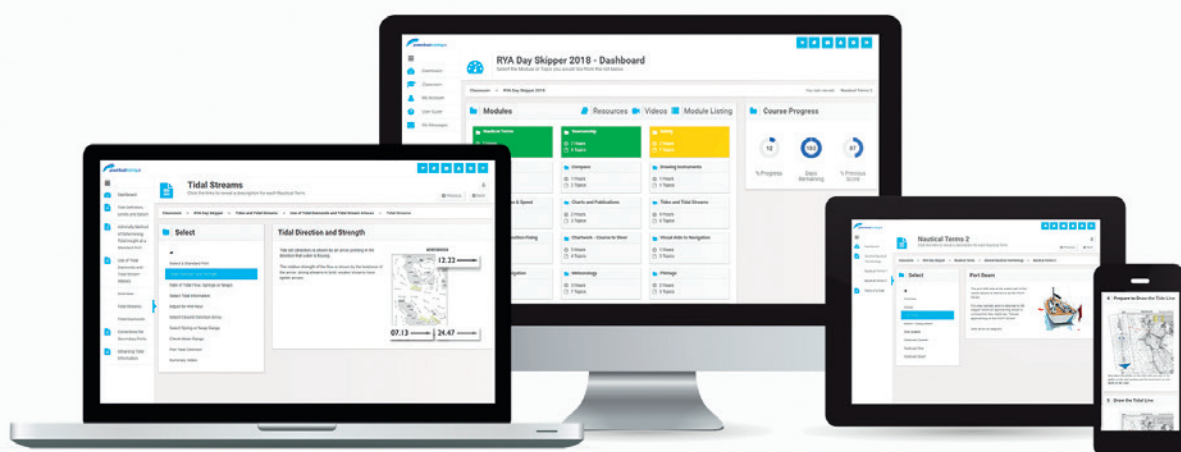




**Paul Glatzel** is a RYA Powerboat Trainer and wrote the RYA Powerboat Handbook and the RYA Advanced Powerboat Handbook. He runs Powerboat Training UK in Poole & Lynton [www.powerboattraininguk.co.uk](http://www.powerboattraininguk.co.uk)

IN ASSOCIATION WITH  
**SPINLOCK, LIFESAVING TECHNOLOGY**



# Let's go boating: From our Sofa!

Whilst 'land-locked' during the current restrictions, what can you do? **Paul Glatzel** discusses ways that you can get a 'boating fix' sorted all from the comfort of your sofa ...

If you can't get afloat, how can you get a bit of boating sorted while your boat stays safely tucked up? What about furthering your knowledge with an online theory course? There are a number of theory courses the RYA offer that can be taken online, so let's have a look at the options.

If you haven't done your VHF radio course, then you really do need to sort it, and what better way than to

do so when you have a bit of time on your hands? The RYA VHF course takes a day in a classroom, and the online version covers exactly the same ground. The course works through various sections with a really good use of graphics and interactive exercises. All the calls that you could ever make are explained, and there are recordings to listen to. Some of the modules even allow you to control a VHF radio simulator and

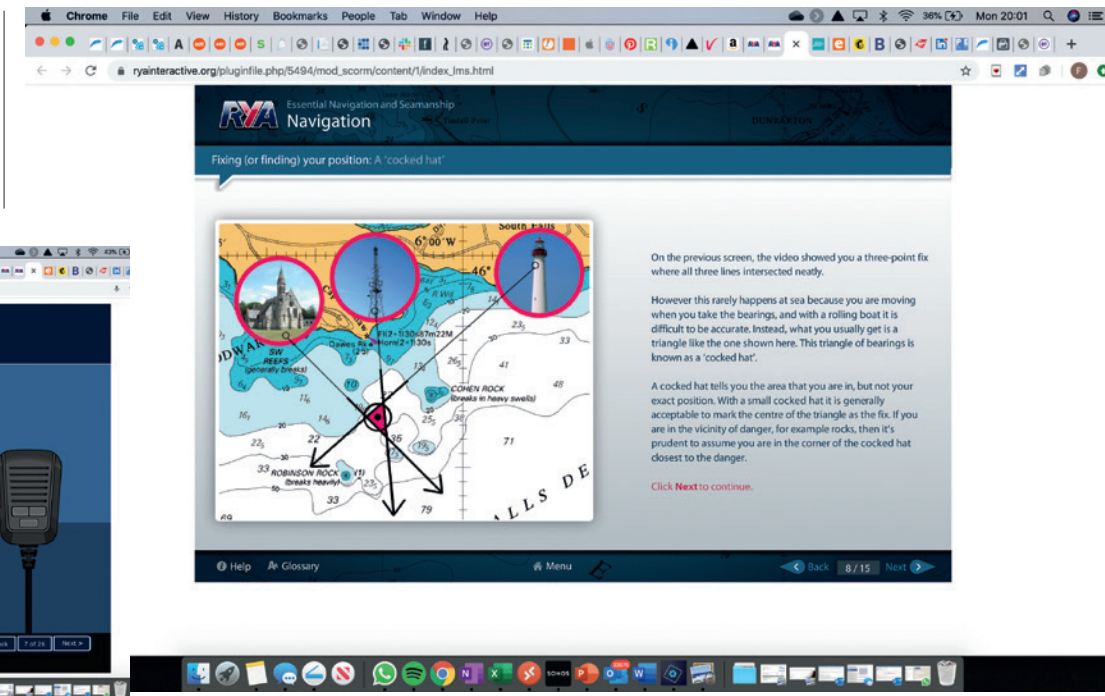
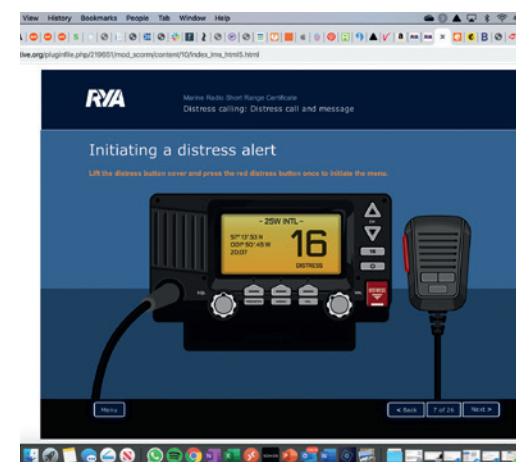
select menu options, record calls to then listen to and see the way that the radio works in detail. The course comes with a book, and at the end of the course there is an assessment to enable you to obtain your VHF licence. This assessment must be done in a training centre's classroom. Even if you already have your licence, what a great way to brush up!

If you want to develop your navigation skills, there are three

courses that could suit. At the top end is the Yachtmaster Theory course. Equivalent to the six days you would spend in a classroom, this is a full-on very detailed course aimed at very experienced boaters typically heading towards operating commercially. To do this course you should hold the Dayskipper Theory certificate or be able to prove that you are at that level. The Dayskipper Theory course is perfect if you have a few days available and want to properly develop the navigation skills to navigate along a coastline in a powerboat (or sailboat for that matter). The Dayskipper Theory course suits those who have a little boating knowledge, but even if you are just starting out, it's perfect. These two courses are actually created by centres and then authorised by the RYA as being suitable. Like any course you consider, shop around and make sure you look at the actual course, as the quality of the online element of the course can vary hugely between providers. With both of these online courses you will get a course pack, which includes RYA charts, coursework, and a plotter and dividers. Some even give you a navigation case. Prices vary, but about £300 gets you a good course.

If you want to start a bit lower, the

RYA have created the online Essential Navigation and Seamanship course. Equivalent to the two-day classroom course, this is a perfect progression from an RYA Powerboat Level 2 course. Prices for this course will be about £100.



## Other options

If you don't have it already, the Navionics chart app is a must-have. Get the one covering the UK and take a virtual tour around our shores. You'll learn loads from spending some time looking closely at an area. You could even start to plan your next trip. If you are feeling a bit more adventurous, download the charts for other parts of the world and dream about that next trip to sunnier climes. The Navionics app is chargeable, but if you fancy it you can look at the same for free on your laptop - search 'Navionics web app'.

When it comes to planning, why not spend some time producing passage plans between locations, and also creating pilotage plans for

entry into ports and harbours you know well - but also for ones you'd like to visit. Given that it's a legal requirement when you go to sea to produce plans, this will be time well spent.

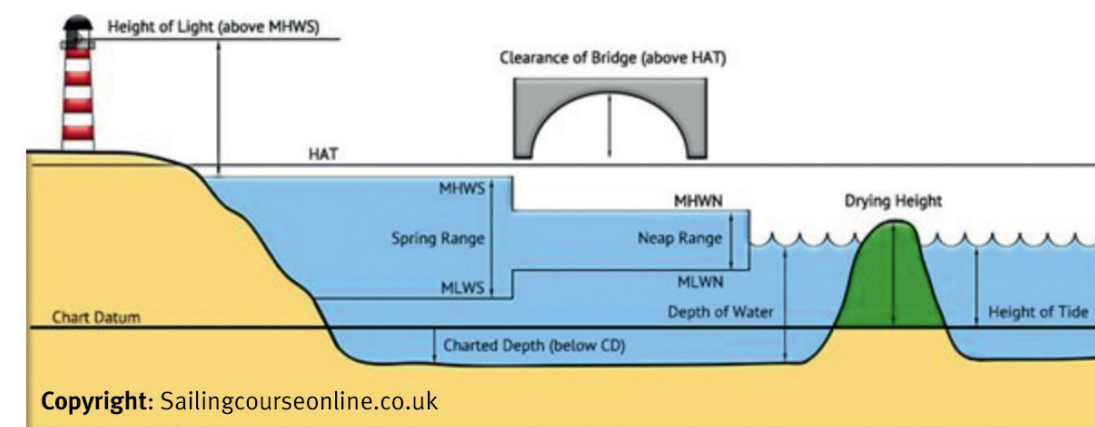
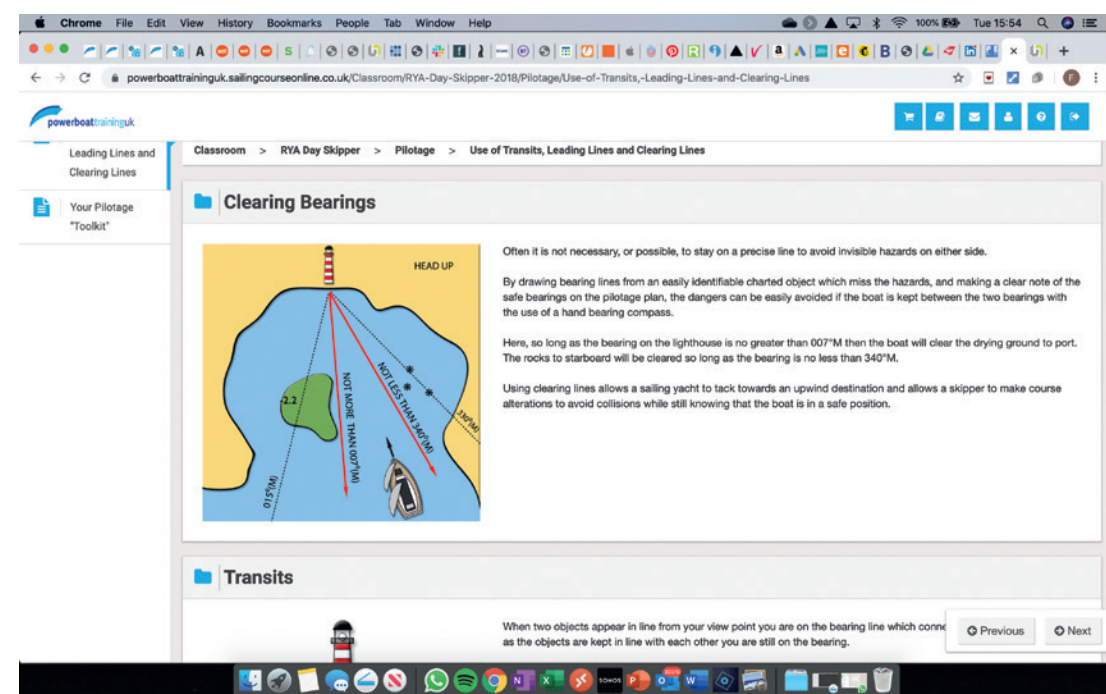
If you want to do a bit of reading, there are plenty of books out there about boating. Of course, the RYA produce loads of great books and the best way to get access to them all is to download the RYA Books app. You can subscribe for a year and get access to all 68 RYA e-books for £68. It sounds like a lot, but when you think how much information is available, then at £1 per book for the year it's a good buy.

What about signing up and reading a few Marine Accident

Investigation Branch reports? If you haven't seen these, the MAIB is all about preventing the reoccurrence of incidents on boats, and whatever size of boat you are on, whether you are a commercial skipper or a leisure user, everyone can learn from others' misfortunes.

If you want to get geeky and learn the details of tides or better understand propeller selection, then Google is your friend. As we all know, there's a wealth of information out there - but beware those that sound knowledgeable but are actually clueless!

So whatever you choose to do, make the most of any downtime you have and keep boating alive! [PBR](#) [#keepboatingalive](#)



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There are some important concepts and terms you need to understand before you can calculate the height of tide and hence depth of water. Select the tabs on the left to reveal the tidal information online.

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As well as an essential on water safety item, Spinlock lifejackets are designed to help you make your day on the water more enjoyable.

Simple to fit, easy to adjust, comfortable all day long, Spinlock Deckvest LITE, Deckvest CENTO Junior and Alto Waist Flotation are specifically designed for the powerboat and leisure market and available in a range of colours of finishes.

