

Commercial Pilot (AS/MEL) Test Information (May 2024)

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

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

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

Required Endorsements:

Please refer to the current edition of Advisory Circular [61-65 \(H\)](#). You will need the endorsements listed below to take your Commercial Pilot 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. [Complex](#), [High Performance](#))

- A.1 Prerequisites for Practical Test (61.39)
- A.2 Review of deficiencies on Knowledge Test (61.39)
- A.34 Aeronautical Knowledge Test (61.35 A1, 61.123c, and 61.125) (NOTE: Your knowledge test results alone is not sufficient. We need this endorsement too!)
- A.35 Flight proficiency/Preparation for test (61.123e, 61.127 and 61.129)
- 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.72 Act as PIC when Pilot does not hold appropriate category/class rating. 61.31(d)(2). If applicable.
- 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 endorsements, I won't be able to conduct your test and we will need to reschedule for another day. This could result in a minimum \$300.00 rescheduling fee.

- Completed application in [IACRA](#)
- Paper copy of the 8710-1 printed from IACRA with a valid CFI signature. (Hopefully we don't need this, but if IACRA is unavailable, we can conduct the test with a signed 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 instruction, make them log it as required.
- Government issued photo Identification. Passport, US Driver License, Military ID, etc.
- Pilot Certificate and valid, signed Medical Certificate (Original, no photocopies), Third Class or higher, OR Basic-med
- All aircraft documentation (AR(R)OW, as applicable) and required supplements.
- All current aircraft maintenance records (AV1ATES etc.), as applicable. (Photocopies acceptable). Please confirm pertinent AD compliance! ([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: **(CLEAN THE AIRCRAFT WINDSHIELD AND WINDOWS)**

- 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 in 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.

-Read the ACS. The whole thing. Especially Appendix 1, 2, 3. (**as applicable**). The ACS describes how your test will be conducted and what the expectations are.

-Read the manual for your airplane, especially the systems section. Know the avionics, be familiar with performance, weight and balance, etc. Things like V-Speeds, max gross weight, zero fuel weight, fuel capacity, etc., should be memory items confirmed with checklists.

- Electronic flight bags with Foreflight or Garmin Pilot are acceptable for use. Be sure that you're 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 evaluated on the use of 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. Consider "all available information" pertaining to your planned flight. Remember to check for NOTAMs and TFRs.

-Know where to find extra information about airports, airspaces, etc. Hot spots are a great example. How much runway will you have if LAHSO is in effect? You must be confident and knowledgeable when exercising your privilege.

-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 weather delays. Hunger can be a distraction.

-If the option is available, go around. Many accidents can be avoided simply by going around.

-You're going to have a simulated engine failure during your flight. There will most likely be a runway nearby when that happens. You will be expected to touchdown on that runway. Plan accordingly. Many applicants fly their approach with no intention of landing, which totally defeats the point of the exercise. Pick a touchdown spot, and then fly an approach that will get you there.

Common Errors

-Privileges and limitations. What exactly can you do with that new Commercial Pilot Certificate? We will discuss a few scenarios relating to your new privilege. While we cannot cover all possible situations, if you know the rules then it should be easy to evaluate each scenario and make a determination.

-Landings: Pay attention to the crosswinds! The ACS is very clear that we need to get the airplane straight and touch down on the centerline, main wheels first, in the touchdown zone. The tolerances are tighter at the Commercial Pilot level. Your landings don't need to be perfect, but they need to be technically correct. On the short field and power off 180 especially, remember that you're trying to land on your point, not crash into it. The landing needs to be under control, not just an arrival on the point.

-Power off 180: It has been my experience that most applicants are paranoid about coming up short, and they overcompensate for that. Most unsatisfactory power off 180s occur because the applicant floated too much and landed long. Extra speed is not your friend on this maneuver. Don't be afraid to slip the airplane, especially down low. A slip is NOT an unstable approach! Applicants ask, "Can I go around on a power off 180"? The answer is: we need to get it right the first time. That's the whole point of the maneuver. If I think that something outside of your control disrupted the maneuver (traffic or ATC instructions), I may ask for it again. The option is mine, NOT yours. If you did not make the point because you misread the wind or turned base too late etc... sorry, dealing with those variables is the whole point of the maneuver. Manage the energy.

-Stalls Slips and Skids: You should be comfortable demonstrating stalls to a full aerodynamic stall. "To the break" basically. The power on stall is going to happen with the engine making power, not at idle power setting. The ACS has a provision that allows for reduced power settings, but that's up to the DPE and it's in place to allow for airplanes with more powerful engines than your average trainer. Plan to use full throttle unless otherwise instructed. Remember we can do stalls either straight and level, or in a bank (see ACS). Practice stalls both ways. Remember as well that there are other types of stalls that may not be tested on the check ride. Discuss them with your CFI to ensure complete training. Make sure you go through things like the cross-controlled stall, etc. The point is to be able to recognize the warning signs of these stalls and take corrective action before they happen. **Chandelles, Lazy Eights, Eights on Pylons etc.**, the aircraft must be kept in coordinated flight. The ball must be in the center, or the pyramid must look like a triangle.

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.