



## Coaching & Instructing

### Focus on the Sport not the Disability

Like everybody else, sailors with disabilities want to improve their sailing skills. Understanding the needs of the sailors is an essential part of teaching. As always, good communication is the key.

### Allow Time

The most likely modification to a training programme involving people with disabilities is allowing more time for such things as:

- Putting on protective clothing
- Transferring into and out of boats
- Orientating to the boat and maybe adapting the equipment
- Planning for efficient use of personal resources
- Making minor adjustments to the boat or rigging
- Repeating and reinforcing all steps for people with intellectual disabilities.

### Use Experienced Coaches

To emphasise sailing rather than disability, obtain the services of experienced and qualified sailing coaches. We are moving into an age of litigation where qualifications are important. However, to provide support for practice sessions, there will always be a place for the experienced sailor without formal qualifications.

### Follow Existing Training Programmes

Yachting New Zealand have national Learn to Sail/Learn to race and also NCEA programmes which give structure and purpose to training. These may require some modification but form an excellent base for training sailors with disabilities.

### Practice good communication

If you are instructing a blind sailor, consider the communication techniques you use. A good idea is to use a clock analogy: the jib sheet is at 2 o'clock to the boat, or the wind is at 9 o'clock.

It may be necessary to be patient when a person has difficulty with verbal communication. Don't be embarrassed to say that you can't understand, it's not going to be news to them, you may need to get somebody else who knows them better to explain.

***Always ask a sailor if they need your assistance, don't assume everybody always needs help.***

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