

VHYC JUNIOR SAILING PROGRAM (JSP)

CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

VHYC's Junior Sailing Program (JSP) is open to children from age six through age eighteen. The primary goals of the program are for participants to have fun, to learn a love for the water, and to develop as accomplished sailors. Advancement from class to class is based on the accumulation of required skills, experience and on the recommendation of the instructors. In all classes there will be a strong emphasis on proper boat maintenance and respect for Club property. Competitive excellence is encouraged by teaching racing skills, and there is equal emphasis on sportsmanship and seamanship throughout the program. In addition to our JSP classes, there are private lessons available to those who do not wish to participate in full sailing sessions or who would like additional instruction.

MORNING CLASSES (9am-Noon)

TADPOLES (Youngest Beginner) - For children ages 6-7 years old with no prior experience. This program exposes children to all aspects of the water-side of the club with sailing as the primary focus. Children will sail in Optimists (Optis), O'Pen Skiffs and Sonars with their instructors. Other activities include swimming, knot tying and various beach games to get familiar with boat parts and sailing terms. Tadpole classes are offered weekly Tue/Wed/Thur 9am-noon.

ZEPHYRS (Novice) - For children ages 7-9 with little or no experience. Named after the gentle pleasant breeze, the Zephyr class aims to teach mastery of beginner sailing skills in a positive and empowering environment. Classes are taught mainly in Optis, often with two sailors in each boat. Other types of boats may be explored throughout the course including O'Pen Skiffs, Sonars, and 420s. Students learn the basic parts of a boat, how to sail straight, turn, land on the beach, and capsize and right their boats safely.

TRADE WINDS (Young Intermediate) - For children ages 9-11 who have mastered Zephyr skills and are able to sail in an Opti, or other small boat by themselves. Named for the steady

and predictable Trade Winds, sailors in this class will continue to build on a strong sailing foundation, mastering intermediate skills. Sailors will finetune intermediate skills including upwind sailing, detailed sailing theory and speed control. This class will be taught mainly in Optis, with exploration of other boats including O'Pen Skiffs, 420s, Sonars, and Lasers.

CHINOOKS (Older Intermediate) - For children ages 12 to 18 who have completed Zephyrs and Trade Winds, or for size or age reasons should move into sailing larger boats such as the 420, laser, or Sonar. Named for the stronger, gustier Chinook winds, sailors in this class will start to learn the dynamics of sailing with multiple people in a boat (skipper/crew) as well as intermediate boat-handling skills in 420s, Sonars, and lasers, including spinnakers and trapezes. This class is a step toward the Mistral class, and is designed to expose intermediate sailors to a variety of experiences in sailing including both adventure sailing and introductory racing.

GROMS WINDSURFING (Beginner) - Open to all children ages 8-18 to learn windsurfing in group lessons. The morning windsurfing course is designed for beginner to intermediate windsurfers and focuses on foundational skills. Students will learn board balance, basic maneuvers and footwork, rigging, and safety skills. Courses will include a mixture of games, activities and land drills to teach skills and keep students having fun on the water, and when wind conditions allow, students may also explore other types of sailboats as well. Sailors often combine Morning Windsurfing with an afternoon sailing class for a full day on the water.

AFTERNOON CLASSES (1:00pm-4:00pm)

MISTRALS (Advanced) - For children ages 12 to 18 who have mastered Chinook skills and basic 420 boat handling. Named for the strong, powerful breeze from the north of France, sailors have confidence sailing in many different conditions, and are ready to learn advanced skills and boat handling. The class focuses on building a foundation for lifelong sailing through mastery of boat-handling skills in the 420 (including trapeze and spinnaker work), Laser, and Sonar. This course can be a stepping stone to the 420 Race Team, or can simply be a great way to get out on the water and enjoy Vineyard Haven in the summer while learning more about sailing.

OPTI RACE TEAM - An opportunity limited to selected individuals ages 9-14 to participate in Opti racing in a team environment. The Opti Race team is the most advanced group of Opti sailors at VHYC, and admittance to the team is at the discretion of the Sailing Director and Race Coaches based on skill, maturity, and independence. Sailors on the Opti Race Team will continue to develop their racing skills under the guidance of high-level coaches. Sailors will hone advanced racing skills including: roll tacks and gybes, starts, accelerations, tuning, racing tactics, and rules, as well as learning how to prepare and maintain their own equipment.

The Opti Race Team will run as one continuous 8-week session, and it is encouraged that Opti racers participate in the full season. The Opti Race Team practices Monday - Thursday, from 1PM - 4PM. On Friday Afternoons, sailors will participate in the VHYC Junior Race Series. Opti Race Team members can expect to travel and compete in 3-4 regattas on and off island throughout the summer. Travel race fees will apply.

420 RACE TEAM - An opportunity limited to older qualified and selected junior sailors ages 14-18 to participate in 420 racing in a team environment. The 420 Race Team is the most advanced group of 420 sailors at VHYC, and admittance to the team is at the discretion of the Sailing Director and Race Coaches based on skill and experience. The 420 Race Team is conducted in a way that emphasizes team collaboration and coherence in an effort to teach team building, leadership, and interpersonal skills. Sailors will also practice advanced racing skills including: boat handling with trapeze and spinnakers, roll tacking and gybing, starting, speed tuning, tactics, and rules. 420 racers will also learn how to help maintain the fleet of VHYC 420s. The VHYC race team prepares sailors for all types of racing including ISSA high school sailing, the c420 circuit, and SMSA regional competition.

The 420 Race Team will run as one continuous 8-week session, and it is encouraged that racers participate in the full season. The 420 Race Team practices Monday - Thursday, from 1PM - 4PM. On Friday Afternoons, sailors will participate in the VHYC Junior Race Series. Sailors can expect to compete in 3-4 regattas on and off island throughout the summer. Travel race fees will apply.

SHREDDERS WINDSURFING (Advanced) - Open to teens ages 12-18 who have mastered the skills of the morning windsurfing course. The afternoon windsurfing course is designed to teach advanced windsurfing skills including sailing in stronger winds, using harnesses and foot straps, foiling, racing, and an introduction to wing foiling as coaches see fit. When wind

conditions allow, students may also explore other types of sailboats. Students will have the opportunity to participate in at least 1 windsurfing regatta throughout the summer.

JUNIOR INSTRUCTOR TRAINING PROGRAM

The VHYC Junior Sailing Program has a long-standing tradition of having Junior Instructors assist with morning sailing classes. The Junior Instructor role exists as a training opportunity for sailors within the VHYC JSP ages 15-17 who are passionate about continuing to grow their skills as sailors, while also developing as future VHYC instructors. Junior Instructors are paid employees of the club, and will assist Senior Instructors in teaching morning sailing, as well as fulfilling other duties as assigned. Junior Instructors are also expected to continue to grow their sailing skills through enrollment in one of our afternoon programming offerings throughout the duration of their employment.

To apply to be a Junior Instructor at VHYC for Summer 2025, please complete the application [linked here](#). Please note that applications will not be accepted after April 1, 2025, and there will be a limit on the number of Junior Instructor positions offered. For any questions about the Junior Instructor Training Program, please contact manager@vhyc.com or sailingdirector@vhyc.com.