

TYPES OF PILOT LICENSES

The type of flying you want to do will help determine the type of pilot certificate (often called a pilot's license) you'll want to get. Take a look at the three most common primary certificates and decide what is right for you.

Private pilot certificate:

The driver's license of the sky

- Fly almost anywhere
- Carry as many passengers as your aircraft will allow
- Fly day or night in good weather
- Pass a simple medical exam

Sport pilot certificate:

Simpler training, lighter aircraft

- Fly recreationally and take up to one passenger
- About half as many hours of training as the private pilot certificate
- Fly during the day in good weather
- Fly smaller, slower one- or two-seat aircraft
- No medical exam required

Recreational pilot certificate:

Fun flying close to home

- Fly within 50 miles of home base
- Less cross-country and communications training than the private certificate
- Carry one passenger during the day in good weather
- Fly many common aircraft, including those with up to four seats

If you want to fly in the clouds or fly for a living, you'll need to go on to earn additional ratings and/or certificates.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

AOPA

aopa.org/learntofly

- Discover different types of flying
- Find out about certificate options and requirements
- Learn about types of training aircraft

aopa.org/students

- Get training tips, articles, training videos, and more

aopa.org/fsfinder

- Find a flight school near you

aopa.org/trial

- Get a free six-month AOPA membership and free subscription to *Flight Training* magazine

QUESTIONS?

Call: 888.232.7456

Email: pilotassist@aopa.org

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FLIGHT TRAINING

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BECOME A PILOT LEARN TO FLY

IT'S EASIER THAN YOU THINK AOPA CAN HELP!



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FLY FOR FUN OR A CAREER

EVERY PILOT STARTS AS A STUDENT

Climb into an airplane and fly off for a weekend visit with family and friends. Meet three clients in three states in one day. Captain a commercial airliner. No matter what your ultimate goals, every pilot begins as a student.

Getting started as a student is easy. It begins with finding a flight school and taking a discovery flight.

Learning to fly is fun. But it also represents a significant investment of time and money, so finding the right school is important.

AOPA's Flight School Finder (aopa.org/fsfinder) can help you identify schools in your area. Flight schools offer a wide range of training aircraft, facilities, and approaches when it comes to learning to fly. We recommend checking out websites and scheduling in-person visits to help you decide which school will be a good fit for you.

When you visit a flight school, you can expect to meet a flight instructor, get a tour of the facility, and look at one or more training aircraft. Don't be afraid to ask questions—they expect it. And don't be afraid to talk about your goals—the better they understand what you want from the experience, the better they can serve you.

Once you've found a school you like, schedule a discovery flight. If you've never flown in a small aircraft, this is a chance to experience it for yourself. You may even be invited to take the controls under the guidance of an experienced instructor.

We bet that once you try it, you'll never look back.



THE BIG QUESTIONS

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE? WHAT DOES IT COST?

SPORT PILOT

Day flights in light-sport aircraft
6 months ~\$5,000-\$6,000

RECREATIONAL PILOT

Day flights close to home
6 months ~\$6,000-\$8,000

PRIVATE PILOT

Fly personal or business, travel in clear weather
10-12 months ~\$10,000-\$12,000

IT'S EASIER THAN YOU THINK

AND WE CAN HELP!

You don't have to be a math whiz, have perfect vision, or be a millionaire to become a pilot. In fact, almost anyone can learn to fly.

Becoming a pilot does take time and commitment. But anyone who's done it will tell you it's more than worth the effort.

And AOPA is here to help you every step of the way.

Start by signing up for a free student trial membership in AOPA and enjoy six free issues of *Flight Training* magazine. You'll also get free flight planning tools and a training helpline with one-on-one answers and support from instructors.

