

Windsurfing - Overview

Windsurfing is one of the most popular racing games in the world that gives you both a nailbiting excitement and a thrilling experience. Though the origin of the sport is in Pennsylvania, USA, many countries participate interestedly in this sport. This sport is fun, excitement, and thrill, all at the same time.



The history of Windsurfing sport can be traced back to 1948, when Newman Darby, a 20- year-old American created a floating board, which looked more like a watercraft with two hulls in parallel. He mounted a sail on it.

In 1964, he invented a universal joint, that he used to connect the mast of the rig to the board, which by now had a dagger board, a tailfin and a kite-shaped sail. This was the beginning of the chapter in the history of windsurfing what a lot of people see as the true birth of windsurfing.



Windsurfing-Objective

In this water sport, the surfer needs to ride on a board of 2.5 to 3 meters and race with other surfers by sailing. The surfer whose board touches the finishing line first is declared as winner. Both men and women can participate in this sport.

Windsurfing –Regulating Bodies

All the rules and regulations of Windsurfing is governed by the International Sailing Federation (ISF). However, each country has its own governing body which acts under ISF. With slightest difference, most of the governing bodies have some common rules. To promote, protect, and represent the interest of windsurfers from UK, an institution named UK Windsurfing Association (UKWA) works.

Yet another national governing body from UK, the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) works for promoting and regulating some water sports.

Types of Windsurfing

There are two types of windsurfing that are included in championships –

Indoor Windsurfing

In this kind of surfing, a massive indoor pool is constructed. Powerful fans are installed to propel the boards along the pool. The fans create wind. The competitions held include slalom style races, jumping, and more.

Indoor windsurfing competitions are held especially in Europe during winter. One of the better known, the PWA/ UKWA World Indoor Windsurfing Championships are held during the annual London Boat Show at the Excel Exhibition Centre in London in January.

Youth Windsurfing

Windsurfing is so popular in the world that, people of different age groups are taking interest in this sport. Young children and young adults between 5-18 years can participate in Youth of age also. Windsurfing is suitable for children as young as 5, with several board and sail brands producing "Kids Rigs" to provide these kid windsurfers.

In some countries, certain organizations exist to provide entry into the sport in a semi-formal or club-style environment (The RYA's Team 15 scheme). If children want to get more involved in racing, they can go to the RYA 'zone squad'.

Windsurfing - Participating Countries

Windsurfing comes under water sports event. Since its inception, the popularity and demand of this game by different nations grew exponentially. Many Asian and non-Asian countries have their active participation in this category of game. Countries like Germany, Australia, Argentina, France, Japan, and USA have a dominating effect upon other countries in this game.

The following table shows the last five championships held with their host cities.

Year	Host Country	City
2015	Oman	Muscat
2014	Spain	Santander
2013	Brazil	Bouziós
2012	Spain	Cadiz
2011	Australia	Perth

Windsurfing - Equipment

When it comes to learning any extreme sport, the participant needs to know which all equipment are required for the sport. There are a few equipments for actual game as well as there are also a few for the safety of the player. Let us see in brief, which equipments are required for Windsurfing –

The Surfing Board

The surfboard is an elongated piece of board that you stand on, and has one or more fins and dagger boards (on some models) underwater. It is 2.5-3 meters long.

The boards are made of either Expanded Polystyrene Foam, Epoxy, Fiberglass, PVC or Carbon Sandwich. Lighter boards are good for Wave and Speed windsurfers while the beginners should start with heavier and larger boards.

The Rig

It consists of a sail, mast, and a boom. The boom is the bit you hold on to and the mast is used for support. A cord should run from the boom to the bottom of the mast, this is the uphaul and is used to pull the sail up.

Helmet

It protects the surfer's head from any minor to fatal injuries that might happen during the sport.



Surfing Board



Rig



Helmet

Sunglasses

They protect your eyes from the direct sunlight as well as light reflected from water. Wearing sunglasses saves you from tiring the eyes due to light and winds.

Shoes

They protect your toes and feet from the possibility of bruises or scratches.

Wetsuit

It is a skintight outfit that makes you comfortable inside the water. It is made of foamed neoprene, which keeps the body warm.

Rescue Coat

This is a light weight life jacket that you need to wear during the sport to save you from drowning into the water.



Sunglasses



Shoes



Rescue Coat

Windsurfing - Playing Environment

Windsurfing is played as the sport of competition as well as recreation. Since this water sport depends on the wind element, this sport is mainly played in the area of large natural water bodies.

Outdoor Windsurfing

In outdoor version, Windsurfing takes place in huge waterbodies such as sea, or large lakes surrounded by nature.



It is mandatory for the surfer to use the safety equipment as the risk involved in this version of sport is more. All the elements of the game are natural hence this version is more challenging.

Indoor Windsurfing

Few years back it was impossible to indulge in this sport unless you reach a large waterbody. Today, Windsurfing can also be an indoor activity. It can be played in a large reservoir that looks like a swimming pool with fans installed alongside to create wind.



Windsurfing - Important Terms

Here are some important terms used in the domain of Windsurfing –

- **Abandon** – It is a race that the race committee withdraws. It is void but may be resailed.
- **Clear Astern and Clear Ahead** – A boat is a clear astern of another when her hull and equipment in normal position are behind a line abeam from the aftermost point of the other boat's hull and equipment in normal position.

The other boat is clear ahead. They overlap when neither is clear astern. However, they also overlap when a boat between them overlaps both. These terms always apply to boats on the same tack.

- **Fetching** – A boat is fetching a mark when she is in a position to pass to windward of it and leave it on the required side without changing tack.

- **Finish** – A boat finishes when any part of her hull, or crew or equipment in normal position, crosses the finishing line from the course side. However, she has not finished if after crossing the finishing line she –
 - Takes a penalty
 - Corrects an error made at the line
 - Continues to sail the course
- **Interested Party** – A person who has a near personal interest in the decision.
- **Keep Clear** – A boat keeps clear of a right-of-way boat in the following conditions –
 - If the right-of-way boat can sail her course with no need to take avoiding action.
 - When the boats are overlapped, if the right-of-way boat can also change course in both directions without immediately making contact.
- **Leeward and Windward** – A boat's leeward side is the side that is away from the wind. The other side is her windward side.
- **Mark-Room** – Room for a boat to leave a mark on the required side.
- **Obstruction** – An object that a boat could not pass without changing course substantially, if she were sailing directly towards it and one of her hull lengths from it. An object that can be safely passed on only one side and an area so designated by the sailing instructions are also obstructions.
- **Postpone** – A postponed race is delayed before its scheduled start but may be started or abandoned later.
- **Course** – A course a boat would sail to finish as soon as possible in the absence of the other boats referred to in the rule using the term. A boat has no proper course before her starting signal.
- **Racing** – A boat is racing from her preparatory signal until she finishes and clears the finishing line and marks or retires, or until the race committee signals a general recall, postponement or abandonment.
- **Room** – The space a boat needs in the existing conditions, including space to comply with her obligations while maneuvering promptly in a seamanlike way.

How to Windsurf?

Windsurfing is a game of balance, so understanding the ways to keep oneself upright on the surfing board and knowing the skills needed to stay afloat once in

the water, is very important to be a surfer. Let us discuss some of the basic steps that are supposed to be practiced before getting into serious surfing.

Preparing for Windsurfing

- Wear a wetsuit, shoes, rescue coat, and helmet.
- Place a whistle in the pocket of the rescue coat.
- Keep personal flotation device with you.
- Check the status of the boat, board, rig, and allied equipment for good condition.

How to Windsurf

- Push the board out into deep water, until the fin is clear of the bottom.
- Get a sense of the wind direction.



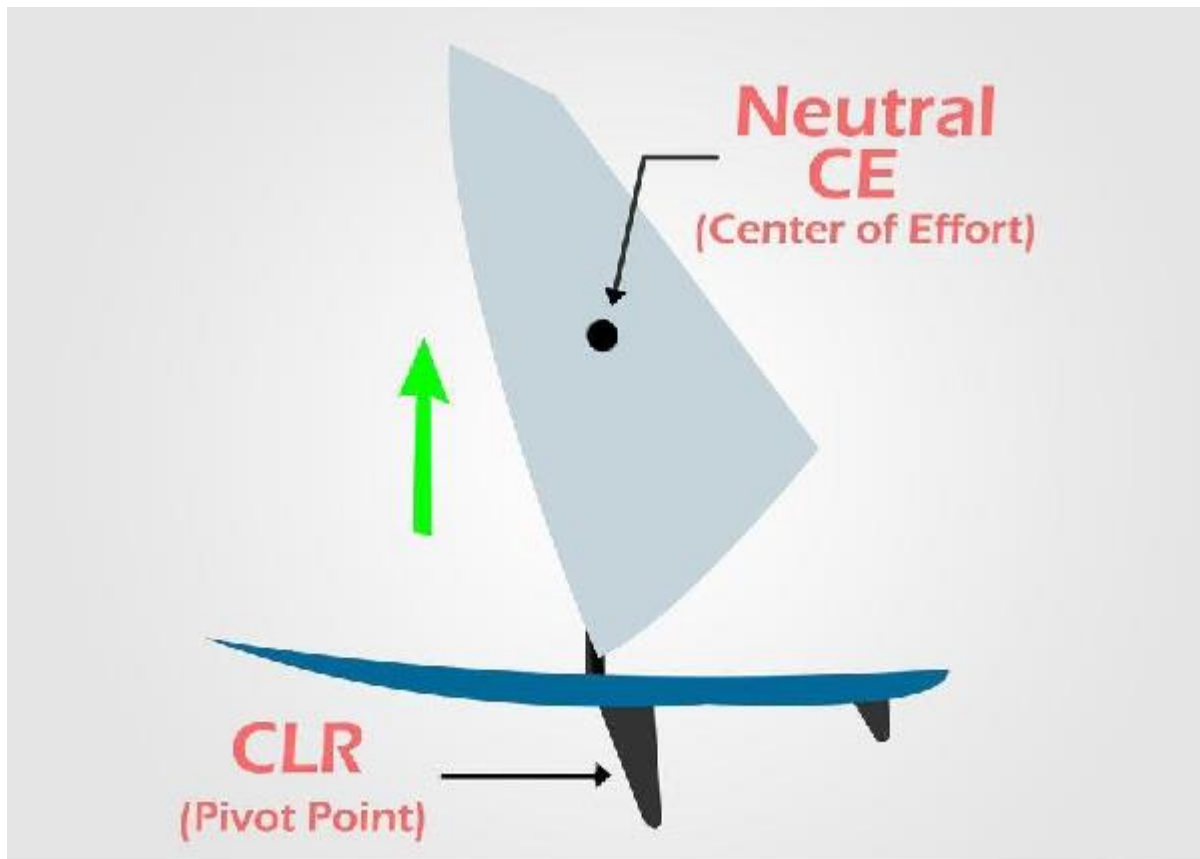
- According to the wind direction, decide how you need to move, as it is completely a play of sailing with the help of the wind.
- Maneuver the board so that the sail is downwind of the board.
- Swim or walk to the upwind side and clamber onto the board - elegance is not required.
- Stay on your knees and grab hold of the up haul, without pulling up the sail yet.



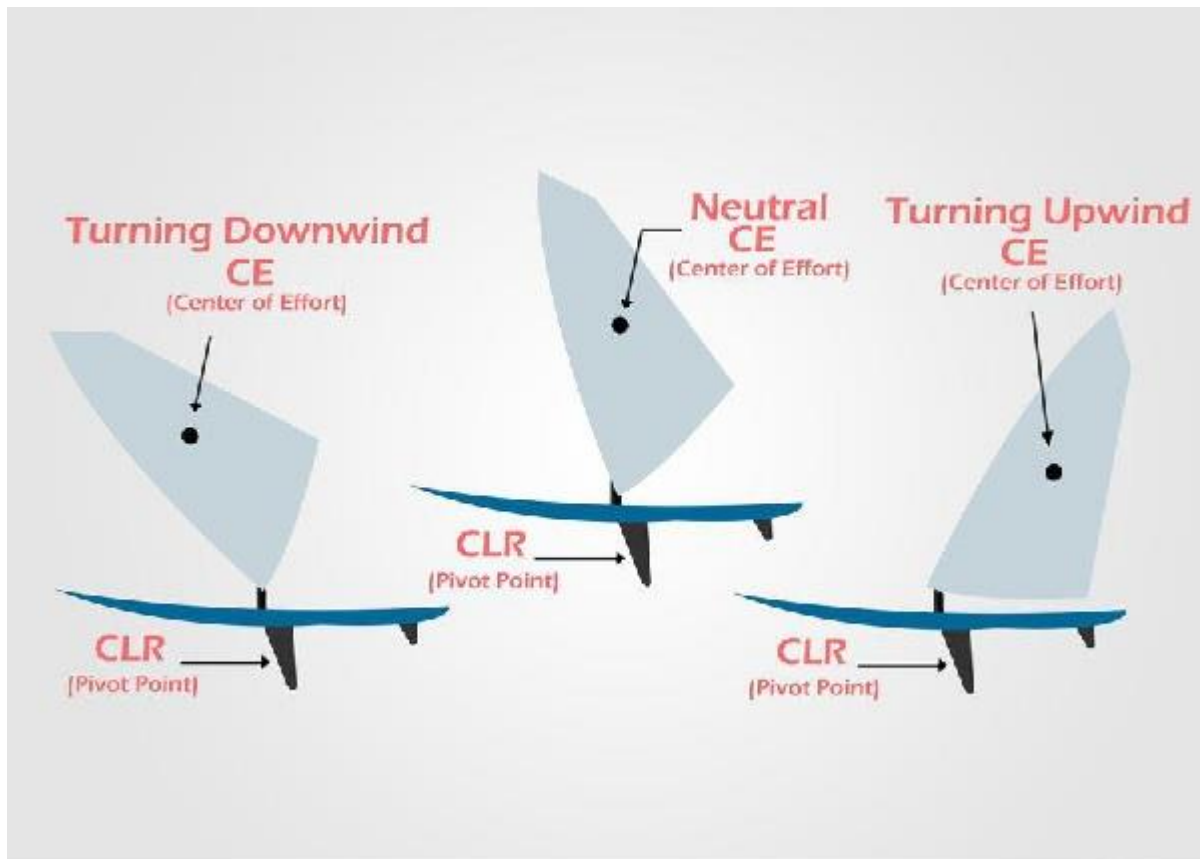
- Stand on your feet at a slow pace.
- Using a beginner's board should mean you are pretty stable - rock back and forth on your feet to get a feel for it.



- Bend your knees slightly and pull the sail up from the water with the uphaul, hand over hand like hauling in a rope.
- Try to keep your back and body somewhat upright. If you feel your lower back is starting to ache, you are bending over too much.
- Take hold of the mast with both hands and let it swing. This is called the safety or the control position: total control with next to no power. After which the wind power will take care of everything.
- Practice steering (called Centre of Effort Steering) in the "safety" position.
- With the mast straight up tilt the mast to your left. Your body should transfer this imbalance (the center of effort of the sail is not balanced with the center of lateral resistance of the board) to the board and make the board turn (or spin) clockwise.
- Tilt the mast to the right and the board will turn (or spin) counter clockwise (anticlockwise). The stronger the wind and the further you tilt, the faster the board will turn (or spin). In a stiff breeze, you may be sailing very slowly at this point. Another steering description is as you tilt the mast to the stern, the board will head up in to the wind.



- Start moving.
- Notice which side the bow of the board is in relation to you, and place your lower hand on the boom so the mast is leading the sail towards the bow (front).
- When you feel ready, transfer the other hand to the boom.
- Don't let the sail pull you down - the mast should be perpendicular to the board, so lean back and keep the arms straight. This is called the Number 7, and that should indicate the posture to you.
- Pull with the stern wards hand (the back hand) to accelerate - let it out to slow down.
- Keep your feet behind the mast foot and the toes of the front foot facing forward.
- Relax. If you need to stop, return to the safety position, or drop the boom if it is safe to do so.



- Make sure it goes in front of you, and bear in mind you will get very tired if you have to keep on picking it up
- Tilt the mast from the safety position towards the stern to turn the nose of the board upwind (behind you) or towards the bow to turn downwind (in front of you).
- Step around the mast, as the nose comes around, to get to the other side. Now you can sail away!
- This principle works whilst sailing too - tilt the mast forward and backward using the boom to adjust your course.

Windsurfing - Performance Techniques

A sailboard will move depending on the wind conditions and the skill or intentions of the surfer, in two entirely different manners with two different displacements as given below –

Windsurfing Performance Under Sailing Conditions

These conditions arise when there are light winds (less than approximately 12 knots), the board moves through the water – much like a sailing boat does – using an extendable center board and fin for stability and lateral resistance.

- **Directional Control** – It is achieved by moving the rig either forward (turning away from the wind) or aft (turning towards the wind).
- **Fall Recovery** – It is achieved when you climb on the board, grab the pulling rope, make sure the mast foot is between two feet, pull the sail about one-third out of the water, and let the wind turn the sail-board combination.

Windsurfing Performance Under Planning Conditions

These conditions arise when there are strong winds (more than approximately, 12 knots). Typically, at this point a harness is worn in order to use the body to counter the force in the sail more efficiently.

- **Directional Control** – It is mainly achieved by putting the surfer's weight pressure on either the left or the right edge of the board. Jibing is done at full speed and pressure is released from the sail as the board speed turns downwind, allowing for the sail to be jibed.
- **Fall Recovery** – When the winds are too strong to pull the sail out of the water while standing on the board, the surfer has to "water start" the board. Occasionally, a surfer becomes unable to water start, if the wind has dropped and the sail becomes too small to lift the surfer out of the water.

Windsurfing - Rules

To be able to judge the performance of the players, every game is bound by certain rules on how it should be played. Let us discuss the basic rules regarding Windsurfing.

Fees and Waivers

Here are some rules regarding fees and waivers –

- This is one of the most important aspect in every Windsurfing sport. Because this money is used to protect the people playing this water game. In addition to this, the money is used for participants' insurance purpose too.
- Every participant needs to sign a legal paper that they are playing this game under their will.

Marshalling

Here are some rules regarding marshalling:

- The marshalling area is near the dock and a marshalling officer is always present there.

- Only the game participants and their corresponding team manager is allowed to the marshalling area.
- The fees generally varies from a few hundred dollars to thousand dollars per event.

Windsurfing - Rules Regarding the Game

Here are some very important rules regarding Windsurfing –

- When the surfers break a rule, they will promptly take a penalty, which may be to retire.
- A boat or a surfer shall give all possible help to any person or boat in danger.
- A surfer shall comply with the World Anti-Doping rules, the rules of the World Anti-Doping Agency, and ISF Anti-Doping regulation.

Windsurfing - Championships

International Sailing Federation (ISF) is the governing body of Windsurfing race. Every participating country has its own governing body to organize the game successfully throughout the calendar year. Following is the list of some important tournaments in this category –

- **Olympic Windsurfing Class** – It uses 'One Design' boards, with all sailors using the same boards, dagger boards, fins and sails.
- **Formula Windsurfing Class** – The windsurfing boards are controlled by the ISF that are maximum 1 meter wide.
- **Race Board Class** It uses longer windsurf boards with a dagger board and movable mast rail.
- **Slalom** – It is a high speed race. Slalom boards are small and narrow, and require high winds.
- **Big Air** – It is a competition to see who can record the highest jump or maneuver. A 3D accelerometer is worn to measure and record heights of the jumps.
- **Figure of Eight** – All through the course, the sailor should be on a beam reach with two floating marks that have to be jibed around.
- **Downwind** – More than two marks are laid and sailors sail a downwind course – jibing around each mark only once.
- **Super X** – This is a new discipline in windsurfing competitions, a cross between freestyle and slalom.
- **Speed Sailing** – It takes the average of each sailor's best two speeds on the 500m course.

- **Freestyle** – The surfer who has the greatest repertoire or manages to complete most stunts, wins. Freestyle is about show and competitors are judged on their creativity. Both the difficulty and the number of tricks make up the final score.
- **Wave** – Bearing some similarities to freestyle, wave sailing has been a part of the sport for much longer (indeed, modern freestyle started off, in essence, as wave sailing without waves). Wave sailing took off during the rapid development of windsurfing on the Hawaiian islands of Oahu and Maui.

Windsurfing - Champions

The following surfers are regarded to have given an extraordinary performance.

Robby Naish



One of the first windsurfing champions to gain international fame, he has dominated the early years of competition in the 1970s and 1980s. Pre-PWA World Champion from 1976 to 1979, PWA Overall World Champion from 1983 to 1987, and PWA Wave World Champion in 1988, 1989, and 1991. Born in the year 1963, this living legend is still pushing the limits of Windsurfing by trying new moves like, “Table Top Push Loop”.

Mike Waltze



He was the first to put a windsurfing sail on a surfboard and sail the famed Hookipa beach in Maui, in 1979. Mike also hosted Maui's first professional wave sailing and slalom event in 1981, which became the foundation of the windsurfing world tour, and Maui became the mecca for the sport both as a design center and a training ground for professionals. On the other side of the camera, he is a cinematographer.

Peter Boyd



He moved to Maui in 1980, and was the first to perform an aerial loop, which was considered impossible by many. The maneuver opened the door to a variety of aerial loop variations, including the push loop and double rotations. Boyd innovated and patented on-land version of Windsurfing. He also created The Boyd Boom, a power sailing device, which became his yet another patent. While innovation was his main focus, Boyd did defeat World champion, Ken Winner, several times at International competitions.

Mark Angulo and Elena Pompei



A windsurfing sports obsessed couple from Maui now stays at Florida. Mark grew fond of windsurfing when he moved from Oahu, Hawaii and moved to Maui at the age of 17. Mark has a board building business. The couple spends major time of the day Windsurfing. Elena is not only a great windsurfer but also a business person, swimwear designer, and a maintainer of around 7000 palm trees. The couple is known as the King and Queen of Hookipa, US.