



Olympia
Community
Sailing

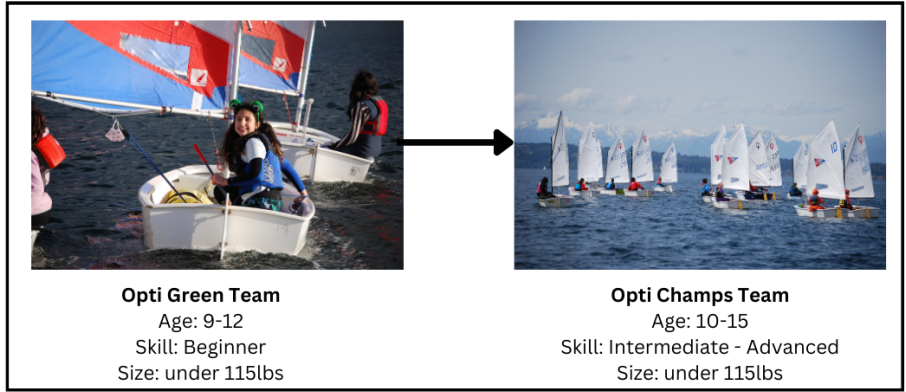
Sailing 101: Information for New Parents!

"Focus on effort, not winning. Winning is a byproduct of effort."
- John Wooden

OCS Teams

OCS runs six different youth race teams throughout the year. Depending on when you join our program and your sailor's age / size, you will end up on one team or another. Sailors start out on the Opti Green, FJ, or High School JV Team depending on their age/size and the season. See below for an outline of the teams we run!

Opti Sailing Spring, Summer, & Fall Seasons

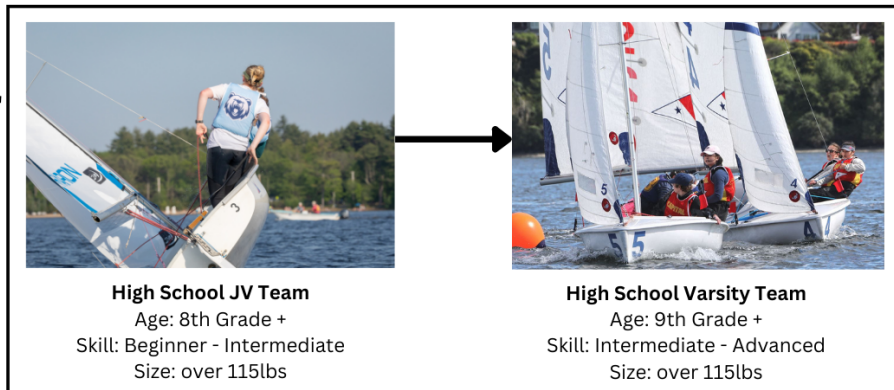


Opti sailors transition teams when they "size out" (around 115 lbs) or "age out" at 15

Summer Sailing Summer Season



High School Sailing Fall & Spring Seasons



Older sailors transition teams between scholastic and summer seasons

Sailor Gear

You don't need to buy sailing-specific gear! Many items from your PNW closet will work great for beginner sailors. The key is to layer, and to use non-cotton clothing.

It is the responsibility of sailors and families to check the weather before going to a regatta / practice and ensuring that they bring the appropriate gear for the weather! *Note: wetsuits protect core temperatures when wet, but are not adequate insulation for wind! When wearing a wetsuit sailors frequently need to wear a fleece jacket, warm hat, gloves, etc. in addition.*

6 Essentials

- Lifejacket
- Whistle
- Bailer
- Wetsuit*
- Booties
- Gloves



Make sure it has a pocket for whistle and snacks!



Whistles are an essential safety item



Bailers can be made from any container with a handle!



Most sailors wear neoprene booties in summer and winter



Gardening gloves work great!

*OCS starts a wetsuit requirement part way through fall season when temperatures drop. Most sailors prefer a 2-3mm wetsuit.

Warm Weather Sailing Gear

Base Layers

- Swim trunks, shorts, or leggings
- Tech, swim, or sun shirt
- Sunscreen & sunglasses
- Gloves
- Wetsuit booties

Mid Layers

- Light fleece

Outer Layers

- Windbreaker
- Lifejacket



Cold Weather Sailing Gear

Base Layers

- Wetsuit
- Wool / neoprene socks
- Warm hat
- Sunglasses
- Gloves
- Neoprene booties

Mid Layers

- Hoodless fleece jacket
- Tech shirt or jacket

Outer Layers

- Spray top or rain jacket
- Spray pants or rain pants
- Lifejacket



Regattas

Regattas are competitions for sailboats! Regattas are like a tournament, where sailors compete in multiple races throughout the event.

Racing 101

Sailors are given a course to sail through, which consists of anchored “marks” (buoys) that they turn around in a specific order. The goal is to accumulate the lowest score possible – 1st to cross the finish line gets 1 point, 2nd gets 2 points, etc. At the end of the regatta, your scores from every race are added together to determine the final winners of the event. It is possible to never finish a race in 1st place and still win the regatta! At some regattas, they will drop your lowest score from the final ranking.

The start line for a race always consists of an anchored Race Committee vessel marked with a flag on the right side of the start line, and either a second anchored vessel with a flag or a buoy on the left side. Sailors are given a 3 or 5 minute countdown, and their goal is to cross the invisible line between the flag on the Race Committee vessel and the buoy/second vessel with full speed at the end of the countdown sailing towards the first mark.

Course I

Windward / Leeward, Windward Finish	
signal	mark rounding order
I1	start - 1 - 2 - finish
I2	start - 1 - 2 - 1 - 2 - finish
I3	start - 1 - 2 - 1 - 2 - 1 - 2 - finish

Course L

Windward / Leeward, Leeward Finish	
signal	mark rounding order
L2	start - 1 - 2 - 1 - finish
L3	start - 1 - 2 - 1 - 2 - 1 - finish
L4	start - 1 - 2 - 1 - 2 - 1 - 2 - 1 - finish

Top Left: Opti sailors on a start line (looking from left end (buoy) towards right end (Race Committee)). Bottom Left: Doublehanded sailors rounding a windward mark in a race. Middle & Right: Examples of course diagrams.

Notice of Race

The Notice of Race (NOR) is a document that is produced by regatta hosts before the event starts. It outlines all the important information about the event that you need to know in order to prepare for racing. It generally includes:

- Event details: location (where to put trailers, where to park, where to spectate, where sailing will occur), schedule, etc.
- Race details: when the racing will start, how many races they will do each day, when they plan to end racing each day
- Host details: who to contact with questions

Regatta Planning & Communications

We send out regatta planning emails starting approximately two weeks before any given event. The regatta planning email includes: regatta vibe, roster of sailors, towing / boat transportation details, schedule of events (including when we will be loading and unloading boats), and event details like the venue address (where to park, where to launch boats, where to spectate), who is coaching, and a link to the Notice of Race and Host Registration. We will follow up this planning email if anything changes.

Sailors only receive regatta communications if they are signed up for a regatta! If you are not receiving regatta communications but think you should be, always email a coach.

Transporting Boats

Regattas are large events that regularly see over 100 sailors in attendance! As such, there are a lot of equipment needs to get sailors on the water. Families are expected to be able to transport their own equipment to and from events, and OCS relies on families to assist with towing coach boats to and from the regattas.

Don't worry - it's not as intimidating as it sounds! Any car with a roof rack can transport an Opti no problem, and most cars with a roof rack can transport an FJ! The boats we sail are very lightweight (an Opti weighs only 77 lbs, and an FJ weighs only 220lbs!) and can easily be placed on top of a car for transportation. When car-topped, boats act like a rocket box.

Sailors and families are expected to either car-top their boat, or use a trailer to transport their equipment. OCS has two trailers designed to haul three doublehanded (FJ or 420) boats, which can be modified to haul Lasers. We do not have an Opti trailer, but will assist in sailors car-topping!

How to Car-Top a Sailboat



Optis and Dolly

Hull Weights / Beam (Width):

- Opti: 77lb / 3ft 8in
- FJ: 220lb / 5ft 3in
- 420: 230lb / 5ft 6in
- Laser: 130lb / 4ft 7in

Min. Width of Roof Racks:

- Opti: 4ft 8in
- FJ: 6ft 4in
- 420: 6ft 6in
- Laser: 5ft 7in



420 with Mast

Roof rack not long enough? Two 2x4s cut to the right width and tied to your roof racks works great!

Car-Topping Supplies:

- Roof Racks (+ 2x4s***)
- Straps for hull (3x 20ft)*
- Straps for mast / spars (2x 10ft)**
- Straps for dolly (2x 10ft, 1x 15ft)**
- Red flag for mast
- Optional: foam padding for hull

**Cam straps, ratchet straps, or 1/4in line work great for the hull - bowline can be used in place of strap for bow of the hull*

***Mast and dolly straps can be cam straps or 1/8" line*

****2x4s need 4x 12 ft of 1/4 in line or 4x square u-bolts with plates to attach to racks*



Two Lasers with Dollies

2x4s Attached to Roof Racks



Optional Roof Rack Attachments:



Chartering Boats – AKA Renting/Borrowing Boats

Current Race Team sailors are always able to charter boats from OCS – charter fees are included in race team dues. Unless you own a personal boat, we assume you will be using one of ours at a regatta if you are signed up to attend that regatta.

Some regatta hosts have charters available at their venue. This is a great option because it means you don't have to transport equipment! Some hosts will charge sailors from other programs a charter fee to use their equipment.

Charter fees range from relatively inexpensive to fairly expensive, depending on the age of the boat and how nice the equipment is. Currently, PNW programs are charging around \$0-50 / day to borrow Opti Green or FJ boats. Charter fees for more complex boats like Lasers and c420s can range from \$100 / day at local events all the way up to \$500 / day at national-level events.

OCS frequently asks for charters on behalf of parents and sailors in order to reduce the burden of transporting equipment. If you ever want a charter from a host, let us know and we will ask for you – however there is no guarantee that a charter will be available, so always have a back up plan!

What a Regatta Looks Like From Beginning to End

Before the regatta:

- Sailors and parents receive a regatta planning email with details
 - Parents towing trailers confirm when and where they will pick up trailers
- Sailors load boats at practice onto trailers
- Families drive to regatta either night before (for distant regattas) or morning of

At the regatta:

- Sailors unload boats from trailers and cars (parents may need to help short sailors)
- Sailors rig their boats (parents don't help!)
- OCS sailors and coaches gather for a team meeting to go over event details: weather forecast, venue special considerations, coaching notes, etc. (parents welcome to listen in)
- Sailors attend the Competitor's Meeting, held by the host, to go over the regatta schedule, rules of the event, etc. (parents can listen in)
- Sailors change, launch boats, and go sailing!
- Green Fleet often has a shore break for lunch/snacks, or sails for less time than the others
- Sailors get off the water, derig boats, and go home / to a hotel
- Rinse and repeat the next day

After the regatta:

- Sailors unload boats at the next practice (or previously determined time)

Regatta Fees

Regattas typically have a small to moderate regatta fee depending on the event. Casual, local regattas can have a regatta fee ranging from \$5-80 depending on the host and the services they are providing. Regattas with larger fees tend to include things like a regatta shirt, sailor dinner, swag items, raffle items, etc. for the sailors.

How to Sign Up & Register for a Regatta

There are two steps to make sure you can attend a regatta:

1. [Sign Up with OCS for the regatta](#)

This tells coaches that you plan to go, want to be included in planning emails, and want to use OCS equipment at the event.

2. [Register with the event host](#)

This reserves your spot on the startline!

For all High School Regattas and some fall/spring season development regattas the coaches will register with the host. If you aren't sure if you should be registering with the host or not, just ask!

Racing Optis

Opti racing nation-wide divides sailors up into different fleets based on skill and age in order to make racing the most fair for everyone. Optis are designed for youth sailors, and you cannot sail Optis after you turn 15. Some sailors will "size out" earlier than that, meaning they get to be too tall or big for the Opti. Generally that occurs somewhere around 115lbs, though there are sailors who still compete beyond that. Coaches will usually start a conversation with sailors and parents about transitioning teams when they start to notice a sailor struggling to tack a boat or move around in it due to size.

Opti Fleets Nation-Wide

Green Fleet:

Green Fleet is for brand new sailors! It is a fun-forward, sailor-focused fleet designed to introduce sailors to the sport of racing. Coaches are on the water actively coaching sailors around the course and everyone gets a prize! Green Fleet also usually takes a shore break halfway through racing in order to give sailors a chance to eat a snack on land, reset with coaches, and take a break.

Green Fleet courses are shorter than Championship Fleet courses, meaning it is easier for sailors to get around the buoys and finish the race. At the end of the regatta, all Green Fleet sailors get celebrated (usually with a prize), and all the sailors cheer for them.

Championship Fleet:

Championship Fleet is for sailors who have graduated from Green Fleet. Generally, sailors will attend 2-5 Green Fleet regattas before moving onto Championship Fleet. Indications to a coach that they are ready to move onto Champs Fleet is that they are consistently winning races (or in the top portion of Green Fleet) and are getting bored there.

Champs Fleet is broken down into three mini-fleets based on age: White (ages 10 and under), Blue (ages 11-12), and Red (ages 13-15). When registering for a regatta, it will either ask your sailor's age, or ask you which fleet they should be in. In the PNW there aren't enough Opti sailors for each of the colors to race solely against themselves, so all Champs Opti sailors start on the same start line and race at the same time. However, they are score only against sailors in their same age bracket. This means your sailor could look like they came in 20th out of 30 boats, but they end up being 5th in their age bracket (kinda like a 5k or marathon).

Opti National Team:

There are many, many Opti sailing opportunities at insanely high levels. Ask for more info!

Owning an Opti

OCS has "club" level Opti gear for our Opti sailors to use. This gear is great for learning how to sail all the way up through Green Fleet!

Once a sailor transitions from Green Fleet, they are still welcome to use OCS equipment at Champs practices or regattas. However, after one or two Champs regattas they will likely have outgrown the club equipment and would benefit from using race equipment. There is a significant impact on performance to have race gear!

Opti race gear is relatively inexpensive compared to other boats, but we recognize it is not something that can always be achieved by every family. OCS does have some scholarships available, and is working hard to fundraise to purchase race equipment for our Opti sailors - if you would like to help with fundraising let us know!

There is a big market for used Opti gear in the PNW. You will likely not see Optis for sale on craigslist or Facebook marketplace only because they get snapped up quickly. It is possible to purchase a race-ready Opti for as little as \$1000, and as long as you take care of the boat (not

bashing into docks, etc.) the boat will retain its value for many years, often longer than your sailor will be using the boat. OCS coaches will frequently forward out Optis for sale in the PNW to the Opti Green and Champs teams so families can purchase them if they desire. Coaches are always available to chat with parents and sailors about boat maintenance and what to look for when purchasing a boat to make sure you are getting an appropriate price. OCS also offers personal boat storage at our Swantown Marina site for only \$20/month!

Some families will also choose to invest in partial equipment like a race sail or race spars while using some OCS club equipment.



Racing Doublehanded Boats

Larger sailors (typically over 120lbs) will usually race doublehanded (AKA two person) boats. During the summer season sailors have the opportunity to choose between three teams on which to sail. During the fall and spring season, larger sailors will participate on the High School team.

Summer Sailing - FJs or Lasers

In the summer season, beginner sailors will start on one of two teams: the FJ or Laser team. The FJ team is a doublehanded team where sailors can learn to race and build up their foundational sailing skills with another sailor in the boat! OCS has six FJs available for sailors to use. The Laser team is a singlehanded (one person) team where sailors learn to race and build up their foundational sailing skills aboard a single person vessel. OCS does not have any program Lasers, however there is a robust used Laser market in the PNW.

Most beginner sailors will start out on the FJ team, and later decide to either purchase their own personal Laser and join the Laser team, or continue onto the c420 team once their skills are advanced enough.

Fall and Spring Sailing - High School Team

In the fall and spring the PNW region enters the High School Sailing season, which is a popular nation-wide sports. Sailors compete for their respective high schools at regattas with some key differences to the regattas seen by Opti sailors or the FJ and Laser team.

It is important to note that high school sailing is not a WIAA sport, so there are some key differences in eligibility for home school and alternative school sailors than regular school sports. If your sailor has an alternative schooling experience, talk to a coach so you know what to expect!

High School Sailing is a team-based sport - it is unique from other formats of racing sailboats. Sailors' scores are combined in Fleet Racing, and Team Racing sailors work as a unit to spar with another team. A nation-wide sport with local, regional, and national competitions, High School Sailing is two-seasons: fall and spring. Sailors compete for their High School at regattas as student athletes. Many sailors participate in High School Sailing as a way to prepare for competing in Collegiate Sailing.

"A player who makes a team great is more valuable than a great player. Losing yourself in the group, for the good of the group – that's teamwork. The star of the team is the team. 'We' supersedes 'me.'"

- John Wooden

Who Can Participate?

Any individual in the 8th grade or higher attending a public, private, or homeschool in Thurston County can join the OCS High School Team.

Teams

At OCS, all sailors in the High School Race Program practice and travel together regardless of what high school they attend. Only at regattas are sailors broken into their respective high school teams.

An "active" team is a school with 4+ sailors that all attend the same high school according to ISSA Procedural Rules (see below). Active teams are eligible to qualify to compete on a national level at High School Sailing events. Sailors that go to a school with less than four sailors are still allowed to compete at local, regional, and certain travel events as part of a "mixed" team composed of sailors from different high schools. Mixed teams are not eligible to qualify for national championships in High School Sailing but can sail at all other events.

Parent/Guardian Expectations

Parents/guardians are responsible for making sure their child is set up for success at practices and regattas. This means making sure they have the appropriate equipment for the event/weather, making sure they have snacks/water/lunch, and making sure they have the appropriate gear packed for whatever event they are going to. Parents/guardians should reach out to coaches if they need help in supporting their sailor with gear, transportation, etc.

For practices: parents/guardians should pay attention to emails and the weather forecast and be prepared for "changes of plan." Sailors must arrive with appropriate gear (see gear list) or they will be sent home. OCS coaches do our best to keep practices as regularly scheduled, including during rain/cold weather, but if a storm is particularly nasty we may have parents/guardians pick up sailors early. Parents/guardians are not allowed on the docks per OYC rules, but are welcome to watch from the public boardwalk while sailors rig.

For local regattas: parents/guardians should read all emails regarding the event and make sure their sailor is ready. They should also make sure they are sending their child with the appropriate gear (see gear list) and a lunch option that does not involve them leaving the regatta venue.

Parents/guardians are invited and encouraged to come and watch regattas! Parents/guardians are not allowed on the docks while sailors are rotating, and should keep a respectful distance during team meetings to allow sailors and coaches to concentrate.