

Private Pilot

Learning to fly is a fun and exciting experience! Being a pilot can mean the freedom to travel and explore the world from a point of view that changes how we experience familiar places. You may want to become a pilot to fly to airports around the country you never knew existed, or maybe you just love the feeling of flying. In any case becoming a pilot will bring many wonderful opportunities, satisfaction, and pride.

What does it take to become a Private Pilot? The first thing any aspiring pilot should do, is sign up for our recommended online course. When it comes to flying there's more you'll need to learn outside of the cockpit than in! With the online course you will learn about the national airspace system, how to decipher charts, how to talk to Air Traffic Control, and much more. Everything you learn in and outside the cockpit will prepare you for the two tests for the private pilot license. The first test is the FAA Computer Based Knowledge Test. It consists of 60 multiple choice questions, and you'll need a 70% or better to pass. Completing the online course will give you everything you need to ace the FAA Computer Based Knowledge Test.

Alongside taking the online course, student pilots will also go flying. A couple things students will need to get along the way include a student pilot certificate, and a medical. Your instructor will help you get Student Pilot Certificate once you start training. With this certificate, and your instructor's permission, you'll be able to **solo!** That means you can fly the plane without your instructor inside to practice landings, maneuvers, and even fly to distant airports all by yourself. Another prerequisite to soloing is a third class medical. This medical is a short examination done by an FAA-approved doctor which shows that the person is healthy enough to exercise the privileges of a pilot. With these out of the way students are well on their way to getting their certificate!

The most exciting part of training of course is flying an airplane! During flight training each student will learn various procedures. Most importantly you will learn to take off and land, but there are many in flight maneuvers to learn as well. To meet the requirements for a certificate you will have to have 40 hours of flight time. Of those 20 must be with an instructor, and you'll do a couple hours of specific things such as night flying. Once your instructor determines you are ready, and you have completed all the requirements, you will take the practical test with an FAA-Designated Pilot Examiner. The final test, aka the practical test, is split into two parts. There's an oral portion, and a flying portion. During the oral test, the examiner will ask questions and give scenarios for you to answer, but they also must ask questions about the things you missed on the FAA Computer Based Knowledge Test. So, a higher score on the FAA Computer Based Knowledge Test will lead to an easier oral. During the flying portion you'll demonstrate you can fly all the maneuvers you learned during training to a certain standard. You will fly the plane you had been training in for the test, and sometimes even at your home airport! The practical is usually between 4 and 6 hours in total (with a break or two), and once you pass, you'll be a private pilot!

As a private pilot you will be able to fly yourself and passengers wherever you'd like to go! Expenses can be shared equally between you and your passengers, but you won't be able to make money from flying until you upgrade to a Commercial Pilot Certificate. Private pilots enjoy the ability to buy or rent a plane to fly, take their friends and family places, go to any of the hundreds of public airports across the country, and travel the world from a bird's eye view.

Summary of Requirements:

- 16 years old to solo
- 17 years old to obtain a pilot certificate
- Speak, read, and write in English
- Be a United States Citizen or get TSA approval
- Apply for student pilot certificate
- Medical
- Pass FAA Computer Based Knowledge Test with 70% or better
- Have a minimum of 40 hours with include:
 - 20 hours with instructor
 - 3 hours of cross country
 - 3 hours of night flying
 - Night cross country
 - 10 take off and landings
 - 3 hours of simulated instrument time
 - 10 solo hours
 - 5 solo cross country
 - 3 towered take off and landings

(National average is 80 flight hours before taking the practical test)

Go over sections missed on FAA Computer Based Knowledge Test

Test preparation (flying and oral)

Take the practical exam!