

## Optimist Towing, Boat Storage & Launching

**Most Opti trailers can be pulled with a full size car or van. The follow is our estimate of the vehicle you will need.**

- 1 to 4 boats just about any vehicle that will accept a class “A” hitch. Engine size can be 4 cylinders. Check your dealership for the specifications on your vehicle.
- 6 to 8 boats something like a SUV with a 6-cylinder engine is preferred. A towing package with transmission cooler will assure you have no problems.
- 9 to 12 and above boats should be pulled with an 8-cylinder engine. Again check your dealership.
- A 16-boat trailer needs a vehicle designed for towing. Full size Vans or Suburban type vehicles that come with towing packages are perfect.



One thing to keep in mind the weight of the boats is very little. The wind age puts the strain on the vehicle.

### **Boat Storage:**

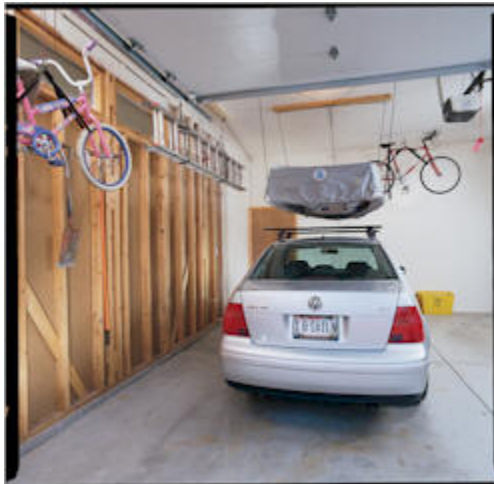
Unless indoors the Optimist is best stored upside down. The deck is very solid and can support point loading of weight while the bottom is a composite, which can indent if point loaded for long periods of time. The Opti is designed to spill water out of the two small fore and aft deck holes and the small mid ship frame hole. The three holes are at the lowest point in the boat when the boat is upside down. These holes prevent water build up and freeze damage.

A bottom cover is not necessary but will keep the boat clean. If stored outside raising the boat off the ground with a couple of 4 foot long 2 X 4's or 4 X 4's will protect the cover from rot and staining of the deck from ground soil.

For indoor storage owners usually want to tie up as little space as possible. Standing the boat on its stern and leaning the boat against the wall is very acceptable. The boat balances best with the bottom against the wall. Be careful to raise the boat at least 3/4 inch off the floor with boards to protect the gudgeons from being bent.



Harken sells a complete pulley package for raising your Optimist to the ceiling of your garage. Being only 77 pounds the ceiling load factor is not a problem.



Seen below is the Optimist storage and launch system at Privateer Yacht Club, Chattanooga, TN. They used the same rack system as shown in our designing a trailer section but with a thinner 1/16-inch wall steel.

## This Facility Features:

- Two inexpensive Rubbermaid storage sheds for blades and spare parts
- Foam padded rails with protected by cover material held in place with Velcro
- Mast/sail storage out of the weather in the roof over the boats
- Vertical foam to protect the boats from the metal as they slide into place
- A dolly launch ramp and dock allowing young sailors to launch the boats themselves
- Secure footings bolted to the rack to protect the boats in a windstorm.
- 5 gallon pails sealed and used as buoys





What ever you do “DO NOT SHRINK WRAP” the boat. There have been cases of moisture trapped in the bottom causing the same type blisters big boats see when they are left in the water.

Docks used for storage and launching the Optimist should be carpeted or well protected. Most boat damage occurs at launching, retrieval and storage. Make sure your docks will not harm the boat if crashed into or if the boat will be tied up for any length of time.



The above four pictures were taken at Little Egg Harbor Yacht Club, NJ. This is one of the most user / boat friendly dock storage systems you will find anywhere. Notice the 8-inch diameter plastic pipes used for sail storage. While 6 inch will work the sails must be rolled perfectly and they will not accept laser sails. The floating docks are only 6 inches off the water and fully carpeted for ease of launching. Notice the nice carpeted ramps. Storage on the docks makes

launching easy. The docks are wide enough to allow rigging the boats. Full carpeting protects the boats in a collision.



The edge of this dock is carpeted so the Opti's can be pulled up on the dock without damage to the bottoms.

Dollies can be used to launch, retrieve and store the Opti. The Optiparts dolly can accept the Opti upside down for long-term storage. Tie the boat to the dolly incase heavy winds come along.



Please share any ideas you come up with. We will add them to this narrative for others to use.

**McLaughlin Boat Works, World Champion Boatbuilder For Over 40 Years.**