

OXYGEN FOR LIGHT AIRCRAFT

Equipment list:

- O2 tank (rent or purchase)
- regulator (rent or purchase)
- nasal cannula (purchase or recycle)
- humidifier bottle (purchase or recycle)

Sources:

O2 tanks can be most economically rented or purchased from a welding supplier such as Sunset Hardware. Medical supply stores (Jim's, Lincare, Apria, etc.) charge much more for exactly the same oxygen (there is no difference between "welding grade" O2 and "medical" O2). When traveling, larger FBO's can trade out or refill your tanks, or you can trade tanks at the local welding supply hardware.

Regulators are the most expensive part of the assembly; you may be able to find them at Sunset; medical supply stores will definitely have them.

Nasal cannulas and humidifier bottles will only be available from medical supply stores, or, possibly, from respiratory therapy departments at hospitals (Bob Shearer is dept. head at OMC). I wouldn't recommend reusing a nasal cannula (except maybe from a family member!), but humidifier bottles can be safely reused after washing in a dilute solution of vinegar.

Notes:

O2 & regulators do not require a prescription to purchase, except to bill health insurance. The nasal cannula and humidifier bottles may be classified as medical devices and require a Rx. I'm happy to provide a Rx for any pilot; leave a message at my office (360-452-3373).

I recommend use of O2 anytime you are above 10,000' daytime or 8,000 at night (the FARs allow higher altitudes). For pilots with any lung disease, high blood pressure or recent smoking history, use O2 above 8,000 anytime. Passengers do not require O2 at these altitudes, but warn them to expect transient altitude sickness (headache, dizziness).