



BoatWorks Frequently Asked Questions

What is BoatWorks?

BoatWorks is a sailing challenge which allows a group of individuals to share an experience and work together to conquer wind, currents, and a special group challenge, all under the watchful eyes of a professional coaching staff.

The group challenge is similar to an obstacle course, but individual boats can't go it alone. Success requires extensive collaboration between boats, and hand-held radios and communications skills prove vital.

What's the typical schedule?

A BoatWorks Agenda normally includes the following segments:

- Welcome/Introduction/ Objectives
- Safety Briefing and Basic Sailing Concepts
- On the Water Practice
- Lunch Break & Mid-Day De-Brief
- BoatWorks Group Challenge
- Post Experience De-Brief and Refreshments

Half day sessions forgo the lunch break and have a slightly compressed time frame.

I don't know how to sail, and I'm afraid of the water! Can I do this?

BoatWorks requires no prior sailing experience. Through a fast-paced agenda you'll learn enough about sailing to conquer any fears as well as the Group Challenge. Each boat will have a professional coach aboard who will serve as an instructor in the morning, and as a safety officer/consultant during the afternoon Group Challenge.

Performance is much more highly correlated with your team's ability to work together. Often boats with experienced participants on board find themselves struggling to keep up with boats completely staffed by never-before sailors.

I doubt I'm up for a difficult physical experience. Is sailing for me?

Sailing is for everyone, aged 6 to 106. Amputees and quadriplegics sail for pleasure and even race competitively. Sailboats are equipped with labor saving devices which enable people of all fitness levels to control them, without overtaxing their bodies. Additionally, roles aboard the boat require varying levels of agility from zero to that of your average person. You and your team mates will work together to determine the best configuration, and if you have a medical condition which limits range of motion, your coach can advise you on the best role for you.

I think I'm prone to motion sickness ... does GEL have advice for me?

While motion sickness can affect anyone, even accomplished sailors and fighter pilots, GEL has never, ever, ever had to return a person to shore due to motion sickness during one of our events.

This is because motion sickness occurs when the inner ear, the eyes, and other areas of the body that detect motion send unexpected or conflicting messages to the brain. Seasickness may affect people on boats when they are down below, or in a cabin and their inner ear senses the motion of big waves, but their eyes do not register corresponding information.

GEL events rarely take place in locations with big waves, and participants don't have to spend any time down below or in a cabin. Your eyes and ears should always be in agreement, even if you and your teammates are not. ☺

Can I do anything to alleviate or prevent symptoms?

Stay on the deck, look at the horizon, and concentrate on your role in controlling the direction of the boat's travel. If you are engaged in driving or helping the driver by controlling a sail, the gentle motion of the sailboat changing direction will not be unexpected.

According to the medical community, you also can take prescription and nonprescription medication to prevent or reduce symptoms. Most medications work best if you take them 30-60 minutes before you travel. The medications work in different ways.

Many people try other methods of preventing motion sickness, such as taking powdered ginger capsules or wearing acupressure wristbands. We believe it is safe to try these methods, and they might offer some relief; however, there is little evidence that they prevent motion sickness.

We encourage you to consult your physician prior to engaging in any new physical activity such as sailing, tennis, jogging, biking or exuberant gardening.