

Sail Stronger, Recover Faster:

Key Exercises to Boost Your Sailing Game





The Author

HELLO THERE!

I am Patrícia, a professional with a strong academic background and extensive experience in behavior change and mindset transformation. I hold a degree in Chemical Engineering, an MBA from Universidade Católica Portuguesa, and certifications in key areas such as Health Coaching from the Institute for Integrative Nutrition (New York), Gut Thrive Practitioner from The Whole Journey (USA), and Transformational Coaching from the Coaching Masters Academy (Singapore). I am also certified by the International Coaching Federation.

As a coach, my approach focuses on helping high achievers, transform their mindset and develop powerful, sustainable habits that unlock their true potential. I strongly believe that mindset transformation is essential for success, whether in sports, as an athlete, or in the corporate world, as an executive.

In 2024, I accepted the challenge of joining the Prow Group team as Chief Marketing Officer, where I continue to apply my expertise in human behavior and performance science to create high-performance environments.

I am passionate about sports, nature, and healthy habits, and these passions play a significant role in my professional and personal life. Sailing, in particular, has become a part of my personal journey, as I am the proud mother of two sailors. This sport inspires me deeply, offering valuable lessons in resilience, discipline, and teamwork.



Vilamoura Sailing

VILAMOURA SAILING – THE WORLD’S LEADING HIGH-PERFORMANCE SAILING HUB

Vilamoura Sailing, part of the Prow Group, is the world's largest dinghy sailing center, dedicated to high-performance sailing. Since its founding in 2017, it has welcomed over 10,000 sailors from 86 countries, providing world-class facilities and an unparalleled sailing experience.

As a premier training center for Olympic classes, Vilamoura Sailing hosts prestigious international events, including Olympic qualifiers and World Sailing ranking regattas. With a full event calendar until 2026, the center continues to be the preferred choice for elite sailors seeking top-tier conditions and professional support.

Located in Marina de Vilamoura, Portugal, the center offers a perfect blend of modern infrastructure, steady winds, and a vibrant lifestyle. Athletes benefit from extensive services, including accommodation, gyms, secure boat parking, and a fleet of VSR coach RIBs. Just five minutes from the slipway, sailors can train in open-sea conditions ideal for performance development.

Vilamoura Sailing is more than just a venue—it's an experience where Olympic dreams take shape, and excellence is the standard.



Our Partner

Renegade CrossFit has been around since 2010. We were the first CrossFit box in Portugal, originally based up north. In 2015, we relocated down south, where we've hosted international competitions and multiple CrossFit camps. We've also worked with Olympic rowing teams, providing strength and conditioning support.

At Renegade, we're a community of like-minded people who believe in hard work, grinding it out, and helping everyone achieve their best health. Our goal is to build a strong, supportive community while working with athletes from diverse backgrounds. We're especially passionate about supporting young athletes in their development.

Our latest Renegade Box No. 7 is a brand-new outdoor facility in Almancil, offering the perfect place to carry on the Renegade community while training in the beautiful Portuguese climate.

As an open-box gym, we welcome everyone—athletes, CrossFit enthusiasts, and anyone looking to improve their fitness.

Introduction

Sailing is a demanding sport that requires strength, balance, flexibility, and endurance. Whether you're preparing for a long day on the water or recovering after an intense session, incorporating the right exercises into your routine can make a significant difference in your performance and overall well-being.

This eBook is designed to provide you with key exercises that can be easily performed at the boat park—no gym required. These movements target essential muscle groups used in sailing, helping you build resilience against fatigue, improve mobility, and recover faster between races.

We are proud to have developed this guide in collaboration with our physical training partner, whose expertise has been instrumental in selecting and structuring these exercises for sailors of all levels. A special thank you also goes to Annie Balasubramanian, ILCA 6 sailor from the Canadian team, who demonstrates each exercise in the following videos. By incorporating these exercises into your routine, you'll not only sail stronger but also recover faster—ensuring you stay at your best throughout the season. Let's get started!

SAIL STRONG, RECOVER FASTER

CHAPTER N.1

The Power of Warm Up

The Power of Warm Up

1. PREPARE, PREVENT, PERFORM.

Warming up before heading out on the water is crucial for performance, injury prevention, and mobility.

A proper warm-up prepares your muscles for the demands of sailing, improves flexibility, and enhances reaction time—key factors for staying sharp and agile during a race.

In this video, we go through a simple yet effective warm-up routine, targeting the main muscle groups used in sailing, with a special focus on back muscles and front chest. One of the key movements included is the Cobra stretch, which helps open up the chest and improve spinal mobility—essential for the dynamic movements required on the boat.

Try repeating this flow **5 to 10 times** before your next regatta or training session, and feel the difference in your mobility and overall readiness!

Check out the video and let us know how it works for you!

[**Click to Watch the Warm up Video**](#)

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CHAPTER N.2

Pre-Race Activation - Power Up Before You Sail

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1. BOOST STABILITY, STRENGTH & CONTROL.

After a proper warm-up, it's time to activate key muscle groups to ensure they are engaged and ready for action.

Activation exercises help improve muscle recruitment, stability, and coordination—essential for maintaining control and endurance on the water.

One of the most effective ways to activate muscles before sailing is by using resistance **bands (elastic bands)**. These bands provide light resistance, helping to fire up the muscles without causing fatigue. They are also easy to carry, making them a must-have for your travel kit—never forget to pack your bands when heading to regattas!

Try 10–20 reps of each exercise, focusing on controlled movements, and repeat for 2 rounds. This quick activation will boost your mobility, power, and responsiveness before hitting the water!

💡 Pro Tip: Keep a set of resistance bands in your sailing bag so you're always prepared to activate before a race!

2. AVOID THESE COMMON MISTAKES FOR MAXIMUM EFFECTIVENESS.

Using resistance bands is an excellent way to activate muscles and improve mobility, but to get the most out of them, it's important to perform the exercises correctly. Here are some common mistakes to watch out for:

- **Too Much Slack or Tension** – The band should have constant, controlled resistance throughout the movement. Avoid starting with too much slack or overstretching it beyond your control.
- **Poor Posture** – Keep your core engaged and shoulders down. A hunched back or flared ribs can reduce effectiveness and cause strain.
- **Rushing the Movement** – Perform each exercise slowly and with control. Moving too fast reduces muscle engagement and increases injury risk.
- **Using the Wrong Band Resistance** – Start with a moderate resistance and progress gradually. If the band is too strong, your form may suffer.
- **Neglecting the Full Range of Motion** – Ensure you go through the complete movement, fully engaging the muscles instead of making small, limited motions.
- **Holding Your Breath** – Maintain steady breathing throughout each exercise to support stability and endurance.

💡 Pro Tip: Focus on proper technique, not just repetitions. Quality over quantity will lead to better activation and improved sailing performance!

3. EXERCISES.

Here's an activation sequence you can do in the boat park:

Try 10–20 reps of each exercise, focusing on controlled movements, and repeat for 2 rounds.

[Click HERE to Watch the Band Exercises](#)

SAIL STRONG, RECOVER FASTER

CHAPTER N.3

The Power of Recovery – Rest, Recharge, Perform

The Power of Recovery - Rest, Recharge, Perform

1. KEY TECHNIQUES FOR FASTER RECOVERY AND BETTER PERFORMANCE.

Recovery is just as important as training or racing when it comes to improving performance on the water. Without proper recovery, your muscles don't have time to repair and grow stronger, which can lead to fatigue, poor performance, and an increased risk of injury. In sailing, we are constantly using our core, back, shoulders, and legs, which makes muscle recovery essential for maintaining peak performance during long training sessions or competitive regattas. Proper recovery techniques allow the body to restore energy, reduce soreness, and improve mobility for the next race or training.

Key Recovery Techniques:

- 1. Active Recovery** – Gentle movements like light walking, cycling, or yoga increase blood flow to muscles without putting additional strain on them. This helps to flush out toxins and promotes faster recovery.
- 2. Stretching & Foam Rolling** – Focus on stretching key muscle groups (especially the back, shoulders, and legs) after exercise to improve flexibility and reduce tension. Foam rolling helps release muscle knots and promotes muscle relaxation.
- 3. Hydration & Nutrition** – Replenishing fluids and providing your body with the proper nutrients (proteins, carbohydrates, and fats) aids in muscle repair. Make sure you hydrate properly and eat a balanced meal post-activity.
- 4. Rest & Sleep** – Sleep is the body's natural recovery tool. Prioritize quality sleep for muscle repair and mental clarity. Adequate rest is essential for sustained high performance in future sessions.
- 5. Ice Baths or Contrast Showers** – Cold therapy can reduce inflammation and muscle soreness, while contrast showers (alternating hot and cold water) improve circulation and promote healing.
- 6. Mindful Recovery** – Mental recovery is just as important as physical recovery. Practicing mindfulness, meditation, or breathing exercises can help reduce stress and promote overall well-being.

Incorporating these recovery techniques into your routine ensures that you remain strong, energized, and ready to face your next challenge on the water. Recovery isn't just about resting; it's about recharging your body and mind to maximize your performance.

2. POST-SAILING STRETCH SEQUENCE.

Now that you know the general recovery techniques, it's time to put them into action with a simple yet effective stretch routine to do after every race or training session on the water.

This routine will help relieve muscle tension, increase flexibility, and promote circulation.

Watch the video with the exercises and try to incorporate them after each session on the water. The routine can be done in 5 to 10 minutes and is perfect for helping the body recover actively and effectively, ensuring you're ready for the next race with maximum performance.

By combining these techniques and a consistent stretching routine, you'll not only speed up your recovery but also ensure your muscles and joints stay flexible and strong throughout the season.

[Click HERE to Watch the Recovery Video](#)

Conclusion

Sailing pushes both body and mind to their limits. It's a sport of endurance, balance, and precision—where even the smallest physical improvements can translate into better performance on the water. By incorporating these key exercises into your routine, you're not just training; you're investing in your long-term success as a sailor.

Strength isn't built overnight, and recovery is just as important as effort. Whether you're warming up before a race, maintaining mobility between sessions, or accelerating your recovery after an intense day, these exercises are your toolkit for sailing stronger and staying in peak condition. The best sailors aren't just skilled—they're physically prepared to handle whatever the wind and waves throw at them.

As Paul "Bear" Bryant once said:

"It's not the will to win that matters—everyone has that. It's the will to prepare to win that matters."

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