

Introduction to Zodiac Handling

Zodiacs are the workhorses of polar expeditions — getting people safely to shore, supporting landings, and sometimes handling unexpected situations in tough conditions. That's why knowing how to operate one properly is essential for any guide working in the Arctic or Antarctic.

This course is built to give you real, hands-on experience with a Zodiac MK5, fully equipped just like the ones used on expedition ships. We train in calm but realistic settings, so you can build confidence step by step — from starting the engine to dropping guests at the beach.

Whether you're completely new to driving or just looking to sharpen your skills before a contract, you'll get plenty of helm time, personal feedback, and practice with situations you'll actually encounter in the field.

Course Includes:

Zodiac basics: getting to know the MK5 setup (tiller steering, kill cord, console layout)

Daily preparation: how to plan and pack the bow box for a day on the water

Pre-start routines: safety checks, fueling, basic maintenance awareness

Launching and recovery: from the ship

Driving skills: starting, stopping, turning, reversing, holding position

Landings: safe beach approaches, bow landings, and gangway docking techniques

Man overboard (MOB) drills and passenger retrieval

Communication: using hand signals, radios, and coordinating with ship crew

Troubleshooting: how to handle common technical issues on the water

Weather & conditions: working with wind, waves, and currents

Certificate of completion is provided after the course.

Note: I'm currently in the process of becoming an approved RYA Training Centre. Once certified, I'll also offer the official RYA Powerboat Level 2 alongside this expedition-focused Zodiac course.