

Choosing the right simulator

The windsurfing simulator has been for many years a necessity to gain windsurfing recognition. However, some confusion exists about what is required and how it should be constructed. The following information and examples from RYA centres should help answer your questions.

The simulator is one of the many aids available to you when teaching windsurfing. It is not the essence of the activity but if used well, can be very effective for the initial introduction and to return to for further coaching at all levels.

There are few simulator manufacturers, so many centres use the local welder to produce one to their own design.

Basic simulators



All recognised windsurfing centres need a basic simulator, preferably with the following characteristics:

- low to the ground
- stable base
- solid assembly
- damping system
- realistic board
- suitable rig
- mobility (if you need to move it)
- clear wind location
- sufficient space around it



Basic stance or 'funboard' simulators

The basic stance, or what used to be known as a 'funboard' simulator, is necessary for intermediate and advanced recognition and should be sufficient for teaching techniques such as harness work and footstraps, and the coaching system Fastfwd.

Familiarity is key, so a modern, durable board similar to the one your

students will be using on the water is the best option.

Lack of placing options often dictates that a rig without a sail is used. However, when at all possible you should use a small fully-battened rig. The boom height must be adjustable and fitted with a pair of harness lines.

The pulley system on most is a length of shock cord made into several loops with shackles on each end and a webbing adjustment.

A safety leash should also be fitted and attached from the main structure, half way along the pulley system (if possible) and on to the boom.

The board

Place on a soft surface or welded structure in a position that allows the student to face the instructor (looking upwind). It should also be easily changed to enable a beam to a broad reach.

The wind

Usually created by attaching a pulley system (as described above) that can be adjusted depending on the desired wind strength and direction and the size of the student. For normal simulators the wind strength should be sufficient for the student to sit comfortably outboard in an efficient planing stance and able to move back into the straps.

Transitions simulator

A useful simulator and easy to construct, this can literally be a board with a rig in a clear area. Placing a matt or board bag under the board will enable the simulator to be manoeuvred through all points of sail as the transition is demonstrated or practised.