets, fire extinguisher, flares, anchor, horn or sound device, type IV PFD, bucket, pump, secure hatches, check navigation lights operations, first aid kit and boat registration)	

48. How long is the anchor line?	
49. How much does the vessel draw?	
50. Explain how would you anchor a Club boat	
51. Explain where in NY Harbor you can anchor	
52. How would you extend the anchor line?	
53. Where would you secure the anchor line?	
54. Check other club equipment on board. Spinnaker sheets, spinnaker, spinnaker bags, towline?	
55. Locate the first aid kit aboard and describe what you expect to find in the kit	
Before Leaving the Dock	
56. Check that crew members are all wearing of PFDs correctly and wearing correct sailing shoes	
57. At some time during sail demonstrate knots: 2 types of stopper knot (figure eight/overhand), square knot, bowline, cleat hitch, slip knot (for sail ties), clove hitch, round turn and two half hitches.	
58. Demonstrate how to throw a line. Then demonstrate how to coil line for storage. Store in correct location below decks.	
59. At some time demonstrate knowledge of all basic terms (bow, stern, main sheet, jib sheet, spinnaker sheets, keel, tiller, starboard-port,	

windward-leeward, shrouds, backstay, traveler, leech, luff, foot, roller furler, bowsprit, tack line, main, jib & spinnaker halyards)	
60. Demonstrate how to undo jib sheet and retie jib sheet	
61. Demonstrate jib furling. Which way does the headsail furl and unfurl?	
62. Demonstrate how to you adjust tension on jib luff	
63. Demonstrate bowsprit extension and retraction	
64. Demonstrate how to adjust rig tuning. You do not need to tune the rig but you should be able to check if you are at base settings.	
65. Demonstrate how to store hatch cover and companionway covers, install the soft hatch cover and spinnaker bags.	
66. Demonstrate how to rig the spinnaker. Certifier will help with this if unfamiliar.	
67. Make sure all other sails are ready and secure (including spinnaker)	
68. Demonstrate ability to start outboard engine. Explain protocol for refueling.	
69. Perform a crew briefing as the boat is rigged up	

Leaving The Dock	
70. Demonstrate how to leave the dock. Importance of using astern propulsion.	
71. Demonstrate safe marina departure. At some point demonstrate ability to turn a tight 360 circle under power.	
72. Demonstrate hoisting sails	
73. Define and identify a lee shore	
74. Explain and demonstrate ability to use and set boom vang, outhaul, Cunningham, traveler and backstay,	
75. Demonstrate sailing towards a landmark in a straight line	
76. Demonstrate stopping the boat and getting underway	
77. Demonstrate sailing all points of sail	
78. Steer the sailboat by the lee without gybing	
79. Demonstrate ability to tack	
80. Demonstrate ability to gybe	
81. Demonstrate how to fall off from a closed hauled point of sail to a broad reach	
82. Demonstrate how to get out of irons twice (with jib furled and unfurled)	

83. Demonstrate how to sail backwards at least two boat lengths	
84. Demonstrate how to heave-to. Note: This will be difficult to perform on a M24.	
Crew Overboard Recovery	
85. Explain the first things you do if a crew falls overboard	
86. Explain two crew overboard (COB) recovery techniques. Quick stop and figure-8	
87. Executes COB recovery technique 2 times. Once when close hauled and the other on a board reach. Preferable on different tacks.	
Spinnaker	
88. Demonstrate how to assess conditions to launch the spinnaker	
89. Demonstrate how to launch spinnaker. Dependent on outcome of previous question.	
90. Demonstrate how to gybe the spinnaker	
91. Explain the procedure for a spinnaker douse	
92. Demonstrate a COB recovery procedure under spinnaker. Execute at Certifier discretion.	
Lowering Sails	
93. Demonstrate correct furling of headsail	

94. Demonstrate restarting engine while sailing	
95. Demonstrate lowering the main sail	
Returning to The Docks	
96. Demonstrate preparation to return to dock	
97. Demonstrate securing the boat at dock. Leave boat in better condition than you found it [Check Club protocols]	