



Claytor Lake Sailing Association and Sailing Club at Virginia Tech Summer Camp 2026 Sailing Instructions:

- Location:** Green Boating Center, 6620 Ben H Bolen Dr., Dublin, VA 24084.
- Age Level:** Students must be 8-16.
- Skill Level:** Beginning Sailing for Youth. For first-time sailors and those who have sailed before but need a review.
- Swimming Test:** All participants must pass a swimming/water safety exam on the first day of instruction. This includes a 50-yard swim and an age-appropriate tread time.

Description:

An in-depth introduction to all things sailing. The focus will be on boat nomenclature, basic boat rigging, basic steering, and general safety knowledge including capsizing and self-rescue. The class introduces sailing skills such as tacking, jibing, getting out-of-irons, points of sail, sailing upwind, and downwind, weather and wind awareness, and basic right-of-way rules. An introduction to knots and their uses and sailing nomenclature activities will precede on-the-water events.

Instructors will use games/exercises to incorporate teamwork and challenges to build confidence and excitement about the sport of sailing. By the end of the weekend, first-time sailors will have developed basic sailing skills and knowledge. Usually, first-time sailors along with returning sailors will learn how to sail a fixed course, sail solo, and exhibit good boat-handling skills.

When:

- Session 1:** **August 2-5, 2026**
Days 1 and 2: 1 PM – 5 PM
Days 3 and 4: 11 AM – 5 PM
- Session 2:** **August 6-9, 2026**
Days 1 and 2: 1 PM – 5 PM
Days 3 and 4: 11 AM – 5 PM

What to Bring:

Swimsuit, t-shirt, hat, sunglasses, **sunscreen**, water bottle, snacks, lunch on days 3 and 4, water shoes, towel, bug spray, and lifejacket (if applicable)

Cost: FREE, but a donation is recommended

Notes

Location:

Follow GPS mapping to the entrance of Claytor Lake State Park. Tell the parking attendant that you are just there to drop your child off from camp, and they will let you through without having to purchase a pass.

Follow signs to the Swimming Area parking lot. As you begin walking towards the beach, our facility, the Green Boating Center (the heart on the map below), is to the right of the Claytor Lake Swimming Area.



Why we chose these boats:

Throughout this camp we will be utilizing club owned Optimist and Flying Junior sailboats as the primary vehicles of instruction.

Optimist (Opti)	Flying Junior (FJ)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Optimists are designed for kids. They can handle them without danger, fear or back-strain.• Single-handed is best. They didn't learn to ride a bike on a tandem.• Over 150,000 kids who race Opti's in over 110 countries cannot be wrong.• Former Optimist sailors were over 85% of medal winners at the last Olympics.• Most sailing/yacht clubs use Optis for beginning youth instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FJ's are a good introduction to multiple- handed boats depending on age and sailing experience.• Most high school and college sailing organizations use these boats. (including SCVT!)• Double-handed boats help teach teamwork and synchronicity on the water.• FJ's are good segues into trapeze and Spinnaker sailing.• The FJ was designed to help train for an Olympic-class sailboat.

Learning Methods/Goals

The purpose of defining objectives is to identify what a sailor should know by the end of a 20 hr program. The following objectives are proposed, divided into four categories of training:

Safety

Seamanship

Boat Handling

Boating Rules

Daily lesson plans will be written and noted on by all instructors. They are a necessary item in assessing and following the progress of both individual students and a class as a whole. Lesson plans are an important medium for evaluation within a curriculum. While they are used to plan how a curriculum will be executed, they also serve to document the success of daily goals, activities, and teaching methods.

While no curriculum fits any student perfectly, this curriculum is designed to meet the needs, as closely as it can, of as many students as possible. Not every student will complete all of the syllabus tasks in the one weekend, 20 hour session; there is a significant difference between the ability of an 8-year-old and a 14-year-old to absorb new information. The curriculum will be taught using recognized US Sailing instruction forms of communication:

Auditory (*Hear it*)

Visual (*See it*)

Kinesthetic (*Do it*)

The methods will include:

- Lectures (*Chalk Talks*)
- Demonstrations
- Land drills
- Water drills
- Debriefings (*Reviews*)

Finally, and perhaps, most important, this syllabus is a guideline of goals/objectives intended to offer our instructors an organized platform from which to provide greater depth, and junior sailors an opportunity to learn more, without making the program a "school." Sailors should end the session wanting to come back; only in this way might they become life-long sailor.

Syllabus/Program Objectives

Safety:

- Follow Program rules
- Be safety conscious
- Stay protected from the sun
- Use safety whistle appropriately
- Avoid collisions
- Put on and take off a PFD while in the water
- Capsize and recover
- Execute a squall/storm drill

Seamanship:

- Be comfortable in an Opti and/or FJ on the water
- Tie a figure 8 knot, square knot, cleat knot, bowline, half hitch, and clove hitch
- Rig and derig the sailboats
- Name the parts on an Opti and/or FJ
- Identify where the wind is coming from
- Identify points of sail
- Respect the equipment including proper stowing of lines, sails, rudder and tiller
- Steer responsibly when being towed

Boat Handling:

- Leaving the dock
- Returning to the dock
- Maintain proper body position and weight in the boat
- Hold the tiller and sheet(s) properly
- Gybe
- Tack
- Sail upwind
- Sail downwind
- Sail a fixed course

Boating Rules:

- Starboard/port tack right-of-way
- Windward/leeward right-of-way
- Basic crossing/passing rules
- Motorboat/sailboat/paddleboat right-of-way
- Rounding a mark

Program Rules

1. All students must have a parent/guardian signed waiver of responsibility administered by the Sailing Instructors.
2. Students must pass a 50-yard swim and age-appropriate tread time to be allowed on/in the water.
3. Students must arrive on time with appropriate clothing and required equipment (swim shorts, hat, t-shirt, sunscreen, sunglasses, bug spray, water, snacks, water shoes).
4. Students must demonstrate appropriate behavior, be attentive, and respect instructors and other students. We have a zero tolerance rule for inappropriate behavior, students may be asked to sit out from this program for any violation of the rules.
- 5. All students and instructors must wear PFD's when on the GBC dock and in/on the water.**
6. Students must complete safety and seamanship activities before being allowed to "solo" a sailboat.
7. Students will be given a skills assessment mid-session, and again at the end to provide feedback.
8. This program is offered on a first-come first served basis and the number of students accepted is limited based on the number of instructors we have working in each session to maintain an appropriate student to instructor ratio.

NOTE:

Sailing is an incredibly weather-dependent sport. We will do our best to get each sailor out on the water as much as possible, but the following daily schedules may be modified to accommodate the day's weather conditions. Please have kids come dressed for water activities every day.

Daily Instruction

Depending on the demographics of each session, students may be split into two groups for instructional time. The two groups will be split based on age and skill level of the children, and this will be decided on the first day of camp (but subject to change throughout the session). While both groups will receive the same information, the group for younger children will receive it in a more direct way to help them comprehend and remember basic skills and terminology.

The older [or more experienced] group will explore the information a little deeper and have more complex chalk talks. Many of the games will be altered slightly for the older group. Our intention is for the group of older students to be small and therefore get more individual assistance from an instructor.

Summer Camp Day 1, 1 PM – 5 PM:

1 - 1:15	Drop off, collect paperwork, check students in, get safety waivers signed
1:15 - 2	Instructor Introductions / Swim test in the Swimming Area
2 - 3	Ice breakers (Hula Hoop Puzzle), snack/water break, transition to instruction - Hula Hoop Puzzle – All students link arms, and must pass a hula hoop from one side to the other without breaking the chain.
3 - 3:30	Instruction- Safety presentation (as listed above)
3:30 - 4	Activity – Team building and proper life jacket fit - Sponge Relay Race – Two teams, one container of water, one empty one, and a sponge. If a team member gets a question right, they can fill a sponge and run to squeeze the water into the bailer. First team to the line of their bailer wins. - Musical Life Jackets – Musical chairs, except you must put on a lifejacket instead of sitting in a chair.
4 – 4:30	Instruction – Boat Parts (both FJ and Opti) and Knot Tying (as listed above) - Game with boat parts- word bank on a whiteboard and let kids guess which part is which as we go through them. Start with the Opti, and when we get to the FJ kids will already have some idea of what's what. - Knot tying on a 2x4 we have cleats attached to - Can You Knot? – Campers test their knot skills by attempting to tie a counselor to a chair/tree/etc. (Along with the explanation that this game is not allowed in any other circumstances)
4:30 - 5	Activity – Debrief and game - Captain's Coming: Simon Says with nautical terms and teamwork to encourage listening for key terms we will be using out on the water

Summer Camp Day 2, 1 PM – 5 PM:

1 - 1:30	Review instruction from Day 1 (Safety, Boat Parts, and knot tying)
1:30 - 2	Instruction – Rigging the boats <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Begin with instructors going over how to rig each boat (Opti and FJ), follow with interactive portion
2 - 3	Activity – Practice rigging and derigging boats
3 - 3:30	Break/Activity – Snack/water break and team Opti rigging races
3:30 - 4	Instruction – Wind direction and Rules of Seamanship <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Done using whiteboards and magnetic sailboat models to showcase points of sail and boat position relative to wind direction- Wind direction: windward/leeward, no sail zone, upwind/downwind, reaching, port/starboard (will give kids a handout to take home and practice!)- Rules of Seamanship: Starboard/port tack right-of way, windward/leeward right-of-way, basic crossing/passing rules, motorboat/sailboat/paddleboat right-of- way, room at a mark
4 – 5	Activity – Wind direction and Rules of Seamanship <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Sheeting in and out scenarios- ‘Where is the wind?’ (having kids identify where the wind is coming from by looking at things like the sail, the telltales, the flag, etc.)- Time permitting, any on-land activity the kids liked or want to try

Summer Camp Day 3, 11 AM – 5 PM:

11 - 11:45	Instruction – Review rigging, wind and safety
11:45 - 12	Activity – Finish rigging the boats
12 – 12:30	Instruction – Capsizing demonstration <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Explaining what a capsize is and how to right a boat.- An instructor on the water with one child as their crew performing a capsize drill by taking the boat down and righting it; once per child until they've all participated.- Kids will practice capsizing in the boat their group has been training with.
12:30 – 12:45	Break – Lunch <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Kids may start sailing as they finish their lunch.
12:45 - 4	Activity – Sailing! <ul style="list-style-type: none">- We will conduct a variety of on-water activities in roughly 45-minute rotations, with the primary focus of helping kids take those classroom skills and translate them to boat handling skills.- We do not have enough boats to have all the kids on the water at once, so roughly half will be on and half will be off. This will also provide them with a chance to get out of the sun for a little bit and cool down.
4 – 5	Activity – Derigging and debrief

Summer Camp Day 4, 11 AM – 5 PM:

11 - 11:30	Instruction – Review all material and rig boats
11:30 – 12:30	Activity – Launch boats, begin on-water rotations
12:30 – 12:45	Break – Lunch - Chance to play a game or continue sailing after finishing their lunch
12:45 – 4	Activity – Sailing with CLSA Keelboats - Split the kids up amongst the available keel boats and have each boat owner show them how the skills they learned on the dinghies apply to keelboats. - Sail around Claytor Lake for awhile before rafting the boats together and letting the kids get out and swim If for any reason we are unable to secure enough CLSA keelboat owners to safely sail with all of the campers, or the weather is ill-suited for keelboats, we will instead continue sailing the Optis and FJs off the Green Boating Center dock.
4 – 5	Activity – Derigging and debrief (and a game if time allows)