

Optimist Transportation and Storage

There is no one perfect way to store or transport the Opti. What follows is a variety of proven solutions and the pitfalls you might encounter. There are many pictures. Should you have a cool idea please send it on to us so it can be added to our website.



Note: The ideas in this article are suggestions. McLaughlin cannot be held responsible for your use and interpretation of these concepts.

Transportation

The Optimist will easily fit inside a Suburban and standard size Vans. In fact two will sit comfortably one on top of the other. You will have to put the back seat down but they fit with room to spare. For a short haul most SUV's and Mini vans will accept the Opti with the back seat down and the rear hatch ajar but tied shut.

Car Topping

Outside the vehicle the Opti should ride upside down for obvious reasons of weather and water. A roof rack is the easiest to work with as it is secure and has tie down points. It takes 4 feet of roof or rack to comfortably hold the Optimist. Many vehicles are wide enough to accept the boat with no rack and just a little carpet, padding and rope. For those that are not wide enough, such as a smaller SUV like the Ford Explorer, you will need to secure 2 bolsters of 48 inch wooden 2 X 4s to the existing roof rack cross members or flat roof. This extends the range of your roof rack or car width. The bolsters are easy to put on and take off. If these boards are to be used many times carpet them and make them easier to use by drilling tie down holes, cutting notches, or adding eyebolts on the ends.



Above 96-inch Thule car top carriers on a 15-passenger van double stacked to carry 8 Optimists.

Make sure your roof rack load capacity is high enough. Most are. The hull only weights 77 pounds and the wind age creates more force then the weight of the boat.

There are many roof rack cross bar systems available in the after market. The "Thule and Yakima" are the most popular. These companies manufacturer bar systems for most vehicles. They are well built but a little expensive. See an Optimist dealer as they all stock these racks. If you have a vehicle like a Van or Suburban you can transport 2 Optimist side by side using the 8-foot bars assemblies. Depending on the width of you vehicle the bars will extend about 12 inches beyond the body on each side. This has never been a problem as the bar feet are strong enough to hold the weight and wind age. Once again if you are innovative 2 eight foot 2 X 4's will do the trick.



Some times you have to be imaginative to find secure tie down points on you vehicle. The window doorpost is one seldom thought of place. Open the door and tie around the doorpost in a 4-door car or roll the back window down for a two-door car. The door gasket is so large that with $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{5}{16}$ lines the door will close with no problem. There are supports in the wheel wells that are more then strong enough to hold an Opti on you car and sometimes there are good connection points under the car near jack fittings. Your local car dealer may have some suggestions.



If you have a motorboat the Opti can be secured on the top of either as if it were on top of the car.



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