

Piper PA-15 Vagabond Model Guide

The Piper PA-15 Vagabond is a two-seat, single-engine piston light aircraft built from 1948 to 1950. It is certificated in the Normal Category with a Lycoming O-145-B2 engine rated at 65 hp, a 1100 lb maximum weight and 12 gallons of fuel. Acrobatics, including spins, are prohibited.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Two seats, 65 hp Lycoming O-145-B2, 1100 lb maximum weight, only 40 lbs of baggage allowed.
- Never-exceed speed is 110 knots; maneuvering speed is 76 knots. Acrobatics and spins are prohibited.
- Inspect the overhead transparency closely: one 1999 UK incident saw it detach in flight.
- Piper builds spare parts only for the type, so confirm part sourcing before you buy.

LIMITS AND LOADING

Maximum weight is 1100 lbs, with 40 lbs of baggage. The fuselage tank holds 12 gallons and oil capacity is 1 gallon. Fuel is 80 minimum octane. The CG range is (+12.5) to (+19.0), datum at the wing leading edge. A 6-gallon auxiliary tank kit is listed as an approved option.

OVERHEAD TRANSPARENCY FAILURE

In 1999 the roof transparency of a 1948 PA-15 detached at 1500 feet and 85 mph, forcing a landing. The owners blamed UV aging, acrylic stress fractures, screws with no clearance, overtightening and cap strips hiding cracks. They fitted Lexan and drilled oversize holes.

ENGINE CARE AND PAPERWORK

Lycoming SB 480C recommends oil changes at 50 hours with full-flow filtration or 25 hours with a pressure screen. It sets a four-month maximum between changes for filter systems. Check the filter or screen for metal. A current weight and balance report must be aboard.

SPECIFICATIONS

Engine	Lycoming O-145-B2
Engine Power Hp	65
Seats	2
Fuel Capacity Gal	12
Oil Capacity Gal	1
Auxiliary Fuel Tank Option Gal	6
Propeller Diameter Min Inches	66
Propeller Diameter Max Inches	70

PERFORMANCE

Family Max Range Nm	500
Family Max Cruise Speed Kts	80
Family Max Service Ceiling Ft	12500

V-SPEEDS

Maneuvering Speed Kts	76
Max Structural Cruising Speed Kts	87
Never Exceed Speed Kts	110

WEIGHT & BALANCE

Max Weight Lbs	1100
Max Baggage Lbs	40
Fuel Capacity Gal	12
Oil Capacity Gal	1

SAFETY NOTES

- Acrobatics, including spins, are prohibited. A 'No Smoking' placard is required on the instrument panel.
- Remove the transparency cap strips periodically to inspect the fasteners and the transparency edges for cracks.
- Skiplane landing distance is about 20% longer than the landplane's. Lower temperatures or other snow conditions increase ski friction.