

# Ventura Yacht Club

## VYC Juniors Sailing Program Reference Guide



*Providing young sailors with a safe, fun, educational learning environment through which they can develop their sailing skills to become life long sailors, dedicated to the Corinthian Spirit.*

1755 Spinnaker Drive  
Ventura, CA 93001  
(805) 642-0426  
vycyouthsailing@gmail.com  
[vycyouthsailing.org](http://vycyouthsailing.org)



## Mission Statement

To provide young sailors with a safe, fun, educational learning environment through which they can develop their sailing skills to become life long sailors dedicated to the Corinthian Spirit.

## Overview

Ventura Yacht Club is a full-service facility located on the west side of Ventura Harbor between the Ventura Harbor Village and the Channel Islands National Park headquarters. Nestled between the beach on the west, and the harbor on the east, the VYC facility offers a panoramic view of the Channel Islands and Ventura Harbor. Few yacht clubs on the west coast can boast of such a spectacular location! VYC maintains an active youth program supports a wide variety of social activities and programs. The Ventura Yacht Club, originally known as the Ventura County Boat Club, was organized in 1938. The club was incorporated in 1940 as a non-profit organization, with an original membership of 60. The club has nurtured many youth sailing programs and has supported youths in regional and national sailing championships.

Ventura Yacht Club maintains a lively Juniors Program. In addition to the summer programs, Juniors Sundays are offered monthly to all who have graduated summer classes with a Junior Membership as well as Junior Members. Racing, drills, and fun make up these Sundays and free bar-b-q lunches are always part of the routine. Regattas are also offered throughout the year, including the Optimist Fall Regatta (So Cal Opti Series). The summer sailing programs encompass a safe, educational, and fun environment. We want the kids to learn, and to have a great time while doing so. Learning sailing skills is supplemented with fun activities such as sailing to the beach or park, having picnics, going on treasure hunts, playing sponge tag, and having relay team competitions. The goal of the program is to promote good overall seamanship, racing and sailing skills, water safety, the Corinthian spirit, and have a great, fun time while doing so. While having fun, the kids will learn a wonderful sport in which they can participate for the rest of their lives. VYC maintains a quality fleet of Optimists, Lasers, and FJs--the standard boats for youth sailing--and classes are taught by US Sailing certified instructors.

The summer classes have an average instructor-to-student ratio of 6:1, so the students receive the highest degree of attention and tailoring to their specific needs. The head instructors are US Sailing Certified Instructors, and are able to certify students through US Sailing. The program emphasizes a fun and safe learning environment. The goal of the instructors is to offer kids a safe class that is a fun, unique, and exciting way to spend the summer while learning good sailing techniques and skills. Each year we offer nine one-week full day sessions meeting from 9am to 4pm. The program is open to all sailors, ages eight to eighteen. Junior membership is required of all participants—either an Annual Membership (this includes VYC Juniors Sailing Sundays as well as other events during the year) OR, for those who do not wish to participate on an annual basis or are visiting from out of town, a One-Week Session Membership (good for 1-week Camp only). All students are required to pass a swim test on the first day of class which consists of swimming a lap across the guest dock (around 50 feet altogether), treading water for one minute, and putting on a life jacket while in the water.



## Ventura Yacht Club Junior Membership

All students wishing to participate in the VYC Junior Sailing Program must have a Junior Membership. This entitles them to participate in Summer Sailing Classes as well as in all Juniors-sponsored activities, as long as the student's membership is active. A One-Week session membership is available for a nominal fee and is good for one week only.

### Levels

The VYC Junior Sailing Program is open to sailors between the ages of eight and eighteen. Some exceptions may be made. We have beginner Optimist, Intermediate Optimist and Advanced Optimist. We also have a beginner FJ, Intermediate Laser/Fj group and Advanced Laser/FJ class.

#### Beginners

This class is designed for individuals who have little or no previous sailing experience, with a focus on basic sailing skills. Students will be taught how to rig and sail Optimists or FJs, how to tie basic knots, how to use basic sailing skills, and how to remain safe at all times on the water. It is not uncommon for individuals to take this course more than once.

#### Intermediate

This class is for individuals who have acquired good fundamental sailing skills and are interested in starting to race. This course will prepare students to compete in regattas hosted by VYC and by yacht clubs elsewhere throughout the nation. Students will learn racing tactics and techniques that will help them maximize their speed and competitive edge. Students will be taught in Optimists, Lasers, and/or FJs, depending on the skill level of the group.

#### Advanced

This class is for sailors who have participated throughout the year on the VYC racing teams. It is open only to those advanced sailors on the race teams. This class will be taught in Optimist, Lasers and FJs.

### Level Determination

Each participant will be initially assigned to a group based on the information given to us by you at sign-ups. If it appears that the level seems inappropriate, the instructors will contact the parent/guardian and the sailor will be moved to the appropriate level. Each class is tailored to meet the needs and abilities of the individual students. If skills need to be refreshed (from the previous year), instructors have the right to move a student down to a lower level.

It is solely up to the discretion of the instructors to place a student in a higher level without his or her having gone through the certification process. Skills may need to be reviewed if the student no longer recalls how to execute them. However, instructors will put in all possible effort to keep students in a comfortable, yet challenging learning environment.



## Times

Summer Camp starts at 9am. Punctuality is extremely important. Each day, parents need to sign-in their child at the beginning of the program, and sign their child out at the end of the day. Upon arriving students should store their gear and snacks on the designated table, gear up, and head down to the docks. Students are urged, as the week progresses, to be finished rigging by 9:45. Classes end at 4pm. Supervision is not guaranteed after this time, so parents are strongly encouraged to pick up their children on time. Early pick-up is not permitted, as sailors will often be on the water until as late as 3:15 and supervision is not provided onshore while the class is on the water. Sailors are expected to participate in de-rigging and putting away their boats at the end of the day. Parents may watch their children throughout the day from the yacht club.

## Required Gear and Equipment

Students will need a properly fitting, US Coast Guard Certified Type III PFD (Personal Flotation Device/ Life-jacket), sailing shoes (no flip-flops/ sandals), a towel, a change of clothes (clothes will get wet!), sunscreen, a snack and lunch. A light jacket and swim attire are also recommended. A wetsuit may be worn during the swim test/ beach days.

## Daily Preparation

For your child's safety and comfort on and off the water, the following should be brought to class every day. A cold, sunburned, hungry, tired and dehydrated child will not be having much fun. The following list should help.

### What to wear or bring:

- Hat (full-brim with chin strap/tether)
- Sunglasses (with "Croakies" or other tethering system)
- Sun Block (waterproof, 30 SPF or higher)
- Closed-toed sailing shoes (Wetsuit Booties, Water Sox, and Sneakers.)
- US Coast Guard Approved Type III PFD (properly fitting, weight & size appropriate)
- Swim Suit, Long Sleeve Lycra Rash Guard
- Extra pair of clothing (clothes will get wet)
- Towel
- Snack (make sure that snacks are in a seagull-safe container; i.e. cooler/zippered lunchbox)
- Plenty of Drinking water
- Any medications or health equipment (VYC instructors will not administer any medication to students unless the medication is 1) presented to the head instructor by the parent, 2)



accompanied by written authorization for administration, and 3) accompanied by written directions for administration)

- Anything else you may feel necessary

## Lost and Found

Please clearly mark all of your child's belongings. Many lunch and gear bags look similar. Please speak to your child about the importance of keeping track of his or her gear. All gear found from the Juniors programs will be placed in the lost and found, located in the VYC clubhouse, under the postage boxes. It is solely the student's responsibility to keep track of his or her gear and lost gear is not guaranteed to be in the lost and found. Please check to make sure that your child has all of his or her belongings at the end of the day.

## Juniors Sundays

Juniors Sundays take place one Sunday each month from 9 am to 1.30 pm. Complimentary lunch is served mid-day for sailors. Please bring a USCG Type III PFD/ life jacket, appropriate clothing, and dock-safe shoes! Please refer to "Daily Preparation" (page 4) for additional details on what to bring to Sunday's program. Junior Sundays are offered to Annual Junior members (parents do not need to be club members), as long as they maintain an active membership. It is an excellent opportunity to have some extra practice (and fun!) during the summer and to keep up skills throughout the year. Summer graduates are encouraged to participate year-round.

## Boat Usage Policy

Boat usage is limited to VYC Junior Sailing Committee members, VYC instructors, and VYC junior members during VYC Junior sailing events/camps only. Parents are not permitted to sail boats or operate chase boats unless they are on the VYC Junior Sailing Committee. Some exceptions may be made by the VYC Junior Program Chair or VYC Junior Program Director on a case-by-case basis. In all cases, a Charter Agreement must be completed if a boat is to leave the VYC premises.

## Borrowing boats

Convertible, Trial, and Regular VYC Members are permitted to use designated juniors sailboats (*no power/chase boats*) provided that the members have been "checked out" by the VYC Junior Program Chair or VYC Junior Program Director. If the boat needs to be launched by the crane, the member must also be "checked out" on the crane. Boats may not be borrowed during VYC Junior Sailing events such as regattas or during summer camp hours. Members of the VYC Junior Sailing Team may request to **charter** boats and equipment to participate in regattas or to practice. Borrowers must agree to repair or replace any equipment that has been lost, damaged, or stolen. If you meet the above criteria and are on the VYC Junior Sailing Committee, you may also use chase boats and/or non-designated boats for training and practice purposes.



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

(From parents)

**Q:** Is it all right if I pick up my child early?

**A:** Yes, as long as you let the Head Sailing Instructor and VYC Office know at the beginning of the day before class, and check your child out with the Head Instructor. Your child may need to be picked up at lunch as sailors will often be on the water until as late as 3:15 and supervision is not provided onshore while the class is on the water. Sailors are expected to participate in de-rigging and putting away their boats.

**Q:** Can I go out with my child on one of the Juniors boats during Camp?

**A:** No—if your child is not ready to try and sail alone, he/she is not ready for Camp.

**Q:** Can I go on the chase boat with one of the instructors?

**A:** No—due to legal and safety issues, parents cannot go out on the chase boats with instructors during sessions. Parents may ask where their children will be sailing, and where the best place to view their children would be. Generally, the upper floor of the yacht club, Harbor Village, Marina Park, and the Park Service observation floor are the best spots to observe.

**Q:** Can my child sail with \_\_\_? Can my child be moved into this level? Can my child sail a \_\_\_?

**A:** VYC Instructors evaluate the abilities of the young sailors, and determine the best level, boat, and person with whom your child should sail. If there is a legitimate issue with who, what, or where your child is sailing, please bring it to the attention of the instructors. If not, please leave it to the best judgment of the instructors.

**Q:** Can I be on the docks helping my child rig up the boat?

**A:** It is best to leave your child to the care of the instructors. You can stay and watch your child, but it is requested that you allow your child to learn for his or herself.

**Q:** Are assignments or projects from the program mandatory?

**A:** No, but they do greatly aid in skill development and understanding. Therefore, it is requested that the students complete given assignments or projects.

**Q:** What's "Fun Friday"?

**A:** This is a day when the sailors get to enjoy the skills that they have learned over the past few days or weeks. It normally consists of sailing throughout the harbor, ocean, or possibly even out to the Ventura Pier or Channel Islands Harbor (for the advanced sailors). Extra activities may be provided at the discretion of the instructors which may include: ice cream at the Harbor Village, relay sailing races, scavenger hunts, sponge tag, competitions, races, swimming, etc. The goal is to give the students a good, fun, lasting impression of sailing.



---

**Student and Parent Acknowledgement**

**Ventura Yacht Club**

**VYC Junior Sailing Program**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have reviewed the VYC Junior Sailing Program Reference Guide and agree to the following:

- Adhere to the policies and procedures of the Ventura Yacht Club Junior Sailing Program
- Follow all US Sailing Rules and guidelines
- Take good care of boats and equipment, to include avoiding boat collisions
- Take direction from the coaches
- Treat all team members with respect
- Have a positive attitude, sail safe and have fun!

If rules are not followed, a warning will be given and parent will be notified.  
Possible removal from group may occur if issues continue.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature