

What Is a Superyacht First Officer? And How Do You Become One?

Want to learn more about the role of the Superyacht First Officer and how you can land your dream yacht job?

Having come from a yachting background, our team is equipped to help you land the job of a lifetime as a Superyacht First Officer. Here is all you need to know:



What is a Superyacht First Officer?

Typically, the Superyacht First Officer, often referred to as the Chief Officer/Chief mate is second in command to the Captain. Meaning, they work side-by-side with one another regularly. First officers face the responsibility of being able to cover the Captain when needed due to the chain of command on board. It is not uncommon for the First Officer's duties to overlap those of the Captain, whether those responsibilities involve managing, leading, or communicating with the crew. In addition to knowledge of all deck and bridge procedures, the Superyacht's First officer must also possess the ability to teach the crew new repair and maintenance skills.

How much is the Superyacht First Officers' salary?

It's hard to say a certain figure, due to yacht crew salaries changing based on the size of the vessel, the yacht they're aboard, and so on. But realistically, for first officers, an expected monthly salary ranges from €4,500 up to €10,000.

What are the main responsibilities of a Superyacht First Officer?

Here is a more thorough list of all that is expected from a Superyacht First Officer. They have to:

- Assist the Captain with all administrative duties.
- Follow all safety procedures. This includes arranging regular safety drills.
- Use bridge and navigation systems to navigate the yacht.

- Manage the Deck Crew.
- Maintain the deck itself. This includes being in charge of deck inventory and equipment.
- Set watch schedules.
- Adhere to the deck budget.

What skill sets are required to become a Superyacht First Officer?

To fulfil their role and responsibilities, Superyacht First Officers must also:

- Have good leadership skills to lead the Deck Crew and stand-in for the Captain if need be.
- Be a good communicator with the ability to delegate.
- Have excellent organisation for boat handling and watchkeeping.
- Demonstrate very strong navigational skills.
- Have *ISM* and *ISPS* knowledge and practices.
- Show extensive knowledge of boat maintenance. This includes knowledge of carpentry, corrosion, rope splicing, outboard motors, painting, and varnishing.
- Have advanced water sports knowledge.
- Demonstrate strong computer skills.
- Basic engineering skills.

How to land a job as a First Officer:

The role of the First Officer is high up on the chain of command and therefore, experience is key. Chances are, if you're currently an experienced second officer, you can progress to become a First Officer. However, if you're just starting out as a yachtie, a minimum of five years of experience working in a similar role is expected of you. This can include work as a second officer, or experience as a

captain on a smaller vessel.

As well as this, you must have a minimum license of OOW unlimited. MCA STCW Officer of the Watch or Chief Mate certifications are required for most First and Second officers. But, these requirements may differ under certain circumstances. And RYA or IYT certificates can be obtained for yachts of a smaller size.

Listen to Brianne Wight discuss what her role as a Superyacht second officer entails:

Video by Oat Futures

Hopefully, now you have a better understanding more about the role of a Superyacht First Officer and how you can become one. If you have any questions for us, please make sure to get in contact with one of our team.

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