

7 Launching



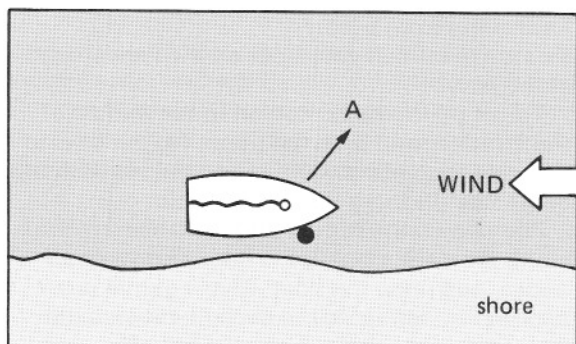
With practice, you will find you can get afloat quickly and easily in most conditions.

How you launch depends on the wind direction relative to the shore. However, a few points always apply:

- Rig the boat on the shore.
- Keep the boat pointing into the wind at all times. Let the sail flap freely – make sure the mainsheet is slack.
- If you are not launching immediately and the boat is misbehaving, let off the kicking strap (vang).
- The hull is very easily damaged. Keep it off the ground at all costs.

Launching with the wind along the shore

This is the easiest wind direction to launch in.



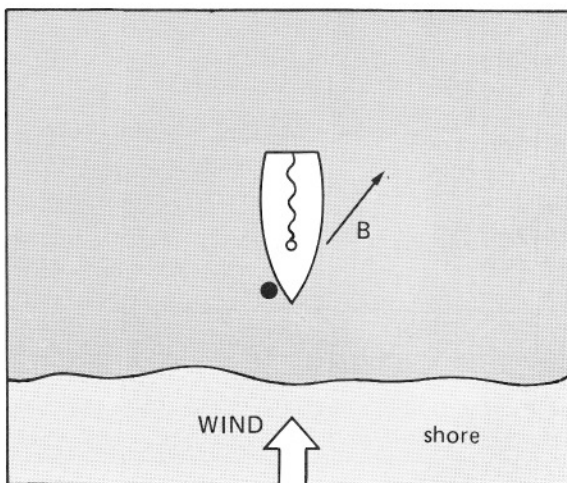
- 1 Get your boat rigged, but leave the rudder blade up and don't put the centreboard into its slot yet.
- 2 Put the boat in the water, keeping it pointing into the wind. Stand on the windward side, as near the bow as you can – remember that the boat will pivot about you.
- 3 See that your trolley is left safely – remember the tide! If you are on a sandy shore, you can

leave the boat aground while you move your trolley; if it is rocky, you will need help.

- 4 Put in the centreboard and push down the rudder until they both just clear the bottom.
- 5 Make sure your mainsheet is running free and the tiller extension points towards you.
- 6 Turn the boat slightly away from the shore, push it forward and step in on the windward side. Pull in the sail, encouraging the boat to move forward slowly, and away from, the shore (direction A on the diagram). *Don't* try to go too fast with the rudder blade up – you may bend the rudder head.
- 7 As soon as the water is deep enough, let out the sail (keeping the boat in direction A) and push the centreboard and rudder right down.

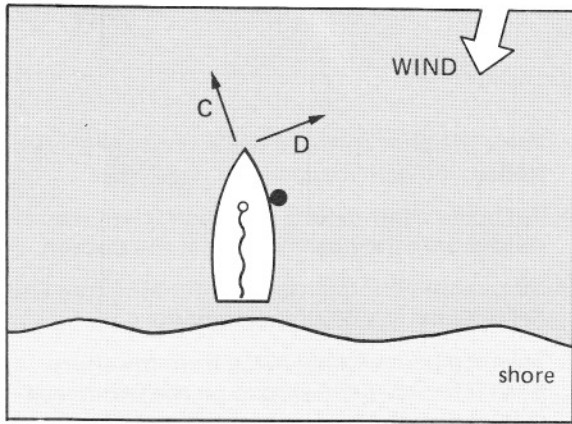
Launching with an offshore wind

Follow *exactly* the same method as for launching with the wind along the shore. **DO NOT** try to turn the boat round and sail straight out – it will sail away before you have time to jump in! Aim to get off in direction B on the diagram.



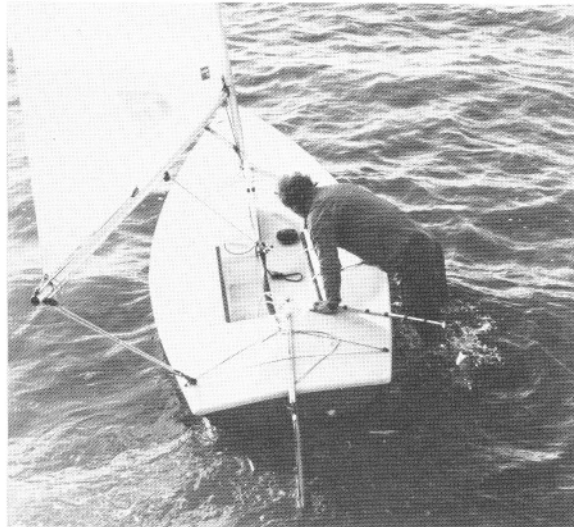
Launching with an onshore wind

This is the most difficult wind direction for launching, because the wind tends to push you back on shore.



Launch the boat with the mainsheet undone. Then turn the boat head to wind and rig the mainsheet. You will have to beat to get away from the shore, so choose which tack you are going to take. In the diagram, C is better than D because the wind is coming more from the right and C will take you offshore faster.

Give the boat a good push and step aboard. Pull in the sail quickly and hike out. Gradually push the centreboard down as you 'crab' offshore. Finally, when you're well out, stop and lower the rudder blade fully.



Launching in very shallow water

Wade out, towing the boat, until the water is at least up to your knees (deeper if the wind is onshore). Then carry on as described above, according to wind direction.

Launching in waves: onshore wind

Rig the boat at the water's edge with the bow into the wind. Decide which tack you're going off on, and stand on the side that will be to windward. Get the tiller extension out to this side.

Slide the boat into the water, so you're up to your knees. Push down the centreboard as far as you can. Hold the mainsheet in your front hand, and watch for a lull in the waves – it *will* come, but you may have to wait a few minutes. Run forward with the boat, and as it gets deep push the boat forward and haul yourself on board. Hike out, and try to sail as fast as possible. If the boat gets washed back in, jump out to *windward* at the last moment. Try not to get between the boat and the shore – a big wave may push the boat into you and do you a lot of damage. If you do get trapped like this, keep your back to the boat or it may hit your knees 'wrong way on' and break your leg. But if it's that rough, maybe you should stay ashore!

Launching from a jetty

Be sure to launch your boat on the leeward side of the jetty!

To get on the boat, step on to the *middle* of the foredeck and grab the mast. Tip the boat to one side then nimbly slip round the mast on the other side and step into the cockpit.

Push down the rudder and centreboard. Walk along the deck, tipping the boat as described above, and untie the boat. Give a gentle push backwards, retreat to the cockpit, reverse the tiller, pull in the mainsheet and sail off.

