

## 4. PERSONAL PREPARATIONS

Some elements of preparing for the rally are the responsibility of the skipper, and some are collectively managed by the crew as a whole. Some preparations are personal to individual crew, such as travel insurance, clothing choices, personal health and staying in touch with home.



### Useful Personal Checklist

Questions	Notes
<i>Have you updated all of your personal information on the Member's Area of the website and 'Declared'? See pages 5-6</i>	
<i>Do you need a passport for the rally, and any onward cruising? If so, is your passport in date?</i>	
<i>Do you need any visas for the rally or onwards cruising? See Local Information section and <a href="http://www.noonsite.com">www.noonsite.com</a></i>	
<i>Do you have suitable travel insurance with medical coverage?</i>	
<i>Have you arranged to have any vaccinations you may need for the rally or onwards cruising?</i>	
<i>If you haven't sailed together as a crew before, have you arranged a get together and/or test sail?</i>	
<i>Do you know how costs will be shared onboard?</i>	
<i>Is the skipper providing your lifejacket, or do you need your own? Does it comply with the Safety Equipment Regulations? More information on lifejackets/PFDs on page 20-21</i>	
<i>Do you need training in:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First aid</li><li>• Sea survival (liferrafts etc)</li><li>• Communications equipment</li><li>• Navigation</li><li>• Sailing skills</li></ul>	
<i>It is recommended that the skipper and at least one crew have undertaken formal training in the past 5 years (see page 30) More information on crew training on pages 35-36</i>	
<i>Do you have any special needs?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diet?</li><li>• Allergies?</li><li>• Health or medical issues?</li></ul>	
<i>Have you explained these fully to the skipper?</i>	
<i>Have you sorted out what clothing you are going to need? Don't forget you will need shore-going and smart clothes too! See page 45 for information</i>	
<i>Have you arranged to do your banking online, and do you have overseas emergency contacts for your bank and credit cards? See page 40 for information</i>	
<i>Do you need a mail forwarding service, or can you access all bills and mail online? See page 40 for information</i>	
<i>Do you need to book any flights/transport to the start or from the finish?</i>	
<i>Do you need to book any shore-side accommodation?</i>	

## Keeping In Touch

### Top tips for managing your life at a distance

**Laptop or tablet.** A must for any modern cruiser, but do think about backup in case it is damaged or stolen; a portable hard drive is a good option, or use online folder backup like dropbox.com. A small **portable printer** may also be useful.

**Web email.** A web-based email (Hotmail, Yahoo, Gmail) that can be accessed worldwide from any computer makes it easier to collect mail.

**Getting online.** The boat may have limited capacity for sending and receiving emails, so use internet cafes or buy a local mobile connection.

A **WiFi booster** can be invaluable in marinas or anchorages with weak wifi coverage.

**Digital camera.** When sending pictures as email attachments or for uploading onto a photosharing website, 640x480 pixels is usually good enough quality, and keeps the file size to 100-200kb.

## Banks and Money

- You will need to manage your money whilst away, so make sure you can access your bank account and statements online.
- Contact your bank and credit card providers so they know which countries you will be visiting, and that you will be making frequent overseas transactions.
- Ensure you have a contact telephone number for your bank that you can use from overseas – local rate or toll-free numbers often don't work outside your home country.
- Check that you can pay any regular bills, including credit cards online. Don't forget tax bills!
- Some banks require authorisation to act on faxed instructions. Check with your bank.
- Be aware of web scams – clear viewing history on public machines; change passwords regularly; don't click on links in emails, but always retype in the browser address line.
- Have more than one type of card (Visa and MasterCard). Note that American Express is not always accepted.
- Cash - plan ahead, as its often easier to

pay with cash, and cards are not always accepted at fuel docks or restaurants.

- Keep a supply of US dollars and Euros onboard in case you arrive when banks are shut, or are a long way from the mooring.
- Keep small denomination notes for buying items in remote locations where change may not be available for large value notes.
- Have a wallet containing some out of date cards and a few dollars to act as a decoy in case of burglary or theft.

## Calling Home

**Mobile phone coverage** is good in most ports. Check with your service provider for call charges, as it may be more cost-effective to buy a local SIM card. Some **satellite phone** call charges are similar cost to making an international call by mobile phone - check with your service provider.

**Calling cards** allow you to dial from local phones and often offer cheap international calls. In most countries you can also buy phone cards which are used instead of coins in public phones.

**VoIP** Call home via the internet. This works well anywhere you have a broadband internet connection. Best known is Skype [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com). These services are free if calling another user on the same network, and offer very cheap calls to international telephone numbers.

## Mail

There will be items that you have to receive via the regular mail. Think about what address you will use whilst you are away. Remember, some organisations will not send to a PO Box number.

There are specialist companies that offer a forwarding service for cruisers: in the UK: **Ship to Shore** [www.shiptoshore.co.uk](http://www.shiptoshore.co.uk); in the USA: **St.Brendans Isle** [www.sbimailservice.com](http://www.sbimailservice.com)

## Receiving Mail

Usually a mailing address will be included in the Local Information section for each port, but if in doubt, ask the Rally team. Ask anyone sending you mail to ensure it is correctly and clearly addressed, including your boat's name.

## Personal Health

The risks to health while travelling will vary between individuals, countries visited, activities planned while travelling, length of stay and general health of the traveller. Many of the problems experienced by travellers, such as unsafe food and contaminated water, accidents, sunburn and insect bites, cannot be prevented by vaccinations and other preventive measures need to be taken.

## Personal Medication

If you require ongoing medication, ensure that you have enough supplies for the duration of the cruise, and that it will be in-date for that period.

If you have a medical condition or allergy that may require emergency treatment, make sure that you have suitable quantities of the medication with you, and that at the very least, the skipper knows what it is, where its stored, and how it should be administered.

Don't forget that you will rely on your crew mates to provide you with emergency care, so be honest and open about any conditions.

If you have medical or health issues, discuss your sailing plans with your Physician or Doctor, who may be able to offer advice. They may also be able to provide information documents that can be shared with the skipper and rest of the crew about conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes, asthma and heart conditions.

## Vaccinations

We recommend that you have a current Tetanus vaccination before leaving home.

Talk to your Physician or Doctor about other vaccinations - ask specifically about Typhoid, Polio and Hepatitis A. Tell your doctor about your onward cruising plans, to ensure you get the right shots. Allow sufficient time before travel to ensure that the vaccinations have reached full effectiveness. This time period varies with each vaccination, and qualified medical advice should be obtained for the countries on your intended route.

## Vaccinations for extended cruising

If you are intending to continue cruising or to travel further inland, then ask an infectious disease specialist about the specific areas to be

visited before you leave home. Information from:

**British NHS** ..... [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk)

**US CDC** ..... [wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel)

**Canadian PHAC** ..... [www.phac-aspc.gov.ca](http://www.phac-aspc.gov.ca)

**Malaria** Seek local medical advice before departing from one port about the conditions at the next port of call, since advice on malaria prophylaxis changes frequently.

**Yellow Fever** This mainly occurs in tropical rainforest areas of South America and Africa, so it is unlikely that sailors would encounter it. However, vaccination certificates can be required in Panama, Ecuador and Brazil. As the vaccination is highly effective and gives protection for 10 years it may be worth having this injection, especially if you plan to travel inland during visits to Ecuador or Brazil.

## Staying Healthy

For staying healthy onboard the maxim should be "prevention is better than cure". Ensure that good personal and boat hygiene is maintained, since the two greatest health hazards when travelling worldwide are mosquitoes and unsafe food and water.

Simple precautions will help maintain health:

- **Prevent mosquito bites** by fitting screens for hatches; burn coils at night, and use insect repellent sprays in the evening.
- Remember that in tropical climates food spoils quickly, so to **avoid stomach upsets**, take care over preparation of food and drink, keeping left-overs, and food hygiene.
- In the salt water environment **cuts and insect bites easily become infected**, and can take a long time to heal. Always disinfect and keep dry (if possible). Persistent wounds may need antibiotics.
- The tropical sun is strong, so take care not to **burn or dehydrate**. Wear hats and use high-SPF sun lotion liberally.
- Take precautions to avoid **galley accidents** such as burns and scalding - avoid cooking in rough weather, wear waterproof trousers when handling full pans, and use a pressure cooker or pan with tightly-fitting lid.
- Be careful to **avoid injury** on deck and below when the boat is sailing, and use lee-cloths and handholds.



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## Immigration Issues

### Passports

It is essential to have a valid passport. Some countries require that the passport is valid for at least six months after the date of arrival in the country, so please check the expiry date.

If you are worried about the expiry date of your passport, consider renewing it before you leave home. If you are undertaking an extended cruise extra spare pages in your passport are a good idea. We estimate one side for every one or two countries to be visited.

It is a good idea to photocopy and scan all passports and visas as well as other important ships documents. This can save time when clearing Immigration, and is invaluable in an emergency or if the originals are lost.

It is recommended that all crew joining yachts should arrive with a signed letter from the skipper stating that the person will be joining the yacht in a specified port and that the skipper accepts responsibility for ensuring he/she leaves the country with that vessel. This can save time on arrival, especially where a connecting flight has to be made to reach the yacht. Copies of such letters in English, Spanish and French are available by logging-on to the rally website [www.worldcruising.com](http://www.worldcruising.com)

### Visas

You may need a visa for the countries you are visiting, or for your onwards cruising plans. See the [Local Information](#) section of the Rally Handbook for visa requirements, see [www.noonsite.com](http://www.noonsite.com), or contact the Embassy of the country concerned.

It is generally easiest to obtain visas in your home country before starting cruising, but check the period of validity and any restrictions.

## Travel Insurance

We recommend that the skipper and all members of the crew have a minimum level of travel insurance to at least provide basic medical cover for emergency treatment.

When taking out a travel insurance policy, pay particular attention to the conditions of treatment and repatriation. There are a number of excellent

tailor-made policies that provide a wide range of benefits, depending on whether you are the boat owner or crew. These include:

**Bishop Skinner** .....[www.bishopskinner.com](http://www.bishopskinner.com)

**Topsail Insurance** ...[www.topsailinsurance.co.uk](http://www.topsailinsurance.co.uk)

**Pantaenius** ..... [www.pantaenius.co.uk](http://www.pantaenius.co.uk)

Specialist brokers tend to offer more helpful advice than general travel or insurance agents. If buying an off the shelf travel policy check that sailing is not specifically excluded as a 'dangerous sport'.

### European Union citizens - EHIC

Outside of the European mainland, some countries are outposts of European Union member states, and EU citizens can obtain reciprocal health care free of charge, although it may be necessary to pay and claim back. Ensure you have obtained your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) before travelling.



## Giving Gifts

If you are cruising to more remote communities, it is nice to give gifts as a thank you for the hospitality shown. Popular gifts include pens, pencils, colouring crayons, exercise books, balls and children's toys. You can also give something back to the community by inviting children onboard to learn about your yacht and how you live, visit a school to give a talk or meet the children, or organise a rubbish clean-up.

There are websites that help to put travellers in touch with local charitable projects, so you can make useful donations of your time or specific items. Sources of information include websites like [www.stuffyourrucksack.com](http://www.stuffyourrucksack.com) and the Embassies/ Consulates of the countries to be visited.



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### Clothing Choices

Prepared with the assistance of Alex Atkin, Gill Commercial Manager [www.gillmarine.com](http://www.gillmarine.com)

It is possible to experience all kinds of weather on a long passage, especially when sailing in blue water. Squalls or frontal systems may bring big seas, rain and spray; and tropical sailing has a high potential for sunburn and heatstroke.

It's important to have a variety of kit available to keep you comfortable during the changing conditions you will meet. Space is normally at a premium aboard, so choosing your kit carefully to make sure everything works well together is critical. Modern technical clothing is generally quite versatile and you can use many items for multiple purposes.

### Clothing for Temperate Sailing

In temperate waters you are likely to experience wet and windy conditions. It's important to have complete wet weather protection and a layering system will help you to stay warm and dry, even during the most difficult and challenging moments.



### Layering Guide

Technical clothing can be thought of in three layers, each with their own specific function.

1. The next to skin **base or wicking layer** is designed to move moisture away from the skin, keeping you dry and warm after bursts of activity. The base layer forms the foundations of the whole clothing system, so it is imperative that it's right. Many base layers also offer UV protection so double as sun-protective layers in warmer conditions.
2. The **mid layer** is designed to be worn over a base layer and under an outer layer. Mid layers provide thermal benefits and are highly breathable to assist the movement of moisture to the outer layer. Constructed from fibres that do not absorb water, they dry quickly and keep you warm. There are a

variety of mid layers designed to work in all conditions, and many can be used as outer layers in lighter conditions.

3. The **waterproof outer layer** is your shield from the elements so it needs to be able to perform in the toughest of conditions. Aim for outer layers that are totally waterproof, windproof and include features designed to aid both comfort and performance. High levels of breathability in outer layer garments helps moist air to escape.

A combination of wicking baselayers, versatile mid layer insulation and protective outer shell will keep you warm, dry and able to perform no matter how demanding the conditions become.

### Lots of Choices

It's a good idea to take along a selection of base and mid layers. Baselayers are always worn next to the skin so if you're working really hard and generating moisture when you go on your next watch you may want to put on a fresh garment. Baselayers are quick drying, but a lot can be said for changing baselayers reasonably frequently and washing them when possible- your crewmates will thank you for this! The temperature and windchill will dictate what kind of mid layers you need. It's a good idea to have a number of options to choose from which can be used independently or together in extremely cold circumstances. These can range from microfleece tops and trousers, through to waterproof and windproof garments with technical synthetic insulation.

### Clothing for Tropical Sailing

In tropical conditions you won't need so many layers. What will be crucial, however, is

good protection from the sun. The sun's rays are particularly fierce at sea, when you are exposed for long periods of time and reflections from the water mean harmful UV can come from every angle.

There are shorts, t-shirts and polo shirts available which offer UV protection built into the fabric. These fabrics also wick moisture, so can form part of your layering system for cooler conditions,





making them a very versatile and useful part of your kit bag. You also need to consider headwear, a peaked cap or wide brimmed

hat is essential to protect your face and eyes and make sure to have a pair or two of comfortable sunglasses to hand (consider what you would do if your favourite pair disappear overboard!). Choosing a polarised pair will help to reduce glare and reflections from the sea.

## Foot and Hand Protection

Rain or shine, wind or calm another important consideration on board is protecting your extremities.

Protection for your hands is vital as a rope burn or other damage at sea can drastically reduce your ability to function as a useful crew member. You may want a choice of gloves as what you will need for sailing in tropical conditions is very different to what you would use for a night watch in the northern Atlantic. A pair of lightweight sailing gloves are essential for common tasks on board like rope handling and sail changes but you may also want a warmer option for overnight watches, especially in cooler conditions.

In temperate waters, a good pair of waterproof seaboots is vital; breathable boots will be more comfortable over a longer period of time. Even in the tropics, consider what you will wear on your feet – it is easy to slip and twist an ankle, or to break a toe by stubbing it on deck hardware.



## Care of Performance Fabrics

Traditionally the advice on washing technical fabrics and especially waterproofs has been to hand wash using old-fashioned soapflakes in order to not damage the membranes and

coatings. With new cleaning products and gentler wash settings available on many machines it's easier to care for your waterproof garments. You can buy specialist aftercare products to help you look after your technical kit – don't use general biological detergents.

Re-proofing spray applies a durable water resistant coating to any fabric, adding a breathable water resistant coating on the surface.

## How to Order Gill Clothing in Europe

You can order Gill products and take advantage of your World Cruising Club 15% member discount by logging-on to the [World Cruising Club website](#) and clicking on the 'Clothing' link within the Members Area. This will take you through to a special area of the Gill website, where you can see details of the product range and order your kit. Delivery is straight from the Gill warehouse to your address, and most orders will be despatched overnight.

All Gill products come with a guarantee against defects in materials and workmanship giving you confidence to enjoy your ocean sailing experience in warmth and comfort no matter what the conditions may be.

## Special Occasions

Don't forget to check the rally schedule to see whether there are events or activities that require specific clothing - there may be a 'smart-casual' dinner or a fancy-dress costume party.

Smart-casual usually means long trousers and a shirt for men, and ladies may choose to wear a dress. If you are going cruising for a long period, there may be times you want to 'dress-up' for dinner and go to a nice hotel or restaurant which may have a dress code.

## Team Clothing

Rally-branded team clothing will be available to buy - this can be embroidered with your boat's name as a memento. More details will be provided in the rally newsletters.

