

Frequently Asked Questions About Airplane Flight Training

This page highlights questions and answers related to airplane flight training at ARH Aviation. The FAQs are organized under a general section and then according to each specific flight training course. From the airplane flight training pages, the questions and answers are listed under each course, along with additional information related to the training program. If you have additional questions, please contact us, and we will gladly answer any questions you may have.

We provide many levels of airplane flight training for single engine. Our airplane flight training programs include:

- Private Pilot – Airplane
- Commercial Pilot – Airplane
- Instrument Rating (IFR) – Airplane
- Certified Flight Instructor (CFI) – Airplane
- Certified Flight Instructor Instrument (CFII) – Airplane
- Professional Pilot Program – Airplane

In addition to our standard airplane flight training programs, we can customize a training program for you or your organization. Please view a specific course for more information about our airplane flight training programs. For more information on custom programs, please give us a call at 479-365-3640.

We provide proficiency requirements such as Flight Reviews and Instrument Proficiency Checks. We also offer several endorsements such as Spin Training and High Performance training.

I. General Airplane Training Questions

-How do I become a Pilot?

The very first step to becoming a pilot is experiencing flying for yourself!

[Please click here to book a discovery flight with us to see if it's a right fit for you!](#)

To earn your Pilot Certificate, you will be required to pass three different tests:

1. A 60 question written exam that can be taken at any time during your training.

2. Checkride which consists of **two** portions that are meant to be done in the same day:

-The ground portion - an oral exam on the ground covering topics such as Federal Aviation Regulations, weather, airspace, human factors, aerodynamics, and more.

-The flight portion - a test in the aircraft itself, covering cross-country navigation, flight maneuvers, emergency procedures, and takeoffs and landings.

For the written and oral exams, we recommend purchasing a home-study curriculum such as those from King Schools, Sporty's, Gleim, and others. These courses often include sample questions and practice exams for the written test. Additional preparation for the oral exam can be done through ground training with an instructor.

For the flight portion of the practical test, you will fly with an instructor to build proficiency in the aircraft and practice each required maneuver. Once your instructor is satisfied that you meet the flight time, ground training time, and level of proficiency required for the checkride, they will endorse your logbook to allow you to take the practical test or checkride.

After passing all three tests, the Designated Pilot Examiner (DPE) conducting your checkride will present you with a temporary certificate allowing you to begin exercising your privileges as a pilot (you should receive your permanent certificate in the mail after a few weeks).

Please see the course information below for more detailed requirements. You will also need a Medical before you can obtain any pilot license.

-How much time and money do I need to invest?

These two questions go hand-in-hand. The longer it takes you to receive your license, it will typically cost you more money. The minimum amount of flight time required to be eligible for a private pilot certificate is 40 hours. That said, the national average for completing the certificate and passing the checkride is around 50 to 70 hours, but that depends on your aptitude. *We have had students pass their checkride in under 45 hours!*

We have seen students finish in 2-3 months while others take years to do so. The difference is the effort you put in and the aptitude you have. **Our best recommendation is to fly with us 2-3 sessions each week for optimal results.** Students who fly frequently will almost always finish the course far sooner than those who can only fly once a week.

We accept cash, check and credit card under a “Pay as you Go” clause. We also offer complete financing through Meritize.

[Click here to see our cost estimate sheet.](#)

[Click here for more information on Meritize](#)

-What aircraft does ARH use to train their students?

We operate a fleet of the world’s safest trainer aircraft, **the Cessna 172**. We are reinvesting in our aircraft by installing new overhauled engines, state-of-the-art Garmin navigation systems and Garmin primary flight displays (PFDs), and Engine Diagnostic Monitors to help us keep a watchful eye on the health of our engines for optimal safety.

We also have a Cessna 182 that complies with the FAA’s TAA requirements.

[Click here to view our fleet.](#)

-Do you accept the GI Bill?

Thank you for your service. However, we currently do not accept the GI Bill.

-What materials will I need to buy?

We recommend students purchase the following items for their Private Pilot training:

- iPad: Mini with cellular data option works best
- Foreflight subscription
- Headset (Avoid using Lightspeed if you plan on flying commercially)
- Kneeboard
- View-limiting device, such as foggles or a hood
- Headlamp with white and red light
- Current FAR/AIM : Available for free with Foreflight subscription, but for specific learning styles, a hard copy may be better.

-Pilot's Handbook of Aeronautical Knowledge: Available for free with Foreflight subscription.

-Airplane Flying Handbook: Available for free on Foreflight with subscription.

-Logbook

-I'm sold! How do I begin my flight training?

You can begin by booking an orientation with one of our flight instructors to learn more. **(insert link here. Our customers should be able to book their orientation like they can a discovery flight. This could save us time)**

-Can Fly ARH help me make this into a career?

We absolutely will. Our program can take you from a private pilot all the way to a commercial pilot...from zero to hero as they say! The best way to learn about this is to simply book an orientation with one of our flight instructors. We will help you get to where you need!

(Insert Link to Book Orientation)

-Can I start training before I turn 17?

Absolutely! We have many students that begin training at an early age. We can even pace it to where you can solo for the first time on your 16th birthday! You just can't obtain a Private Pilot certificate until you turn 17.

-Is it hard getting on the schedule? Is there a waitlist for students?

With any flight school that is growing, the schedule can get competitive at times. Here at ARH, we work tirelessly to avoid any frustration with students being able to get the time slots they want. We have 6 Cessna 172's and a top of the line maintenance team that keeps our airplanes up and running. We will match any pace that you want to fly. The student gets full authority over the training schedule. Students can book as many times as they want, and as far advance as they want. We also do not have a waitlist for students to fly.

-Do I need a tablet such as an iPad for flight training?

Back in the day pilots usually lugged briefcases, AKA flight bags, filled with necessary papers. Tablets help by shedding the paperweight, and they have changed the aviation industry in many ways!

While it is absolutely not required to purchase a tablet for flight training, many students find a tablet with an electronic flight bag (EFB) application to be an invaluable tool. EFBs offer many desirable features on a single device, including:

- Charts that are updated regularly and automatically, without the need to order new ones every month.
- Organization and storage of FAA handbooks and publications, training materials, and aircraft documents.
- Airport and facility information including runways, frequencies, procedures, and FBO information.
- Weather products and weather briefings.
- Filing, opening, and closing flight plans electronically rather than on the radio or over the phone.
- As a student pilot you will still be learning how to plan flights using the classic paper charts, a plotter, and a flight computer, but you will be allowed to use a tablet for your checkride. Regardless of whether you purchase a tablet as a student pilot, we highly recommend getting one once you begin flying as a private pilot.

If you do decide to purchase an iPad for flight training, we recommend the EFB app Foreflight with a basic subscription. It will provide anything you will need from an EFB and way more. It is **IOS only** however, so an Apple iPad or product is required for Foreflight.

-Are there any prerequisite course requirements before I can start training?

Nope! We will help you from the start if you want. We can assist you every step of the way. Our team understands that beginning flight training can be a daunting task, and we want to help, advise, and point you in the right direction.

-I am not a US citizen, but can I still learn to fly?

Yes! We can assist you with submitting the required applications and help guide you through the process. Once your application to TSA is approved, you will receive a 12 month window to complete whatever aviation course you have

applied for. We have a lot of experience with assisting students who have gone through this program.

II. Introductory Airplane Flight Experience

General Information

The introductory airplane flight lesson is a great experience. It is the recommended first step for anyone who is considering learning to fly. No prior flight time or aviation background is required. Prior to the flight, your flight instructor will go over key aspects of the aircraft controls and some required awareness training. During the flight, you will be on dual controls with the instructor and actually fly the airplane. You will be able to fly over Northwest Arkansas and will gradually be introduced to the controls and how to fly the airplane. We will perform maneuvers such as climbs, descents and turns, and you will be able to spend some time practicing taking off and landing the airplane.

-How long is the introductory flight?

The introductory flight itself lasts for about 30 minutes. However, you will spend approximately 45 minutes prior to the flight talking to an instructor about the components of the airplane.

-Will I get to fly the airplane during the intro flight?

Absolutely. You get to fly, using the controls, under the supervision of a certificated airplane flight instructor.

-Do I have to be on the controls?

No, but the whole point of the introductory flight is to try to fly the airplane. If your preference is to only ride in an airplane, one of our helicopter tours would be a better option.

[Please click here to see our helicopter tour options](#)

-How much is the introductory flight lesson?

The cost for the intro flight is \$250 and includes a **free** t-shirt and log book!

[I'm ready to book my Discovery Flight](#)

III. Private Airplane Rating Course

Obtaining your airplane license is a significant accomplishment. With an Airplane Private Pilot license you are able to fly the airplane as pilot-in-command, meaning you are the manipulator of the controls, and are the final authority, as well as being responsible for all decisions in the aircraft. The Airplane Private Pilot course is intended as the starting point for new pilots that want to start flying as a career or for people that want to fly as a hobby or for personal business.

Eligibility Requirements for the Airplane Private Pilot rating

The following items are a summary of the eligibility requirements listed in 14 CFR Part 61.103 for obtaining a Private Pilot Airplane license.

- Be at least 17 years old
- Be able to read, speak, write, and understand the English language.
- Meet the aeronautical experience requirements listed below
- Receive flight training
- Pass a written knowledge test
- Pass a practical test (i.e. a Checkride)
- Hold a student pilot certificate, sport pilot certificate, or recreational pilot certificate.

Aeronautical Experience for the Airplane Private Pilot rating

The following items are a summary of the aeronautical experience requirements listed in 14 CFR Part 61.109 for obtaining a Private Pilot Airplane license.

- At least 40 hours of total flight time
- At least 20 hours of flight training from an authorized instructor
- At least 10 hours of solo flight time

There are specific flight requirements to complete, such as cross country, night flights, that will be required during the hours listed above. We'll satisfy those.

Limitations of the Private Pilot Airplane rating

The following is a list of key limitations, but is not an exhaustive list. Review 14 CFR 61.113 and 14 CFR 61.117 for all the specific limitations related to the private pilot airplane license.

- With some minor exception, cannot operate as pilot in command for compensation or hire
- May not pay less than pro rata share of expenses related to a flight
- Cannot act as a second in command that is type certificated for more than one pilot
- Cannot act as a second in command for an aircraft that is carrying passengers or property for compensation or hire

FAQ's

-How long does it take to get a private airplane license?

Typically, it takes anywhere from 2-6 months to acquire this license on average. The regulatory minimum of hours is 40, but most people take 50-70 flight hours to certify, depending on personal aptitude. We recommend flying two or three times per week when starting out, to retain as much as possible, but learning to fly can be very flexible.

-How much does it cost to get a private airplane rating?

A private pilot certificate is going to cost in the neighborhood of \$9,500-\$11,000 in the Cessna 172. This is going to depend largely on the student's personal ability. The goal is to pass every test first try, and an applicant must have to fly to a certain standard to pass the checkride.

-Where can I fly as a Private Pilot?

We do rent our aircraft! Once you have completed our training you can fly to an area of your choice. The good ol' US of A offers over 5,000 public use airports. We encourage both pilots we have trained, and others outside of our program, to fly to some of these wonderful areas. While non-pilots are stuck flying into only airports with airline service, you will be able to fly into those smaller airports located right next to your destination.

Flying yourself to your destination will likely be faster than driving there, and it will definitely be more fun and convenient than paying for an airline ticket.

-With a Private Pilot license, will I be able to fly at night?

Yes, an airplane pilot with a private rating is able to fly the aircraft at night, assuming the aircraft is equipped for night flying.

IV. Airplane Instrument Rating

General Overview

An airplane instrument rating is beneficial for any pilot, it makes one able to fly more precisely and confidently. The instrument rating allows pilots to operate IFR equipped aircraft in adverse weather conditions. The IFR training is often included during a portion of the commercial airplane training, because the commercial rating is largely time building. Although you can obtain a commercial airplane license without an IFR rating, most employers prefer to hire an IFR qualified pilot.

Eligibility Requirements for the Airplane Instrument rating

The following items are a summary of the eligibility requirements listed in 14 CFR Part 61.65 for obtaining an airplane instrument rating.

- Hold at least a current airplane private pilot certificate, or be concurrently applying for a private pilot certificate, with an airplane, helicopter, or powered-lift rating appropriate to the instrument rating sought;
- Be able to read, speak, write, and understand the English language.
- Meet the aeronautical experience listed below
- Receive flight training
- Pass a written knowledge test
- Pass a practical test (i.e. a Checkride)

Aeronautical Experience For An Airplane Instrument Rating

The following items are a summary of the aeronautical experience requirements listed in 14 CFR Part 61.65 for obtaining an Airplane Instrument rating.

- At least 50 hours of cross-country flight time, with at least 10 hours in an airplane
- At least 40 hours of actual or simulated instrument time
- At least 15 hours of instrument training with an authorized instructor. During the training, there are specific flight requirements to complete, such as cross country flights, specific approaches, etc.

FAQ's

-What aircraft will we use for IFR training?

All of our Cessna 172's are equipped as an IFR trainer as the airplane includes all the required IFR equipment for IFR training flights.

-Will we fly the airplane in actual instrument conditions?

Yes, there will be times when you will fly in actual instrument conditions.

-What type of approaches will we fly with during the IFR training in the airplane?

Our Cessna 172's are equipped to fly VOR, LOC, ILS, and GPS approaches.

-If I have a helicopter IFR rating, will I have to take a written exam to add-on an airplane IFR rating?

No. If the pilot already has a helicopter IFR rating, they do not need to take a written exam to add an airplane IFR rating, only a practical exam.

-Do I need to have an IFR rating in the airplane to become an airplane flight instructor?

Yes, to apply for a CFI certificate and to be able to take the practical test for a CFI certificate, the applicant must hold an instrument rating.

-I have some helicopter instrument time, will this time count towards the airplane instrument training?

Yes. You need at least 40 hours total logged instrument or simulated time. Only 15 hours of this time needs to be in an airplane. However, it is difficult to complete all the requirements, such as the approaches, cross-country flights, etc. within 15 hours.

V. Airplane Commercial Pilot Rating

General Overview

The Commercial Airplane license is what legally allows you to get paid to fly. The Airplane Commercial course is required for flying airplanes as a career. Parts of the Commercial Airplane course can be completed at the same time as the Airplane Instrument Rating (IFR) course. Although you can obtain a Commercial Airplane license without an IFR rating, most employers prefer to hire an IFR qualified pilot, even if they will never have you fly in actual IFR conditions.

Eligibility Requirements for Commercial rating

The following items are a summary of the eligibility requirements listed in 14 CFR Part 61.123 for obtaining a Commercial Airplane Pilot license.

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be able to read, speak, write, and understand the English language.
- Meet the aeronautical experience listed below
- Receive flight training
- Pass a written knowledge test
- Pass a practical test (i.e. a Checkride)
- Hold at least a private pilot certificate

Aeronautical Experience for the Airplane Pilot rating

The following items are a summary of the aeronautical experience requirements listed in 14 CFR Part 61.129 for obtaining a Commercial Airplane Pilot license.

- At least 250 hours of total flight time
- At least 100 hours of total flight time in powered aircraft
- At least 50 hours of that 100 hours in powered aircraft must be in airplane
- At least 100 hours of pilot in command time
- At least 35 hours of pilot in command time in an airplane
- At least 10 hours of pilot in command in cross country flight in an airplane
- At least 20 hours of flight training in an airplane with an authorized instructor
- At least 10 hours of solo flight time (part of the 20 hours of instruction)

During the training, there are specific flight requirements to complete, such as cross country, night flights, etc.

FAQ's

-What type of work can I do with a commercial airplane rating?

With a commercial rating you can be compensated for flying an airplane. The most common first job is being a flight instructor (need the CFI rating). Aviation is an experienced based industry, the more flight hours you have the more valuable you become. Insurance on multi-million dollar machines is expensive, and potential employers want to be able to trust that you will be responsible with their aircraft. As you get flight hours, there are additional job opportunities; at 500 hours you'll meet the legal requirements to fly VFR charters under part 135 (a more strict set of rules to ensure passenger safety), at 1200 hours you are eligible to fly IFR charters under part 135, assuming you have your IFR rating and an IFR capable ship. The commercial airlines are the most popular airplane career, and the typical minimum required hours is 1500 and can vary based on the employer.

-Will you help a new commercial airplane pilot get a job?

If you have done your training with us, we can assist you in getting a job. It's a lot easier to hire the students we train as pilots as flight instructors (Need CFI/II). We can't guarantee a position, however.

VI. Certified Airplane Flight Instructor (CFI)

General Overview

Becoming an airplane CFI is typically what people do as the first step in their career as a professional pilot. Many initial flight jobs are as a CFI, building time and teaching people to fly. Being a CFI can be extremely rewarding. As an instructor, your skills will increase significantly, and it is fun to see students progress at achieving their goals. Through the CFI training course, you will learn how to instruct airplane students in a safe and efficient manner, as well as refine your own skills.

Eligibility Requirements for the Airplane Flight Instructor certificate

The following items are a summary of the eligibility requirements listed in 14 CFR

Part 61.183 for obtaining a Commercial Airplane Flight Instructor rating.

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be able to read, speak, write, and understand the English language
- Hold a commercial airplane pilot certificate or ATP certificate, with an instrument rating or privileges appropriate for the rating being sought
- Meet the aeronautical experience listed below
- Receive flight training
- Pass a written knowledge test (fundamentals of instruction and standard FAA written)
- Pass a practical test (i.e. a Checkride)

Aeronautical Experience for the Airplane Flight Instructor Certificate

There are no regulatory hour minimums for obtaining an airplane flight instructor certificate; however, you'll at least need a commercial pilot certificate so you'll have to at least meet those minimums. Typically people starting training for a CFI certificate have around 150-170 total flight hours.

VII. Certified Airplane Instrument Instructor (CFII)

General Overview

The Airplane Certified Flight Instructor Instrument (CFII) is often referred to as an Airplane Instrument Instructor. As an Airplane CFII (C / F / double I), you will be able to conduct flight and ground lessons for eligible airplane pilots working towards their airplane instrument rating.

Airplane Instrument Instructor

During the Airplane Instrument Instructor Course you will learn concepts of airplane instrument flying but will do these actions from the flight instructor seat. You will also learn the techniques to teach IFR flying concepts to students working on their airplane instrument rating.

Eligibility Requirements for the Airplane Instrument Instructor rating

The following items are a summary of flight instructor requirements listed in 14 CFR 61.183.

- Be at least 18 years old

- Be able to read, speak, write, and understand the English language
- Hold an airplane pilot certificate or airline transport pilot certificate
- Hold an airplane instrument rating
- Pass a knowledge test (if not an add-on rating)
- Pass a practical test (i.e. a Checkride)

Aeronautical Experience for the Airplane Instrument Instructor rating

Although there are few aeronautical experience requirements, the following is the only requirement listed in 14 CFR 61.183. This PIC requirement is already met during the procedure to obtain a commercial airplane rating.

- Log at least 15 hours as pilot in command in an airplane.

FAQ's

-Can I take the airplane IFR and airplane CFII checkride with only one checkride?

No. You must take the airplane IFR and airplane flight instructor instrument as two different checkrides. One of the prerequisites for an instrument flight instructor is to have an instrument rating in the appropriate category and class of aircraft for the rating sought. As such, the paperwork for your airplane IFR rating needs to be completed before being eligible for the airplane flight instructor instrument rating. The Airplane CFII could be scheduled as soon as the day after passing the Airplane IFR rating.