Flight Instructor (Add-on Rating) Test Information (Jan 2025)

Lesson Plan: You will need to prepare a lesson plan on a maneuver to be taught both on the ground and in flight. Your lesson plan will be assigned when you schedule your test. This changes each test.

Examiner Weight: 185 Pounds

Baggage Weight: 10 pounds, plus whatever you normally keep in the airplane.

Test Fee: Please call for current test fee information.

Scheduling and Weather Policy: Please refer to the Scheduling page for details.

Required Endorsements:
Please refer to the current edition of advisory circular 61-65. You will need the following endorsements to take your CFI practical test. Please 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 you will need the following:

-A.1 Prerequisites for Practical Test (61.39)
-A.2 Review of deficiencies on Knowledge Test (61.39)
-A.42 Flight Instructor aeronautical knowledge test (61.183g) (if applicable)
-A.45 Spin Training (61.183 i1) (NOTE: If you already hold a fixed-wing CFI certificate and have previously demonstrated spins and recovery, be prepared to show this endorsement)
-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 $300.00 rescheduling fee.

-Completed application in IACRA
-Paper copy of the 8710-1 printed from IACRA with a valid 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 pay 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 are not acceptable.
-Valid, signed medical certificate (Original, no photocopies, Third Class or higher) OR Basic-med
-Pilot certificate and CFI certificate
-Required aircraft documents (ARROW, as applicable) and required supplements.
-Current aircraft maintenance records (AV1ATES, as applicable. Please confirm any pertinent AD compliance!) photocopies acceptable.
-Lesson plan for assigned maneuver

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. AD Compliance 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 may incur a cancellation fee to reschedule.

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

-Bring some snacks, or lunch. Sometimes tests run long, especially if we get a weather delay. No one flies well when they're hungry.

-Read the manual. Read the handbook. Go find the source. "My instructor said" is almost always the wrong answer on a CFI test. Don't tell your student what the answer is, show them where to find it.

-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.

General advice: Think like an instructor and think like an examiner. You're supposed to be teaching this stuff. How would you present this material to someone who has never seen it before? If you were sitting in my seat, what information would you want to see in order to be sure that the applicant knows their stuff? Take the time to actually read the ACS and think about it from the CFI's perspective.

Fundamentals of Instruction: Because this is an add-on rating, we are not required to cover the FOI. However, it is still fair game during the oral exam and should not be ignored. Remember to apply all the lessons and theories from the Aviation Instructors Handbook as you develop your syllabus, lesson plans, etc. If it appears a further examination of the FOI is warranted during the oral exam, it is available for testing.

Technical Subject areas: I would suggest reviewing the ACS to get familiar with the required items. Many people struggle with logbook endorsements. Basically, you should be able to walk me through the training and paperwork process for a Private student, Commercial, etc. Common problem areas include, systems and airspace. People don't go into enough detail. For example, if they're talking about airspace, they can tell me about A/B/C/E/G airspace okay, but they can't really work through special use airspace. Same thing with systems. Most people have a general, high-level overview of how stuff works, but they don't really understand the details, which means they have a real hard time answering those "okay, but why?" kind of questions. Again, remember that you are now the expert that students call when they don't understand how something works.

Lesson Plan: Although we typically do not assign a lesson plan for the oral exam, I suggest creating them and having them available anyway. You'll need them as soon as you start teaching, so why not have them available for you during the test?

Flight Portion: Definitely be comfortable teaching each maneuver. If you need an additional resource for the maneuvers and how to teach them, the University of North Dakota has a fantastic video series on YouTube that does a great job of breaking things down into manageable pieces to help ensure you understand what's going on. They're easy to find, just go to YouTube and search for "UND Chandelles" or whatever maneuver you want. Think about foundational skills here as well. If you're going to do a Chandelle, what basic skills are involved?

Stalls: Be comfortable taking the airplane all the way to the break in each stall, including the cross-controlled stall. Remember, we're teaching someone else what the airplane looks and feels like. I see a lot of CFIs that are honestly afraid of full stalls. They shouldn't be. Here's a good exercise for you: Think about a cross-controlled stall. If we spin, which way will it go? Now, go try one in the airplane, and let it get deep into the stall. What the airplane actually does may surprise you (In a good way). Now that you've seen it, why did that happen? Explore it. **Go slow.** I don't want you to rush through the stalls, I want you to break it down and teach it to me. Many flight instructors seem to be afraid of stalls. That doesn't exactly inspire confidence in your student.

Engine Failure: We're not teaching this task effectively. If you have a student who has never experienced an engine failure before, what would you want to show them in order for them to understand a successful method for handling it themselves? I'm going to ask you to teach/demonstrate a simulated engine failure. You can teach it any way you want but be advised I'm going to have you do it over a runway and you will be expected to put the wheels on the ground in a controllable manner. Your student should be capable of replicating what you just demonstrated to them. Luck should not be part of the discussion.

Take Off and Landings: We'll do a few to Commercial standards. Normal, Short Field, Soft Field, Power Off 180s (as applicable). You will demonstrate a couple, and I'll be playing student and making some mistakes on at least one landing. The landings don't need to be perfect, but they do need to be technically correct and within ACS. Don't be lazy about crosswind correction, centerline, etc.

-Slips and Skids: I've had a lot of issues recently with people who can't tell the difference. That's a problem. We need to be able to identify each, use the appropriate one, and explain the aerodynamics involved. I've had a number of people who tell me they're going to use a slip, but then show me a skid instead, and don't see that as a problem. Deliberate skids thinking we're doing a slip are not acceptable. Watch for your student doing a skid. This is

how spins happen. You should be able to explain the aerodynamics involved, what the difference is, how to identify the slip vs. the skid, and why we care.

Questions?
Text me and ask! I'm here to help. You can try calling me too, but I do spend a lot of time in airplanes and I'm not always available to answer. A text message is the most reliable and preferred way to reach me.