Jessica Watson (May 18, 1993 – ) is an Australian teenager who became the youngest person to sail around the world alone. She did it without stopping or getting help during the journey.[1]

Jessica Watson was born on Queensland’s Gold Coast on 18 May 1993, the second of four children. She has an older sister (Emily) and younger brother and sister (Tom and Hannah) Her parents were Roger and Julie Watson. All four children took sailing lessons, but her mother said Jessica was a quiet, shy child who didn’t like adventures.

For five years, the Watson family lived on a boat. When Jessica was 11 years old, her mother read a bedtime story to the children that gave her an idea. The book was about a boy called Jesse Martin, who sailed around the world alone on his boat Lionheart. It planted a seed in Jessica’s imagination that soon grew into an ambition.

Over the next four years, she worked hard to get as much sailing experience as she could. She sailed all the time. She passed tests in

- sea safety,
- how to fix engines,
• using a radio,
• first aid,

She joined the crew (team) on different boats, including acting as skipper (captain) crossing the Tasman Sea from Sydney to Tasmania.

Jessica Watson's first try to sail solo was in September 2009, when she left from Mooloolaba in Queensland to sail around the world. About 15 hours after she left, her yacht hit with a bulk carrier

![bulk carrier](image)

She was not hurt in the accident, but her yacht “Ella's Pink Lady”, was badly damaged.

![Ella's Pink Lady](image)

After her yacht was repaired, Watson sailed from Sydney on October 18, 2009 (aged 16) to sail around the world. Many people said it was too dangerous for a girl to go alone. The distance of her voyage is about 35,000 kilometres and it took almost seven months to finish.
When she returned to Sydney on May 15, 2010, thousands of people, including the Prime Minister of Australia, and many small and big boats turned out to welcome her home.

In 2011, Jessica Watson was awarded Young Australian of the Year and in 2012 the Medal of the Order of Australia for her service to sailing and as a role model for young Australians.