



AKARANA
SAILING ACADEMY

OPTIMIST LEVEL 2

Student Handbook

WELCOME TO OPTIMIST LEVEL 2

If you're reading this booklet, then you have successfully completed Optimist Level 1 and are now ready to embark on Optimist Level 2!

As you read through this booklet you will continue to develop and build on the skills from the Level 1 course. These new learnings will help you sail the boat faster and better, and show you how to control all the different parts of a boat.

At the back of this booklet there is a checklist. In the Level 2 course your coach will work through the checklist, which also covers learning new sailing vocabulary, understanding the sailing area in Okahu bay and better boat handling.

Your coach will assess your development and complete the check list to show when you're ready to advance to Optimist Level 3.



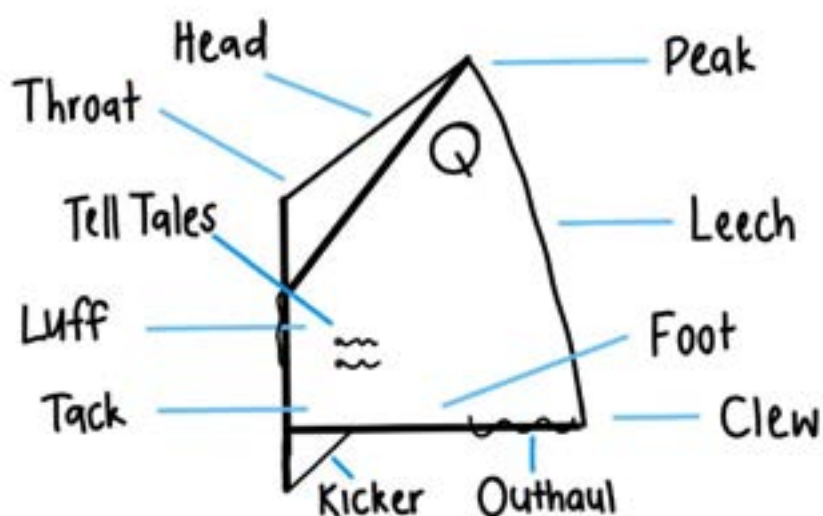
Established in 2001, the Akarana Sailing Academy was founded to provide opportunities to the children of current members. Parents then had the option to go sailing, while the kids learnt to sail in a safe and friendly environment. For 20 years there has been a range of courses available, which has resulted in our sailors becoming local, national and world champions.

The Royal Akarana Yacht Club is one of the New Zealand's oldest yacht clubs and occupies a unique place in sailing history. Throughout the last 125 years it has been at the forefront of New Zealand sailing.

The Akarana Sailing Academy offers a range of sailing opportunities, so the whole family can be on the water together.

RAYC is where many Olympic sailors choose to train including gold and silver medallists Peter Burling and Blair Tuke and silver medallists Alex Maloney and Molly Meech. Sailing is a sport for life, whether you're sailing for fun or if you are planning on a pathway to race on the world stage.

SAILING VOCAB - PARTS OF THE SAIL



Did you know that sailors have their own language?!

Get ready to learn new vocabulary!

To start understanding how sails work and how they move boats we need to know the names of each part of the sail.

Each different part of a sail has a different name. The different controls affect different parts of the sail as they are adjusted.

The controls are things like the Kicker, Outhaul, Sprit Tension etc.

By adjusting controls, we tighten or loosen a different part of the sail.

When we adjust (pull tight or loosen) our controls we like to think of our sail like a bucket and the wind like water.

When the sail is flatter it can't hold as much wind so this will help to depower our boat, making it easier to slow down. By flattening the sail when it is windy, the boat will tip over less.

When our sail is deeper it can hold LOTS of wind, so this helps us gain power in our sail. We usually have a deeper sail when there is less wind around.

NO GO ZONE

When learning the points of sail, one of the most important and often frustrating is the 'no go zone'. This is an area pointing straight into the wind. When in this zone our boat can't sail and the sail flaps like a flag!

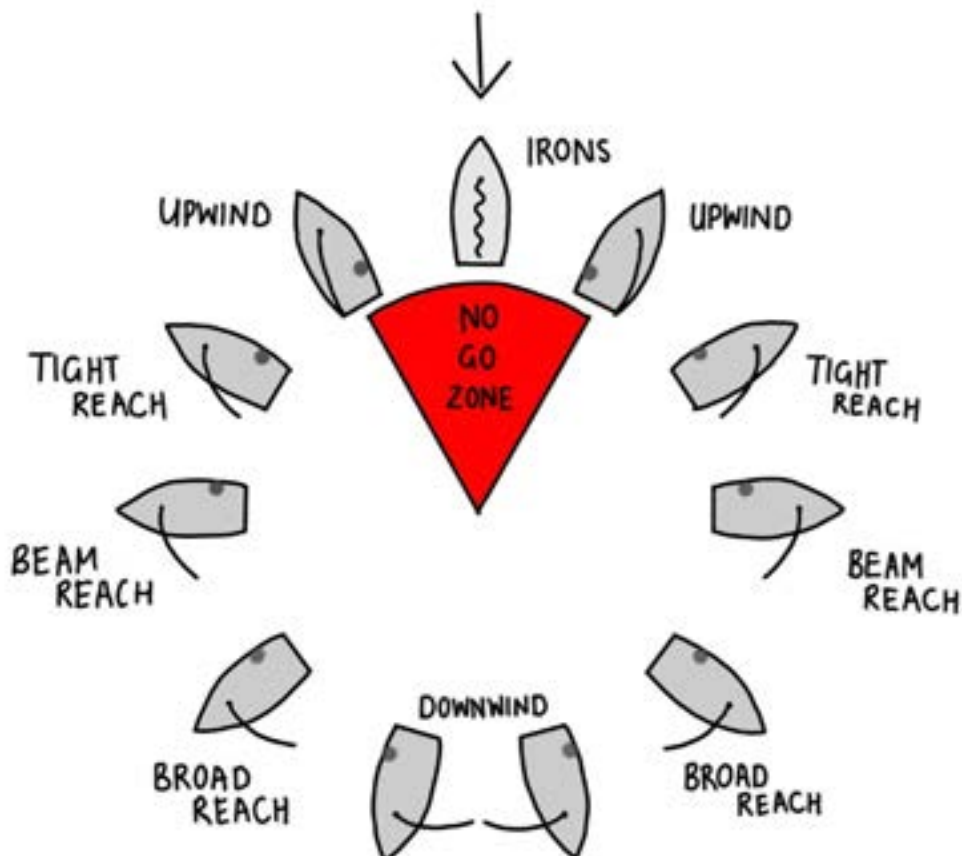
If you get stuck in this zone you lose all the power in the sail which means the boat can't steer or tack its way out! You feel like you are going nowhere.

To escape the 'no go zone' we need to do the following steps in order:

- PUSH the tiller
- PUSH out the boom so wind fills the wrong side of the sail
- PULL the tiller to turn away from the wind and back to an upwind/beam reach
- PULL in the mainsheet if we let it out

Remember! PUSH, PUSH, PULL, PULL

We're going to add a few more sail positions and lingo to our points of sail diagrams
This diagram is adding the follow Points of Sail
Tight Reach, Broad Reach and Sailing by the lee



WEATHER & TIDES – OKAHU BAY

Okahu Bay is a sheltered area with generally good protection from any big waves or wind. Even in a sheltered bay you should always check the forecast before going sailing.

Here we have a picture of Okahu Bay.

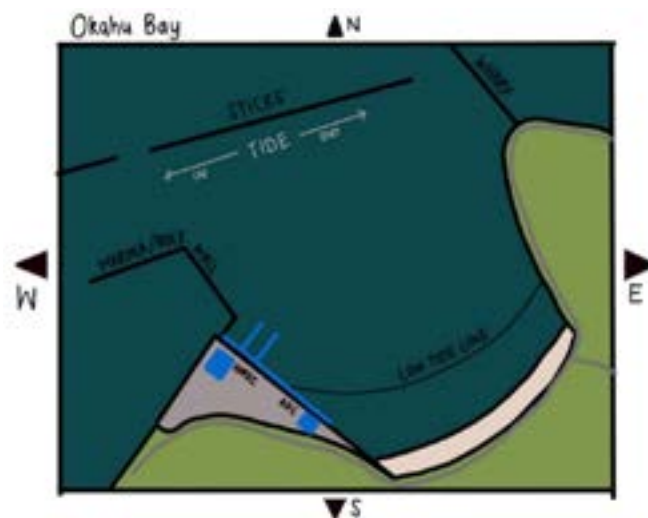
The directions of the compass will help to work out where the wind is coming from. So, if the wind is a northerly it is coming from North Head.

The tide is always moving in the bay – even though we don't feel it a lot of the time

When the tide is out the bay has less water and we can sail in less places.

When checking the forecasts for sailing online, make sure of these 3 things.

1. Wind Strength and Direction
2. Tide Direction and Time
3. Temperature



Before you visit the club, check out our PredictWind webcam.

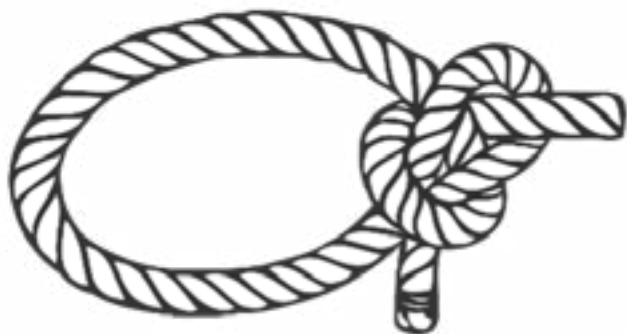
Available on our website or on the PredictWind App!



MORE KNOTS

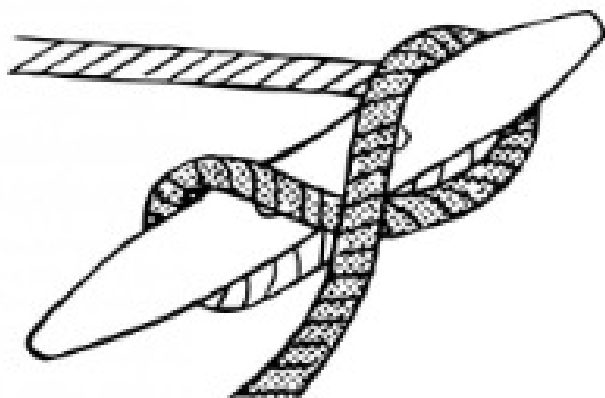
There are more knots to learn! In Optimist Level 2 you need to learn how to tie a "BOWLINE" and how to attach a rope to a "HORN CLEAT".

Check out these ones and remember to practice at home!



Bowline

This knot is a secure loop in the end of a piece of rope. It has many uses like to fasten a mooring line to a ring or a post. Under load, it does not slip or bind. With no load it can be untied easily. Two bowlines can be linked together to join two ropes. Its principal shortcoming is that it cannot be tied, or untied, when there is a load on the standing end.



Horn Cleat

This knot is used to secure halyards, but to also tie your boat to a dock! This is a very versatile knot that will come in handy across an array of situations.

Practice your knot tying! It's a skill that always comes in handy
And check out the videos for information



ADVANCED GYBING

Now we've learnt how to gybe it's time to start thinking about few extra things that can help us.

One technique to improve gybes is using bodyweight to help turn the boat. This is called 'rolling' or roll gybing.

We lean out on the windward side and tip the boat a little bit on top of ourselves, then we give the mainsheet a pull to swap the boom across, as we do this we move our weight from one side to the other. You should feel the boat speed up as you sit down on the new side.



Another technique at level 2 when gybing, is looking for and using waves. Waves can pick up our boats and push them forwards which means we can move even faster when travelling downwind.

By pulling the mainsheet to 'pump' the sail, keeping the boat on the wave and propelling the boat forwards.



Here's a video of an Opti 'pumping' on some waves. If you find yourself in this position, hold on tight!

ADVANCED TACKLING

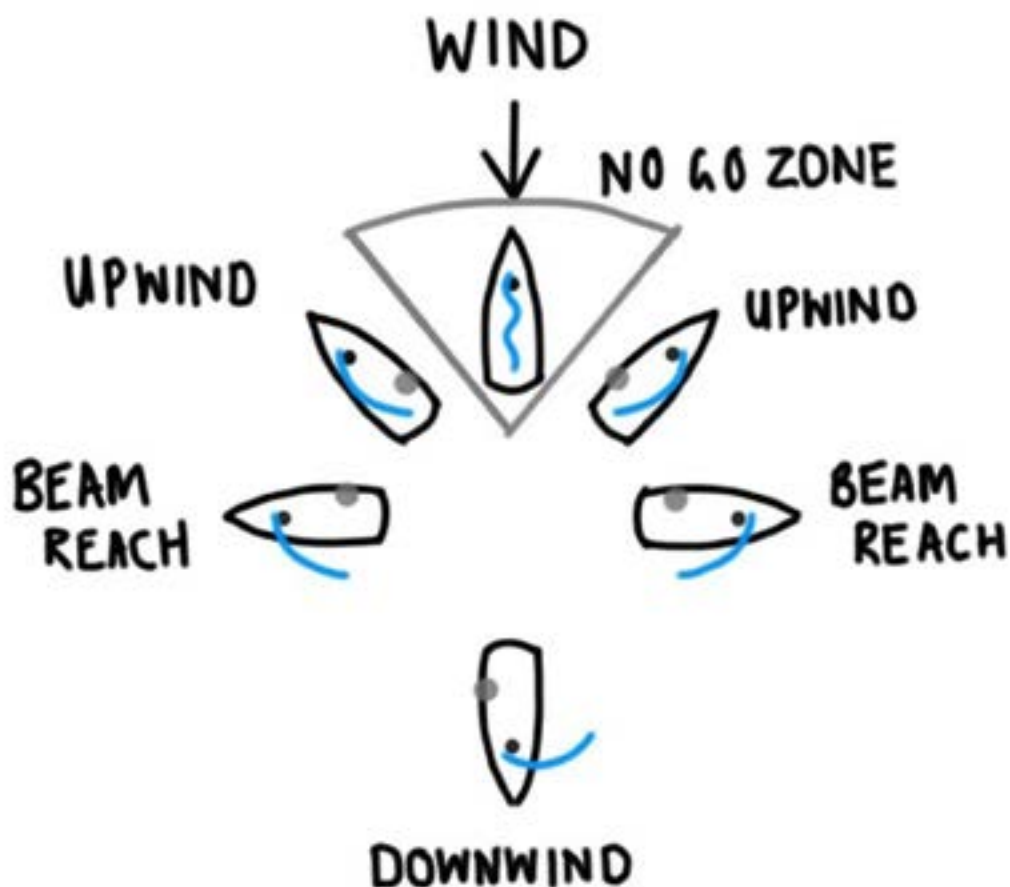
Here are some more things to think about when tacking that will help with the speed and control of the boat.

- Get the boat moving fast before tacking. This will stop us from getting stuck in the no go zone and help keep the boat moving after the tack.
- Sailing on the edge of the no go zone will also help us when tacking, as the distance we need to travel to the next tack is as small as possible.

We will also start to look at 'rolling' or roll tacking our boat. Similarly, to roll gybing we use our body weight to help turn the boat.

When we roll tack, we wait on the windward side as the boat moves through the tack and tip the boat on top of ourselves.

When we sit on the new side our body weight will flatten the boat and this will cause the boat to accelerate.



BOAT HANDLING SKILLS

At Level 2 we start to learn some more skills and manoeuvres which help us have better control over our boat. We are going to learn how to come along side, stop and start our boat and sail backwards!

Coming alongside is super important! We need to learn this skill to be able to safely come up to our coach's boat or alongside one of the pontoons at HMSC. These are made of plastic and can damage the boats if we hit them hard.



- When coming alongside, slow down the boat by easing out the mainsheet.
- As approaching, turn the boat into the wind, making it slow down even more (making sure there is still enough speed to get there!)
- Once we're alongside we can hold on and go from there.

The next skill is stopping and starting the boat. This is key to skill to know, especially how to stop our boat!

To STOP your boat

Ease/let out the mainsheet
Push and pull the rudder to act as a
brake
Turn the boat slightly into the wind/no
go zone, so our sail flaps

To START our boat

We need power - To do this:
Pull our sail back in
Steer away from the wind



Ask your coach about sailing backwards, they'll be able to explain this best on the whiteboard!

< Here's a video to show what we mean

ESSENTIALS

Our sailing essentials are the skills needed to sail a boat well. These can be broken into 5 categories.

1. Sail Trim
2. Course
3. Body Weight/Balance
4. Body
5. Centreboard

We need all these five essentials to sail our boat, and learning how to break them down helps understand what we need to do. If we miss one essential, then we might not be able to sail our boats super well!

Sail Trim – Sail trim or ‘trimming’ is adjusting the mainsheet/sail. To sail any boat well we need to trim our sail to suit the direction we are sailing and where the wind is coming from.

Course – When sailing we need to think about where we are going and what our ‘course’ is. So, if we are sailing upwind, we will need to zig-zag up the ‘course’.

Body Weight/Balance – We also need to think about balancing our boat. By sitting super far forward the ‘bow’ of the boat might dig into the water and scoop water up. This isn’t fast or good! Same if we sit too far back, the boat might start dipping down on the ‘stern’ dragging through the water.

Body – If its super light - lean into the boat and move around less to make sure we don’t ‘shake’ the wind out of the sail. In heavy wind by leaning out with your body to keep the boat flat.

Centreboard – We adjust our centreboard depending on sail position. Sailing downwind pull the centreboard up a little bit. If we did this while sailing upwind our boat would drift sideways, and we wouldn’t be able to sail where we wanted to go!



Here we see our sailor with his centreboard up on the downwind!

Get Rigged

Here's a quick checklist on what we need to check before sailing! This is while we rig our boats!

- Point the boat into the wind
- Check that the **centreboard** is tied on
- Check the **rudder** is clipped properly
- Check the **bungs** are in
- Check the **bailer** is tied on
- Check the **mast** is tied in / bungee is on
- Painter / Tow Rope** is attached

Packed Up

Here's a quick checklist on what we need to check after sailing! Packing up our boats properly and making sure all equipment is away neatly.

- Wash anything that gets wet by the sea
- Get as much water out of the boat as you can
- Take the bung out and empty
- Put centreboard and rudder under the hiking straps
- Mainsheet clipped to the front of the boat
- Mast is away in rack, sail hung nicely
- Sprit away in the storage bin
- Boat away in the shed

More Vocab – Part of the Sail

- I know the names of each part of my sail
- I understand my controls and what part of the sail they affect
- I can flatten or deepen my sail with my controls

Weather and Tides

- I always check the forecast before I go sailing
- I know when high or low tide is and how it affects my sailing
- I know my sailing area (compass points, hazards, tide direction)

More Knots

- I know how to use a horn cleat
- I can tie a bowline
- I can tie a bowline around something

Advanced Gybing

- I can use my bodyweight to gybe the boat
- I understand using waves to help gybe
- I can gybe from downwind to downwind

Advanced Tacking

- I can use my bodyweight to tack the boat
- I always have enough speed to tack

More Points of Sail

- I can draw and understand all points of sail
- I can sail around any course in the correct sail positions

Boat Handling

- I can come alongside the coach boat
- I can stop and start my boat efficiently
- I understand sailing backwards

Essentials

- I use my centreboard depending on what sail position I'm in
- I can balance my boat for light and heavy wind
- I understand how each essential effects my sailing/ability to get around a course

NEXT STEPS

If the coach has checked off all your skills in the checklist then the next step is to begin the Optimist Level 3 course!

In the Level 3 course we use all our knowledge from the last two courses to start learning the basics of how to get around a racecourse.

- How a start line works
- How to think about getting the boat quickly around a racecourse
- How to win races!



MY OPTIMIST LEVEL 2 LOG BOOK

Date	Wind Direction & Strength	Activities We Did	What I Did Well	What Can I Improve On

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WHAT'S NEXT?

OPTIMIST LEVEL 3

In the Optimist Level 3 course we use all our knowledge from the last two courses to start learning the basics of how to get around a racecourse.

rayc.co.nz/academy