



## **BECOMING A SCOW SKIPPER**

**As Approved by the Board on September 13, 2021**

Once you join SCOW, becoming a SCOW Skipper allows you to reserve and sail SCOW sailboats. If you are new to sailing this is a big step toward what may be one of the most fulfilling things you can do throughout the rest of your life. SCOW has two types of boats: six Flying Scots and three 25-foot Catalina cruisers. Whether you are a new or experienced sailor, before you can reserve and skipper our boats, you must demonstrate you can sail safely and know SCOW's procedures by passing both written and on-the-water tests. SCOW's formal policies regarding skipper qualifications and boat use are on the SCOW website ([www.scow.org/bylaws](http://www.scow.org/bylaws)). This document is only an outline of the steps you follow to qualify as a skipper. For questions about becoming a SCOW Skipper, contact the Skipper Director at [skipper@scow.org](mailto:skipper@scow.org).

### **HOW TO BECOME A SCOW SKIPPER**

#### **If you are new to sailing, to become a certified Flying Scot Skipper ...**

1. Take the SCOW Basic Sailing Training (contact [training@scow.org](mailto:training@scow.org)) or take a comparable training that will teach you how to safely skipper a sloop-rigged daysailer.
2. Familiarize yourself with the SCOW Skipper Requirements and Boat Use Policy and Flying Scot Skipper Information File (SIF).
3. Complete the open book (not open test) written exam - no time limit - and return to Skipper Director for grading.
4. Complete an NASBLA-approved boating safety course and get a Boating Safety Certificate. The Coast Guard Auxiliary and the DC Harbor Police both offer courses at various locations. BoatUs offers an on-line course (DC course is preferred).
5. After passing the written exam, you are eligible to refine your skills with assistance from a SCOW tutor. Contact the Skipper Director to arrange for tutoring.
6. Complete the on-the-water checkout to confirm that you have the skills to take full responsibility as skipper for the safety of a boat and crew.
7. Fill out the Skipper Application/Agreement and sign it. Submit this along with a copy of your Boating Safety Certificate to [skipper@scow.org](mailto:skipper@scow.org). Pay the applicable fees in accordance with SCOW Dues and Fees Policy.

#### **If you already have prior training and sufficient experience at the helm to competently and safely skipper a Flying Scot or other sloop-rigged daysailer, to become a certified SCOW Flying Scot Skipper ...**

1. Familiarize yourself with the SCOW Skipper Requirements and Boat Use Policy and Flying Scot Skipper Information File (SIF).

2. Familiarize yourself with the rigging, launching and sailing of the club Flying Scots. Come to Social Sail on Thursday evenings at 6:00 p.m. and help launch and rig a Scot and go for a short sail with a SCOW skipper. Help unrig and put away the boat. Crew during Wednesday Night Racing (WNR) beginning at 5:30 pm. Seek opportunities to do day-sails with SCOW skippers on SCOW boats, especially if you will be given the opportunity to take the helm. Repeat these activities as needed to familiarize yourself with SCOW procedures and to practice boat handling. Be especially aware of the need to demonstrate the ability to launch the boat from our docks and to dock safely and effectively under different wind/tide conditions.
3. Demonstrate your basic sailing skills and familiarization with SCOW procedures to a certified SCOW trainer or tutor. Contact the Skipper Director at [skipper@scow.org](mailto:skipper@scow.org) to arrange for this assessment. This may include a telephone or other interview in which you will be asked about how much time you have spent as a skipper on Flying Scots or comparable boats, and the circumstances of this experience, e.g., how were boats stored prior to use, what was needed to get underway and return, what were conditions like on the water, etc.
4. Complete steps 3-7 for Flying Scots above.

**If you have no experience sailing a keel boat, to become a certified Cruiser Skipper ...**

1. Take the SCOW Cruiser Training (contact [training@scow.org](mailto:training@scow.org)) that will teach you how to safely skipper a keel boat.
2. Familiarize yourself with the SCOW Skipper Requirements and Boat Use Policy and Cruiser Skipper Information File (SIF).
3. Complete the open book (not open test) written exam - no time limit - and return to Skipper Director for grading.
4. Complete an NASBLA-approved boating safety course and get a Boating Safety Certificate. The Coast Guard Auxiliary and the DC Harbor Police both offer courses at various locations. BoatUs offers an on-line course (DC course is preferred).
5. After passing the written exam, you are eligible to refine your skills with assistance from a SCOW tutor. Contact the Skipper Director to arrange for tutoring.
6. Complete the on-the-water checkout to confirm that you have the skills to take full responsibility as skipper for the safety of a boat and crew.
7. Fill out the Skipper Application/Agreement and sign it. Submit this along with a copy of your Boating Safety Certificate to [skipper@scow.org](mailto:skipper@scow.org). Pay the applicable fees in accordance with SCOW Dues and Fees Policy. Obtain towing insurance as detailed in the Cruiser SIF.

**Effective January 1, 2022, if you already have training and experience skippering a keel boat, to become a certified Cruiser Skipper ...**

1. Contact the Skipper Director and Training Director, who will jointly assess your prior training and experience and determine whether you are an appropriate candidate to qualify as a skipper without taking SCOW's training class or an equivalent keelboat class. If so, they will provide a plan for certification. If the plan includes tutoring, it will be limited to familiarizing the candidate with SCOW's policies and boats. You should not expect tutoring to be offered as a substitute for a training class or to remedy gaps in your fundamental skills.
2. Familiarize yourself with the SCOW Skipper Requirements and Boat Use Policy and Cruiser Skipper Information File (SIF).
3. Complete steps 3-7 for cruisers above.