



VIRTUAL YACHT ASSISTANT

# WHAT TO EXPECT YOUR FIRST 3 MONTHS OF LANDING YOUR **DREAM YACHT JOB**



Your guide to **PASS** your probation period.

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## It is important to bust a few MYTHS before we jump into the details

### **You are home free, you landed your first job, you can stop trying so hard.**

Wrong!!! You will be on probation for 3 months, which is a trial period for the yacht & for you.

### **You have dayworked, so you know how things run on a boat.**

Wrong again friends, every boat follows the same principles but the way in which work is carried out, products used, rules in place, all vary boat to boat. Don't assume & definitely don't say the words "on my previous boat, we did it....". Please, if you want to be liked, learn don't try teach!

### **The stewardess's clean the interior so I don't have to clean up after myself.**

If you want to be told off and upset the steward/ess's then have that mentality. However, if you don't, clean up after yourself, put your laundry in on time, don't ruin your uniform & RESPECT the interior rules.

### **Messing on the teak decking & thinking" oh, the deckcrew will clean that up".**

No they won't, if we mess we clean, if we don't know how to clean it, ask, but departments have to respect and work with each other, not against.

### **The captain is so friendly and buddy like, he is like one of us.**

The Captain is the MASTER of the vessel, treat him/her as such and always with respect, he/she is NOT your friend, but your Captain.

### **It's the chef's job to cook meals that I like to eat or food that I request, what else are they doing?**

The Chefs job is to feed us healthy balanced nutritious meals 2-3 times per day and will supply food to re-heat on weekends. You can always ask if the chef has a meal preference list for crew and if you can fill one out for yourself, but never treat the chef like your personal cook.

### **It's okay if something breaks, the engineers will fix it.**

Not the right way to think about it. Instead, remember that anything as small as a dent or scratch can cost in the tens of thousands of dollars. Having spacial awareness & care is very important. Always report what has been damaged or broken, don't try fix it yourslef unless you 100% sure you know how. Be careful.

## STILL BUSTING MYTHS

### **I will have weekends off, every weekend and finish at 5pm everyday.**

Reality check!!! Not true, with guests on you won't typically have any days off. With guests off and no imminent plans for guests to board you may have weekends off, at the discretion of the captain. Finishing times are based on how much work there is to be done & how long you have to do it. If your detailing the boat and guests are due to arrive in the next few days, expect long hours, the same goes for when guests are onboard. Don't take days off for granted, they are not a given, that is why you get paid so much money.

### **I am working harder than my team members, I am hard done by.**

The whole point of being part of a team is to have the ability to be able to support one another and fill in each others weaknesses. If you are working consistently harder than everyone else, there is 1 of 2 reasons for this: 1) you have not yet become proficient at your duties and takes you a little longer than everyone else. 2) some members of your team are a little more worn out than you and they have slowed down a little more than usual. Either way, the "I am hard done by" card is one that doesn't get anyone anywhere useful, communicate with your team and support each other.

### **I am getting all the crappy jobs to do, they are bullying me.**

The fact of the matter is the following, you are a junior crew member, and it is the juniors that start at the bottom and have to earn their way to the top, everyone goes through this. You can never expect to be an HOD if you have not yet experienced and learnt how to do all the jobs you will one day have to delegate. So, the best course of action is just to suck it up, do the work to the best of your ability, and work towards moving up the ladder. It is not bullying, it is the industry norm, you may even find that some HOD's don't mind climbing in and getting their hands dirty.

### **On my friends boat, they get this, that and the other, this boat is crap, the grass is greener elsewhere.**

With this mentality you will be jumping ship every month, there are some exceptional boats out there and then there are some poorly managed ones. You will never know until you join or a reference from a friend that use to work on the boat. The key is to identify if your objectives and goals are being met on the boat and if you are happy onboard. If you are extremely unhappy and you have tried to rectify the issues to no avail I would say move on. However, just because another boat offers more money or lax rules don't jump ship for that, there are more important things than just money or time off, you will come to realise this after your first year in yachting.



## YES, YOU DID IT, YOU LANDED THAT DREAM JOB, NOW WHAT?

### Important documents to pack:

1. Passport
2. All original Certificates (maritime related)
3. Visa's
4. Seamans Book (if you have one)
5. Signed SEA (Seafarers employment agreement, if you have one)
6. As courtesy send the following info to your HOD you are communicating with:
  - o Shoes size (US or UK)
  - o Wasit size (US or UK)
  - o Shirt size (US or UK)
  - o Cap size ( S, M, L, XL)
  - o Food & medical allergies

### First 24 hours:

1. You arrive onboard
  - a. **Tip:** Remember to take your shoes off before boarding the vessel
2. You pop your bags down & meet everyone
  - a. It will be intimidating, all the new faces, the new space, the unknown, but it too shall pass.
3. Depending on your arrival time, you will be taken on a safety familiarization tour around the entire vessel. This is a requirement & helps you identify escape routes, safety equipment location & more.

### 4. You will be provided the following:

- Wifi code
- Crew door access code
- A radio for communication & charging station
- Laundry #
- Cabin & Bunk bed
- Towels & laundry bag
- Laundry sheet days & rules
- Crew mess rules
- Be shown the toiletry cupboards, food, snack & drinks storage
- You will be walked through start & end times
- Explained the plan for the week & where you will be placed and how it will work
- Provided uniform (guest on & off)
- Explained any rules the vessel may have in place



5. You may jump straight into work or given time to settle in, this all depends on the vessel

## Important things to do in your first 24 hours:

- Unpack your bags & ask someone where you can store them
- Try on all your uniform (so they can be altered if required)
- Introduce yourself to everyone on the boat
- Ensure you know where your closest escape route is to your cabin
- Familiarise yourself with where the drinks and snacks are kept
- Save important phones numbers for people onboard on your phone
- Save the crew access door code to your phone
- Inform your friends and family that you are safe
- Take your passport to the Bridge and ask if they require anything else from you – usually you will have a few documents to fill out & hand in
- Read the notice board and take in all the important rules & information (ignorance is not bliss)
- Get to know your room mate and their pet peeves, so you don't step on each others toes
- Put your radio on charge in the evening
- Be prepared for your first day at work tomorrow

## CONGRATS ON YOUR FIRST 24 HOURS!

It's not time for your first day of work, flip over to the next page to find out how the first day on the job will work.





## YOUR FIRST WORKING DAY –GUEST-OFF

### TIPS:

- Wake up an hour before starting time
- Get dressed in your uniform & take your radio with (always)
- Have some breakfast & coffee/tea
- Clear your mind, meditate, envision your day
- Take a walk around the interior & exterior of the vessel & acquaint yourself with everything
- Show up for your morning meeting 15 mins before the start time

### FIRST DAY

It is important to note that every vessel's daily operations vary, the principles remain the same, so your day may not go exactly as discussed below.

1. Morning meeting
  - a. It is here that your HOD (head of department) will run through the plan for the day, who will do what, where & how.
2. They will explain what you are working towards (guest trip, charter) and the time constraints that apply.
3. You will usually be teamed up with someone else on the team to shadow and work with for the day and potentially the week.
4. After the morning meeting you will commence on the daily duties (see next page for an outline).
5. Daily duties
  - a. For the Chefs, Stewardess's & Deckhands the duties vary greatly but remain the same for most days of the week for each position.

**Flip the page to find out what these morning duties may be.**



**Chefs:** *(see end of e-book for more details)*

- Plan crew meals for the day
- Go off to market/shop to provision
- Defrost all items required for meal prep (or do it night before)
- Start prepping meals
- Serve Breakfast or snacks at tea time
- Clean galley (kitchen) as you go
- After Breakfast start prepping lunch & dinner

**Deckhands:**

- Wipe the boat down (if it rained the night before)
- Check all lines have no slack in them & fenders are in correct places
- Starting pulling products and equipment for work to be done during the day, it would have been discussed in the morning meeting.
- Once the boat is wiped, decks dried then work on the days duties commences.

**Stewardess:**

The interior have 4 areas to focus for morning duties:

- Laundry, Crew Mess, Captains cabin & Bridge.
- You will be rotated daily or weekly through the different areas (this depends on how your C.Stew likes to do it).
- You will be shown how to clean the area your working in for the daily duties & provided a time to have the work completed.
- After morning duties you start the days work tasks.

**TIPS:**

- Take note of radio etiquette, keeping your information short & concise as well as how to use the radio properly
- Ensure you don't go over your stipulated break times, be precise and on time
- Leave your work stations neat & tidy when you go for your breaks or finished for the day
- Never put something down on a surface without protecting it first
- Never leave the boat without informing someone or signing out on the board





## IT ALL SEEMS RATHER DAUNTING RIGHT?

To put your mind at ease, you will be shown how to do all the work before being expected to carry out the work. You can ask as many questions as you want to, you are not expected to know how to do everything but you are expected to do your best & ASK questions.

### 1st WEEK

YES, so your first day on the job is done, what comes for the rest of the week?

During your morning meeting you may have been explained what you are working towards, or there may be a monthly/weekly calander up that can answer this question for you.

However, in your first week ASK ALL the questions, learn by observation, open up every cupboard, locker and investigate & memorise where everything is kept.

### WHY DO THIS?

In some cases, you will be required to hit the ground running and using your initiative to learn where things are kept & how they are stored, will help you keep up with the team. Use this 1st week to show that you are being proactive as a team member to learn as much as you can. As you head into your 2nd week you will be left alone to work a little more, so if you want to be comfortable in doing this, TAKE MY ADVISE.


## WHAT IF YOU HAVE GUESTS ONBOARD?

So, the plan changes a little with guests on board. The previous pages focused on duties and routine that would be in place if there were no guests on.

If you find yourself in a position where you joined the vessel with guests on already or guests joining in your first week, you need to be prepared the following ways:

- Understanding & having sense of urgency is of paramount importance
- Get enough sleep & be fresh everyday
- Your presence should be known & not heard (be quiet in guest areas, keep your radio sound on low.)
- Stick to the time frames expected of you with your duties –Chef's can't be late feeding the crew, as crew have limited time to eat while guests are on, same applies for the other roles.
- Watch your team members and how they do their work, so that you can learn quickly
- Don't complain about the long days & hours worked, remain positive & create a routine for yourself before starting work every morning to get you in a good headspace
- If you find yourself speaking with the guests, remain professional, never promise anything you don't know if you can deliver, the best is always to say "I will find out for you Sir".

**Next we will talk about what to expect your first month on the job. Flip over to the next page to see what is in store.**





## OKAY, SO FIRST WEEK DOWN, LET'S TALK WHAT HAPPENS IN YOUR FIRST MONTH

**By now you would be well acquainted with the following:**

- Morning duties
- Storage areas
- Product knowledge
- Routine (guest on or off)
- You would be a lot more comfortable with your team members & other crew members

**What else can you expect the first month:**

- You would understand how the departments are interlinked, how being a TEAM player is VITAL
- You would have started finding out crew members trigger points –by this I mean how people like certain things certain ways, how they behave and react. This will help guide you in staying out of any drama.
- The excitement is still there as everything is still new, one thing many crew struggle with is finding the balance between socialising and not being hungover for work the following day.
  - It's very difficult to not get dragged out most nights for a drink, but it is here that you need to ensure that you get to know the crew but your not out partying every night & affecting your quality of work the next day.
- You would have learnt the BASICS of what you need to know, and only practise will help you get further along at mastering the work.



## WHAT HAPPENS IN YOUR 2ND MONTH

Your HOD would be more comfortable leaving you alone to carry out your work, so be prepared to be left alone, this does not mean you can't ask questions.

- You will know a bit more of the vessels plans & itinerary, which is very exciting, as you will know roughly where the vessel will be cruising to & when you can expect guests.
- If you haven't had guests on then you should ask some questions about the guests & ask for any preferences sheets to read through to get to know them better & how they like things.
- You may have received some training: Tender driving, crane operations, laundry, service set-up, cocktail making. This all depends on your HOD & the time available.

### **You would have experienced:**

- Provisioning or bringing provisions onboard
- Being at anchor, cruising or tied down to the dock
- Docking the vessel, line & fender operations
- The importance of clear & concise radio communication
- Completed a monthly safety drill + cabin inspection
- Some monthly maintenance tasks
- Detailing & what it involves
- You would have gotten use to having a room mate & learnt how to live together
- You probably would have gained a little weight, being fed 3 balanced nutritious meals a day, everyday is exciting and you want to eat everything, as well as access to the snacks cupboard, the excitement of it all has its effects, this is very normal.



## SO NOW YOUR 3 MONTHS IN, YOUR PROBATION PERIOD IS COMING TO AN END.

With most SEA (seafarers employment agreement/contract), there would have been a clause in there that states you will be on probation for 3 month before a review is done on your work & salary.

If you have done your best, learnt, used initiative, stayed out of trouble, been a valuable team member and shown growth and dedication then your well on your way to becoming a permanenet crew member.

It is important to remind your HOD of the probation coming to an end and having a review of your contract & if there was a clause stating you will get a raise if you pass probabtion, make sure you discuss this.

It is also an important to get feedback from your HOD on areas you can improve, asking this shows interest in bettering yourself for the sake of your team and the program.

If you are asked to provide your feedback on your time so far to your HOD, remember the following:

- Remain positive in your responses
- Mention areas you think you need to improve and ask for help & guidance
- Inform them of what you enjoy the most & what you think you struggle with most
- Tell them how excited you are for the future with the program
- Confirm next appraisal

## SO, HOW DOES IT WORK FOR CHEF'S, AS THE GALLEY TEAM ISN'T AS LARGE AS THE OTHER TEAMS

Galley team sizes depend on the size of the boat, to give you a rough idea:

- 40-60m yacht:** 1-2 chefs (head chef & sous/crew chef)
- 60 -80m yacht:** 2-3 chefs (head chef, sous chef + crew chef)
- 80 -100m yacht:** 3-5 chefs (head chef, sous chef, crew chef + chef de partie)
- 100m+ yacht:** 5+ chefs (Head chef, speciality chef, sous chef, crew chefs)

Your days and duties will run according to how your head chef likes to run the galley, he/she will have specific ways of doing things, storing, purchasing & cleaning.

It is always advised to learn how they like to do things & then carry it out. As you progress in your career you would have learnt many different ways of doing things & then choose the way you like best.

Cleanliness of the galley is of the utmost importance, weekly checks are carried out by 2x HOD's who are responsible for reporting & recording weekly checks.

Storage may be limited depending on the layout of the boat, so how often you provision will be based on that.

Getting to know what your crew like by providing them with preference sheets gives you great ideas of what to make them for each meal.

Become a pro at recycling leftovers, don't just throw them away!

## COMMON STRUGGLES & TIPS

You may join a boat as they are about to do a crossing (crossing an ocean to get from one point to a pre-determined location). If this is the case, make sure you do the following, if you not sure if you get seasick:

- Don't drink the night before
- Get proper sleep the night before
- Eat a big nutritious meal the evening before
- Take a seasickness Tablet (non-drowsy)

If there is a crew member you are struggling to get along with, here are a few pointers:

- Don't let it carry on, approach them in a gentle, personable manner & ask how you can both rectify what is happening
- Do NOT start making the issue the talk of the boat
- Do NOT react erratically, remain professional and poised -feeling overwhelmed with the work load and hours, this is very common, here are a few ways to handle it:
- Identify which tasks you struggle with most & ask one of your team members to help you become more proficient & show you some tips and ticks
- Rest in your breaks
- Stay hydrated on the long days (you don't need a headache ontop of it all)
- Make sure you do something for self-care once a day
- If you are working behind the scenes, listen to some music if your not around guests to lift the spirits
- Work out when you can
- Stay intouch with family and friends, confide in them, you don't want your struggles to be the talk of the boat



**WELL DONE ON INVESTING TIME INTO READING THIS GUIDE.  
IT'S AN INVESTMENT IN YOU DEEPER UNDERSTANDING ABOUT  
THE YACHTING INDUSTRY.**

Should you require any assistance with: Visa's, CV customization, courses, booking accommodation, flights as well as industry mentoring or guidance. VYA is here to offer you all the support you require. Have a look at the next few pages to find out how we can support you best



**Find out more....**

I WISH YOU A **SUCCESSFUL** AND **ABUNDANT** CAREER IN YACHTING.



## VISA SERVICES

- Schengen Visa  
R 5,500.00
- B1/B2 Visa  
R 5,500.00
- Seafarer Visa  
R 5,500.00
- Other Visa's  
R 5,500.00

## SEAMANS BOOK

- SAMSA Seamans Book  
R 3,500.00
- UK Seamans Book  
R 3,500.00
- Malta Seamans Book  
R 3,500.00

## ACCOMMODATION & FLIGHTS

- Visa Dummy Airline Itineraries  
R 825.00 (Max 5 legs)
- Airport Return tickets  
R 825.00
- Visa Dummy Accommodation Bookings  
R 750.00 (max 5 bookings)

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

- Basic
- Minimal
- Low Coverage
- Comprehensive

Global Travel Insurance meeting all country requirements. Issued through global travel insurance providers.

## PROFESSIONAL YACHT CV

- Professional Yacht CV  
R 1,500.00

## PROFESSIONAL YACHT CV PACKAGE

- Professional Yacht CV
- Cover Letter (editable)
- CV Business Card + QR Code to CV  
R 3,000.00

## YACHT AGENT & JOB BOARD PROFILES

[ENQUIRE TO FIND OUT MORE](#)

## VISA DOCUMENT TEMPLATES

You will need to submit documents to support your visa application, if you are doing this completely on your own, we recommend obtaining these documents so you know that you have included all the information the Consulate needs to see.

Includes:

- Itinerary Templates
- Sponsor Letter Template
- Legal Address Template
- Invitation Letter Template (if required)

These are advanced courses which extend on the Intro Stewardess course (on previous page). **The Intro Stewardess Course is a pre-requisite for the below advanced courses.**

The benefit of taking the advanced courses is to provide more detailed information on each module and convert detailed theory to practical application.

**Recommended for:** Deck, Steward/ess and Chef Yacht Crew.

### ADVANCED BEVERAGE COURSE

3 DAYS

**INCLUDES:**

- Wine, Beer, Liquor and Liqueur Knowledge
- Classic and Creative cocktail practicals
- Yachting beverage service terms and knowledge

This course is 80% practical application and 20% theory.

**R 8,250.00**

### ADVANCED SILVER SERVICE COURSE

2 DAYS

**INCLUDES:**

- Cutlery, crockery, glassware and other service items care and guidelines of use
- Types of Silver Service
- High-tea and caviar service
- Cultural & religious considerations

This course is 80% practical application and 20% theory.

**R 6,750.00**

### INVENTORY & ORGANISATION COURSE

2 DAYS

**INCLUDES:**

- Learn basic Excel skills and cell formatting
- Learn to design and manage inventories
- Understand organisational skills and techniques

This course is 80% practical application and 20% theory.

**R 6,750.00**

### FLORISTRY COURSE - 3 DIFFERENT LEVELS

2 DAYS (per course)

**INCLUDES:**

- Floristry knowledge & care
- Floristry equipment
- Flower colour schemes and textures
- Flower life extension
- Ordering flowers through provisioners
- and much much more...

**R 7,000.00**

If you are overwhelmed with the intricacies of the yachting industry and would like to speaking to an expert but don't have the time to dedicate 4 hours in one day, this E-book is what you need.

## THE ULTIMATE BEGINNERS GUIDE TO YACHTING E-BOOK

"The ULTIMATE Beginners Guide to Yachting" E-book covers vital topics for green yacht crew to know to land their first yacht job. This e-book will help you expand your understanding of the Yachting Industry as a whole and be guided through every step you need to take, from start to success.

It covers:

- Yachting Seasons
- Yachting Terminology
- Visas
- Crew Houses
- Yacht Crew Agents
- Dockwalking /Job Hunting
- Daywork
- Seamans Book
- Yachting courses
- Position & Hierarchy - Deck, Stew, Chef & Engineer
- Yacht CV template & guidance
- Interview questions and tips
- Savings, Bank Accounts & Tax's
- Salary Guidelines
- FAQ
- and so much more...

Cost:  
R 600.00

THIS E-BOOK  
IS JAM  
PACKED WITH  
RESOURCES



If you are overwhelmed with the intricacies of the yachting industry and would like to speaking to an expert about what the industry is all about, where to start, what to invest in and how to succeed. This consultation package is for you.

**BONUS** - The Ultimate Beginners Guide to Yachting E-book will be provided for **FREE** (see next page to find out what the E-book is about).

## YACHTING INDUSTRY CONSULTATION

4 hours -

One-on-one call, *carried out over Zoom.*

*2x 2 hrs slots.*

### *INCLUDES:*

- What is yachting?
- The Reality of Yachting
- Private & Charter Yachts
- Hierarchy & Departments
- Salary, Tax & Savings
- Daywork
- How to land your first job
- How to set yourself apart
- Visas, Accommodation & Flights
- CV & Interview Skills
- How to handle difficult situations
- Shipyard Periods

## ACCOMMODATION & TRANSPORT

- Accommodation  
R 445.00/night (+ laundry)
- Transport (to & from SYTA & STCW)  
R 595.00
- SYTA Golf Shirt  
R 325.00



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