

Hello Sailor

Top sailing tips from Pearl

Hastings and St Leonards Sailing club

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Hello Sailors.

This week we will be looking at what to do if you capsize or lose a man (or woman) over board.

Capsizing

Knowing how to deal with a capsize is an important part of learning to sail small boats. Dinghies do capsize occasionally - but it is nothing to worry about. The most common type of capsize occurs when the boat heels too much and capsizes to leeward. This type of capsize is relatively slow and gentle.

If you capsize it is important to not panic and stay with your boat.

Righting a two-person boat

The scoop method is used when capsizing a two person boat.

1. Helm and crew swim to the stern and hold on. Check the rudder is still on.
2. Helm takes the end of the mainsheet or righting line and swims round to the centreboard.
3. Once there, helm stabilises the boat so it doesn't invert (turn upside down).
4. Crew finds the jib sheet and passes it to the helm. Or the righting line is used.
5. Helm can then let go of the mainsheet/righting line and climb onto centreboard holding the jib sheet.
6. Crew floats inside the boat holding on to a toe strap.
7. Helm stands with feet close to hull and leans back on the jib sheet.
8. As the boat comes upright the crew is scooped back on board.
Crew can then help helm back on board.



Watch this video to see this method in action.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zOBQjUEd_4s

Top tip

If you find yourself in the water under a sail, just put your hand above your head to create an airspace and swim to the sail's edge.



Righting a single-hander

1. Swim to the stern and check the rudder.
2. Hold the mainsheet and swim to the daggerboard.
3. To right the boat, pull on the daggerboard or climb onto it.
4. As you pull on the side of the hull, the boat will right itself and you can climb back in.



Watch this video to see this method in action.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sbmJf0GDdgY>

Man overboard recovery

Man overboard does not happen very often but, if it does, these simple steps will help. Your first priority is to get the boat under control and to avoid a capsize.

If you are helming and your crew falls overboard, let go of the jib sheet immediately. If you are crew and the helm falls out, release the jib sheet and grab the tiller to regain control of the boat.

If the boat capsizes, you may be close enough for the person in the water to swim to the boat. If not, you must try and right the boat while keeping the person in the water in sight.

Never leave the boat to try and reach them!

Once you have the boat under control:

1. Turn onto a beam reach and check the position of the man overboard.
2. Sail away for about ten boat lengths. Tack round and check you can still see the man overboard.
3. Bear away onto a broad reach.
4. Approach on a close reach, letting the main out to slow down. Stop with the person by your windward shroud.
5. Pull the person back on board by kneeling in the boat and leaning the windward side towards the water. Grab their buoyancy aid and lean back to helm them in.



Click the link to watch this video and learn how to recover your crew.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGZrK3tVCFk>

Remember. Even the best sailors capsize.

Check out the RYA website for more videos and fun things to do.

<https://www.rya.org.uk>