

New

- Club boat ~\$3000
- Regatta boat ~\$4000+

Second Hand

Second Hand Fibre Glass Optimists vary in price, but you can pick up good ones between \$2,200 to \$3,200. They are largely holding their value well due to the newness of the class and the growth of the class.

Things to look out for on second hand boats.

Is it an **IOD 95 Optimist**? All optimists, no matter who builds them, must have an IOD 95 sticker.

History

- Age? Most fibreglass boats in Australia will only be a few seasons old as the Optimists are still a new class
- Who has been sailing it – arguably the more use the poorer condition but top sailors keep their boats in good condition

Hull

- check for damage particularly around gudgeons (fittings to fit the rudder), centreboard casing, & cracking around collar to the mast step hole

Sail

Many people selling their boats will claim it has 1 racing sail and 3-6 training sails and that this increases the price of the boat. However training sails are generally just old racing sails and many should be thrown in the rubbish. Old sails can be good for new sailors to train with, but as they get more into racing, then newer sails are better.

- look for wear and tear – the stiffer the sail the better
- cross cut sails are made with largely horizontal cuts of cloth (more traditional & some regard them as better for beginners)
- radial cut sails are made with cuts of cloth orientated to the corners of the sail (newer style of sail & some think that they require more sailing experience to get the most out of them)
- what size person has been sailing it – the more similar in size as your sailor may suggest a better fit (as some sails are designed for different weights)
- Check the sail has tell tales (small ribbons on the sail, 2 sets of 2, one on each side) that show how wind is flowing on the sail
- New sail ~\$500+
- Wind indicator (new ~\$20)

Foils (rudder & centreboard)

- look chips and cracks and wear & tear around fittings

- check the rudder retaining clip works well (holds the rudder on if the boat capsizes)
- Most foils should be epoxy
- New ~\$300 each for rudder & centreboard (~\$40 for a new tiller)
- Foils should have their own protective bag with zip or Velcro closing

Spars (mast, boom & sprit)

Much is made of spars and the advantage of stiffness or being softer but their impact will depend on the size of the sailor, their ability, and the conditions – generally the heavier the sailor the stiffer the spars desired. An entry level set of spars is perfect for a beginner. You can always upgrade after a season or two. Generally you pay for stiffness

- look for wear & tear around fittings
- Check sprit halyard fittings end of sprit halyard needs to be strong and able to fit sprit into it (they wear from constant rubbing) (new ~\$100)
- Check mast fits snugly through hole in mast step – less than 1mm play (if it's loose it is likely to crack collar and the mast step) – if the step itself is cracked, it will likely require some serious fibre glassing work (or a boat repairer)
- Spars and the sail (rolled on the boom) should have their own bag
- New (~\$300-\$1000)

Sheets (Ropes)

- Check for wear and tear
- Long enough to allow boom out just forward of the mast with extra 500mm+ from the last block to regather
- needs to run freely in blocks
- thinner rope can be good in light conditions but difficult to hold in a breeze
- mainsheet quick release shackle linking the mainsheet to the boom

In the Boat

- 3 Buoyancy Bags (check for leaks) (new ~\$60 each)
- Floating tow rope (must float & must be at least 8m long)
- paddle (new ~\$16)
- Bailer – ideally 2 but 1 will suffice) (~\$16)
- Sponge to get rid of water and to clean
- Adjustable mast block (new ~\$80)
- Hiking Straps (new ~\$25)
- Ratchet Mainsheet Block (allow rope to run easily one way and hold under pressure the other way) (new ~\$110)
- Some boats use a mast lock to hold the mast down on capsizing; others just tie the mast down – both work well
- Bungy from the mast step with a hook to clip onto the centreboard (so you don't lose it and it holds the centreboard up when running downwind)

Accessories

- Dolly (best aluminium that breaks down) check that it's sturdy and its tyres inflate (new ~\$400)
- Boat covers (hull cover and top cover) (new hull ~\$280 & top ~\$170)
- Fine rope 1.2mm to rig sail onto mast & boom (good to have extra pre-cut 30cm ties ready to go as easily lost) (new real 15m ~\$20)

- Stronger rope 3mm for (tack, clew and head ties) (new real ~\$40)

Personal

- Suitably sized lifejacket; preferably not one with a collar as they get caught on rigging. They are generally weight fitted but should be snug and not lift up from the shoulders when in the water
- whistle (required for regattas)
- Watch with countdown timer for race starts
- Gear bag for wet and soon to be smelly clothes, drinks, forgotten food etc

Remember it is more about the sailor and his/her skills than the boat.