

BASIC REVIEW OF FAR'S FOR THE PRIVATE PILOT

FAR 61.23: Medical certificates: Requirement and duration

Third Class

↓40 yrs. = valid 60 calendar months; ↑40yrs–24mo

Required to execute student, rec., sport, private pilot, and instructor privileges

Second Class

ALL ages = 12 calendar months

Required to execute commercial pilot privileges

First Class

↓40yrs. = 12 calendar months; ↑40yrs = 6 calendar months

Required to execute airline transport pilot privileges

→ *Not only must we pay regular visits to our aviation medical examiner, we must also medically self certify ourselves before each flight. A good way to ensure that we are able to fly is by using the “I’m Safe” personal checklist from the Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM):*
“I’m physically and mentally safe to fly, check... **Illness, Medication, Stress, Alcohol, Fatigue, Emotion.**”

FAR 61.56: Flight review

(a) a flight review consists of a minimum of 1 hour of flight training and 1 hour of ground training. The review must include:

- (1) A review of the current general operating and flight rules of part 91 of this chapter; and
- (2) A review of those maneuvers and procedures that, at the discretion of the person giving the review, are necessary for the pilot to demonstrate the safe exercise of the privileges of the pilot certificate.

(c) Except as provided in paragraphs (d), (e), and (g) of this section, no person may act as pilot in command of an aircraft unless, since the beginning of the 24th calendar month before the month in which that pilot acts as pilot in command, that person has—

- (1) Accomplished a flight review given in an aircraft for which that pilot is rated by an authorized instructor; and
- (2) A logbook endorsed from an authorized instructor who gave the review certifying that the person has satisfactorily completed the review.

→ *In simple English this means that you need to perform a flight review every two years, and the instructor who conducts the review must endorse your logbook. This is a sensible, safety enhancing FAR. A good pilot is always learning, and a flight review is a golden opportunity to put your skills to the test, without the pressure of a flight test environment. During your flight review, you will no doubt learn some new things and increase your overall confidence level as a pilot.*

FAR 91.7: Civil Aircraft Airworthiness

It is the PIC’s responsibility to ensure the aircraft is airworthy. The following items are required to be complied with in order to deem an aircraft airworthy:

Required Maintenance

Airworthiness Directives
VOR: every 30 days if IFR (§91.171)
Inspections 100 HR (if the ac is for hire) & Annual
Alt/Pitot: 24 (§91.411)
Transponder: 24 (§91.413)
ELT: 12 (§91.207)

Required Documents (§91.203, §91.9, AC 20-65A)

Airworthiness Certificate
Registration
Radio Station License
Operating Limitations
Weight and Balance

FAR 91.205: Powered Civil Aircraft: Instrument and Equipment Requirements

→ The following items are required for flight. If any of the following items are inoperative or missing, the flight must be discontinued. A special flight permit may be applied for to deliver the aircraft to a location to fix the instrument/item.

VFR Day

Airspeed Indicator
 Tachometer
 Oil Temperature
 Mag Compass
 Altimeter
 Temp Gauge
 Oil Press
 Fuel Quantity
 Landing Gear Indicator
 Anti-collision lights
 Manifold Pressure Gauge
 ELT
 Seat Belts

VFR Night

VFR Day Plus...
 Fuses
 Landing Light (for hire)
 Anti-collision Lights
 Position Lights
 Source of power

FAR 61.57: Recent flight experience for Pilot in command

(a) No person may act as a pilot in command of an aircraft carrying passengers unless that person has made at least three takeoffs and landings within the preceding 90 days.

(b) Night takeoff and landing experience.

(1) No person may act as pilot in command of an aircraft carrying passengers during the period beginning 1 hour after sunset and ending 1 hour before sunrise unless within the preceding 90 days that person has made at least three takeoffs and three landings to a full stop during the period beginning 1 hour after sunset and ending 1 hour before sunrise.

→ Additionally, you must comply with the 24 calendar month Flight Review requirement (previously called Biannual Flight Review) and have a valid medical certificate.

FAR 91.155: Basic VFR weather minimums

GULF	G↑10,000 MSL	
	D&N	1,000FT above 5SM vis ☁ 1SM horiz. 1,000FT below
	G↑1,200 AGL	
	D	1,000FT above 1SM vis ☁ 2,000FT horiz. 500FT below
	N	1,000 FT above 3SM vis ☁ 2,000FT horiz. 500FT below
	G↓1,200 AGL	
	D	1SM Clear of Clouds
	N	1,000 FT above 3SM vis ☁ 2,000FT horiz. 500FT below
N	If within ½ mile of rwy... Visibility between 3-1SM Clear of Clouds	

ECHO	E↑10,000 MSL	
	D&N	1,000FT above 5SM vis ☁ 1SM horiz. 1,000FT below
	E↓10,000 MSL	
	D&N	1,000 FT above 3SM vis ☁ 2,000FT horiz. 500FT below
	D	1,000 FT above 3SM vis ☁ 2,000FT horiz. 500FT below
	C	1,000 FT above 3SM vis ☁ 2,000FT horiz. 500FT below
	B	3SM Clear of Clouds
	A	IFR ONLY

FAR 91.119: Minimum safe altitudes

Except when necessary for takeoff or landing, no person may operate an aircraft below the following altitudes:

- (a) Anywhere. An altitude allowing, if a power unit fails, an emergency landing without undue hazard to persons or property on the surface.
- (b) Over congested areas. Over any congested area of a city, town, or settlement, or over any open air assembly of persons, an altitude of 1,000 feet above the highest obstacle within a horizontal radius of 2,000 feet of the aircraft.
- (c) Over other than congested areas. An altitude of 500 feet above the surface, except over open water or sparsely populated areas. In those cases, the aircraft may not be operated closer than 500 feet to any person, vessel, vehicle, or structure.

→ This FAR will keep you out of harm's way in more ways than one. Don't risk flying into an obstruction. Be sure to review your low altitude chart before every flight to familiarize yourself with tall structures or TV/radio antennas. Check NOTAMS for cranes operating in the vicinity of airports & INOP tower lights, & do not become another accident fatality statistic due to reckless behavior. Just because the FAR doesn't say a minimum altitude over open water doesn't mean you should test how low you can go.

FAR 91.103: Preflight action

Each pilot in command shall, before beginning a flight, become familiar with all available information concerning that flight. This information must include:

- (a) For a flight not in the vicinity of an airport, weather reports and forecasts, fuel requirements, alternatives available if the planned flight cannot be completed?
- (b) For any flight, runway lengths at airports of intended use
 - (1) N/A (helicopters)
 - (2) Reliable information appropriate to the aircraft, relating to aircraft performance under expected values of airport elevation and runway slope, aircraft gross weight, and wind and temperature.

→ Many pilots think preflight planning is a suggested item, when it is indeed required. This FAR can be used as part of a preflight briefing checklist before departure, as it relates to many flight planning safety items. Take it one step further and always have a good backup plan, just in case your flight cannot be completed as planned.

FAR 91.151: Fuel requirements for flight in VFR conditions

(a) No person may begin a flight in an airplane under VFR conditions unless (considering wind and forecast weather conditions) there is enough fuel to fly to the first point of intended landing and, assuming normal cruising speed?

- (1) During the day, to fly after that for at least 30 minutes; or
- (2) At night, to fly after that for at least 45 minutes.

→ At first glance, you may think that this would be an obvious rule: always have enough fuel to get there and some to spare. Yet pilots still manage to run out of gas for a variety of reasons, including unexpected wind, improper preflight calculations, or defective fuel gauges, to name a few. If you can take on additional fuel and still be within your airplane's weight and balance limits, do it. The most useless fuel is the fuel left behind in the truck when you had space for it in the airplane.

FAR 91.3: Responsibility and authority of the pilot in command

- (a) The pilot in command of an aircraft is directly responsible for, and is the final authority as to the operation of that aircraft.
- (b) In an in-flight emergency requiring immediate action, the pilot in command may deviate from any rule of this part to the extent required to meet that emergency.

→ This is by far the most valuable regulation around. Remember that the ultimate responsibility rests solely on the pilot in command. This FAR even allows you to deviate from all the others in Part 91 to meet the requirements of an emergency, but that's because the burden of responsibility for safe flight rests squarely on your shoulders as the pilot. And that's as it should be. We wouldn't want it any other way.