

Instrument Rating Test Information (September 2021)

Cross Country Destination: Your destination will be assigned when you schedule your test.

Examiner Weight: 185 Pounds. **Baggage Weight:** 10 pounds.

Test Fee: Please refer to the [Fee schedule](#) page for current information.

Scheduling and Weather Policy: Please refer to the [Fee Schedule](#) page for details.

Required Endorsements:

Please refer to the [current version](#) of Advisory Circular [61-65 \(H\)](#). You will need the endorsements listed below to take your Instrument Airplane practical test. Have your instructor review your logbook to ensure that these endorsements are complete and current. Missing endorsements may cause a cancellation/reschedule and incur a cancellation fee. Other endorsements may apply, but at minimum we will need the following:

- A.1 Prerequisites for Practical Test (61.39)
- A.2 Review of deficiencies on Knowledge Test (61.39)
- A.38 Aeronautical Knowledge Test (61.35 A1 and 61.65A & B)
- A.39 Flight proficiency and practical test (61.65 A6)
- A.40 Prerequisites for Instrument Practical Test (61.39(a))
- A.65 Completion of a Flight Review (61.56). You will need proof of a current flight review or the equivalent to be PIC and take this test.
- A.73 Retesting after failure of a practical or knowledge test (61.49), if applicable.

Required Documents:

Please ensure that you have ALL the following (applicable) documents, in addition to the required endorsements listed above. If you are missing documents or paperwork, I won't be able to conduct your test and we will need to reschedule for another day. This will result in a minimum \$200.00 rescheduling fee.

- Completed application in [IACRA](#)
- Paper copy of the 8710-1 printed from IACRA with a the CFI signature. (Hopefully we won't need this, but if IACRA is unavailable we can conduct the test with a paper copy in hand).
- Knowledge test results
- Pilot logbook with **all** pages totaled
- Record of [ground instruction](#) received (This is missing **too often!**) I can't do the test without it. You are paying your CFI to give you flight and ground training, make them log it as required.
- Government issued photo Identification. Passport, US Driver License, Military ID, etc. Foreign Driver Licenses not acceptable.
- Valid, signed medical certificate (Original, no photocopies), Third Class or higher OR Basic-med
- Pilot certificate
- Required aircraft documents (AR(R)OW, as applicable) and required supplements.
- All current aircraft maintenance records (AV1ATES, as applicable. Please confirm any pertinent AD compliance!) photocopies acceptable. ([Airworthiness checklist link](#))
- Completed cross-country navlog, with supporting documentation (charts, weather briefing information, performance data, etc). Navlog **MUST** have all relevant flight and airport information for discussion. (Not just waypoints)

Test Advice:

-Go through the maintenance records with your instructor well in advance of the test date. Verify that all the inspections are up to date, **ESPECIALLY** the airworthiness directives. Remember, 91.7 says that it is your responsibility as PIC to make sure the airplane is airworthy. While it is the owner's responsibility to keep it airworthy under 91.405, it is your job to make sure the owner is doing their job. Please review 91.417 carefully. Lack of or missing AD Compliance notes is a consistent issue. If they are not documented correctly, I cannot and will not fly your airplane, which means your test is cancelled. Blanket statements such as "All ADs are current" are not acceptable. The FAA is very clear about the requirements. Remember that recurring ADs need to have their next due date listed too. This has been enough of an issue recently that I have adopted an "unprepared policy". If your test is delayed or can't be conducted because of missing information that, in reality is part of the test, I will discontinue or disapprove the test and you will incur a cancellation fee to reschedule.

****CLEAN THE AIRCRAFT WINDSHIELD AND WINDOWS! (No explanation needed) ****

-Read the manual for your airplane, especially the systems section. **Read the supplements and pilot guides for the avionics installed in your airplane.** Failures on an instrument check ride can often be attributed to a lack of functional knowledge of installed avionics and systems. You need to have a solid understanding of installed avionics. Know what buttons to push to make it do what YOU want it to do. If it's installed in the aircraft and functional, you will be required to demonstrate its use as related to normal flight operations. A common failure item on this test is configuration and sequencing when using certain GPS NAV systems. It is easy to make a mistake. Know before you go. Part of my job during this test is to make sure you can respond appropriately and timely to unexpected situations, and that involves being able to handle your avionics quickly and effectively. (Think reroutes or holding patterns)

-Read the ACS. The whole thing. ESPECIALLY appendix 5 and A-11. This describes how your test will be conducted and what the expectations are.

-Electronic flight bags with Foreflight or Garmin Pilot are acceptable for use but be sure that you are comfortable with the technology and how to use it. I often hear "I just started using this, so I am not sure how to" You will be tested on the tools you bring to the test. Tools are designed to help, not hinder, if used properly.

-Get a thorough weather briefing from Flight Service, Foreflight, or other "approved" source. Printing METARs and TAFs from aviationweather.gov is only the beginning. Consider "all available information" pertaining to your planned flight.

-Don't forget to look at the NOTAMs. Missing a NOTAM could mean the difference between missing or hitting that temporary crane. If the minimums have changed, you (we) need to know about that. Disregarding this vital piece of information often gets people killed.

-Know where to find extra information about airports, alternates, etc. Look at the details. It is your responsibility to know all the pertinent data about your flight. Are there non-standard alternate minimums at your alternate? What is non-standard about them?

-Please dress comfortably. If you are a smoker or suffer from halitosis, please be considerate. I have respiratory issues that do not respond well to either.

-Bring a snack or some lunch. Sometimes the test runs long, especially if we have any weather delays. No one flies well when hungry.

-Take your time. A lot of the mistakes I see during tests are simply the result of people rushing into things without thinking about what they're doing. If you take an extra 10 minutes to finish the test, that's fine. Watch the details. Use a checklist. I see a lot of silly mistakes simply because we didn't verify that we had completed loading or briefing a procedure and now we're in the wrong mode, wrong frequency, even wrong approach loaded etc.

-If it doesn't look right, go around. If something is obviously wrong, descending on the approach isn't going to make it better. Call the missed and admit the mistake. Position and situational awareness cannot be overemphasized.

-Landing from an instrument approach is a mandatory task. I expect you to execute a normal landing at the end of the approach. That means that the landing should be on center line, in the prescribed touchdown zone at the right pitch attitude, with the proper crosswind corrections applied, on the main wheels first.

Questions?

FIRST, review this information with your CFI. He/she should be able to answer all questions regarding preparation for the FAA Practical Test to ACS standards. If you have an administrative question or need further clarification, you may call and leave a message or text me. I'm here to help facilitate the process of you getting your Instrument Rating. I do spend a lot of time in airplanes and I'm not always available to answer my phone. A text message is the most reliable and preferred way to reach me.

REMEMBER: There is little or no room for error when flying in IMC. Situational and positional awareness is key to proper operational awareness.