

Personal Equipment needed for Offshore Passages

When going to sea it is very important that the clothing you wear is suitable for the conditions you will be facing. Being warm, dry and comfortable will make the whole experience much more enjoyable. At sea it is much colder than on land, and even in the height of summer you should prepare to wear many layers, especially at night.

Layers

The best principle is to use light layers which will trap air close to your body, providing insulation. A good base layer is advisable, such as the new Icebreaker Merino Wool range which are designed to wick water away from your skin. Cheap polyester T-shirts from a sports shop are fine, as are football jerseys etc. Fleeeces are the best option, you can wear two or three if necessary, and they will still keep you warm if they get wet. Polyester tracksuit bottoms are the most comfortable things you can wear under your sallopettes.

Hat/Beanie

Don't forget to bring a warm hat, you lose 30-40% of your body heat through your head and putting on or taking off a hat is an easy way to regulate body temperature. You can get good fleece lined beanies with polyurethane coated outsides either online or at chandleries. Likewise for cold night watches it may be advisable to bring a scarf or balaclava.

Footwear

You can buy cheap sailing wellies in CH Marine for about €40. Regular wellies will do if you check that the soles are non-marking, and if they are reasonably sturdy. Good sailing boots will cost well over €100 and are an investment you make if you plan to do lots of sailing. If they are looked after well they will last well over ten years. If sailing in warmer weather then deck shoes are the best option. Try to avoid sandals, as it is good to have some protection for your toes when working on deck. Runners or skate shoes are OK, again so long as they have non-marking soles.

Gloves

Your hands can get very cold on watch at the wheel, particularly if wet, so 2 pairs of gloves are recommended – at least one can be drying at a time. One combination could be a good pair of ski gloves or mittens together with a pair of sailing gloves.

Towel

If possible then get a Lifeventure or a Speedo pack towel. They are made from slightly different materials but both can be squeezed dry and will make it much easier for you to keep your cabin dry, as a cotton towel will not dry out.

Jackets

When choosing a jacket try to bring one that is both waterproof and breathable. If you are thinking of buying one XM are a generic brand that make equipment which is equally good as brands such as Henry Lloyd, Helly Hansen, Musto etc. and are much cheaper. On the other hand if price is an issue go for a cheap waterproof jacket and be well layered up inside. If you don't want to buy expensive sailing salopettes then you can get waterproof trousers for about €15 from a hillwalking shop. It is very important to have these, as well as keeping you dry they provide an extra insulating layer.

Sunglasses

Sunglasses are essential, you can get UV400s for under ten euro. Polaroids help to reduce glare which can make it easier to spot things on the horizon, but you can easily do without them. A lanyard around your neck will stop you losing them.

Shore clothes

You can keep a clean set of clothes for going ashore, that you don't wear while sailing. Store these in a waterproof bag whilst at sea.

Sleeping Bag

Again use a synthetic material – not down as it will not dry if it gets wet.

Medication

If you have any medication that you routinely use it is good to bring them with you, and you must inform the skipper what you have. There is a full First Aid kit on board. Bring seasickness tablets, and start taking them the evening before you go onboard, so your body has time to get used to them. Stugeron seems to work well. Remember to pack suncream factor 50. Sunlight is very strong at sea even if it's cloudy.

Toiletries

There are two showers onboard, and two flush toilets. Usually there is enough water that everyone can have a shower at least every second day, if not every day. Bring the toiletries you usually would for any short trip away. There is soap and toilet paper on board.

Suggested “To Bring” List for Offshore Passage

Please pack all your equipment in one or two soft bags, as there is no space on the boat for storing hard suitcases.

Essential:

Lifejacket. Minimum 150 newton with harness ring. Automatic or manual.

(Safety lines will be supplied)

Headlamp or maglight or similar

Sailing knife (Let me know if you are flying with just hand luggage as I have some spare knives on board)

Sleeping bag and pillowcase.

Personal Clothing suggestions

3 fleeces/ synthetic sweatshirts

2 pairs of trousers/jeans or tracksuit bottoms

1 pair shorts

3 Tee-Shirts or synthetic baselayers.

Waterproof trousers or salopettes

Waterproof jacket

Lots of socks, at least 2 pairs for wearing in boots - avoid cotton if possible

Underwear (5 days!)

1 Pair Sailing boots or wellies

1 Pair Deck shoes or runners

Crocs or similar for wearing below

1 Warm hat/ beanie

1 Sun hat (baseball cap or wide brimmed)

Gloves - 1 pair or 2 pairs (1 x waterproof) gloves

1 Pack Towel or regular towel

Personal Toiletries – preferred sea sickness medication

Checklist:

Camera

Phone

Passport

Money

Flight details

