

The SkyTrain Checkride NOTAM

Congratulations on scheduling your checkride! Be excited, not nervous. (Easy for me to say.) This document is intended to help make sure that your checkride goes as smoothly as possible.

We at SkyTrain genuinely appreciate the opportunity to be a part of your aviation journey, and even though we are evaluating you, our primary focus is to ensure you are a safe and competent pilot with whom we would enjoy sharing airspace. It is our hope that this document helps prepare you for your checkride, sets expectations, and provides guidance to make your checkride day a little less stressful.

I hope this helps and that you enjoy! And please let me know if you think I should add something for future applicants. Fly safe, and good luck with your checkride!

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“There’s more to life than being a passenger.” – Amelia Earhart

Important information about SkyTrain checkrides

What to know before scheduling:

- I currently offer Private, Instrument, Commercial, and Multi-engine checkrides. I also offer instructor add-on checkrides (CFI, CFII, MEI), but not initial.
- Most checkrides are conducted out of Springfield, TN, at M91. For certain situations, we will conduct checkrides out of other airports in the area.
- Checkrides lasting longer than 4.5 hours will be charged by the hour.

Scheduling:

- Except in rare cases, I book checkrides 1 – 2 weeks out. Applicants should be **fully qualified**: They have completed their training and are ready to take their checkride. IACRA doesn't need to be submitted yet, but the applicant should be ready to do so.
- To schedule, text me (615-495-7350) the following information in a single text message:
 - Applicant first and last name
 - Applicant phone number
 - FTN
 - Type of checkride
 - Aircraft to be used, exactly as it will be entered into 8710 form
 - 141 or 61
 - If 141, name and designation number of approved school
 - Instructor name and contact number

Before your checkride:

- By reading this NOTAM and continuing with the checkride, you agree to this NOTAM's terms and conditions.
- IACRA must be completed at least **two days before** your checkride.
- Please text me **the night before** your ride. My schedule is very busy. But also, remember that DPEs are pilots too. We steal pens, tell everyone within earshot that we're pilots, and make mistakes.

Rescheduling and cancellation policy:

There is always the possibility of rescheduling due to my being called out for additional SkyTrain duties, your being sick, weather, etc. If this were to happen, we will work together to reschedule accordingly.

In the case of cancellation, if the applicant cancels more than 72 hours before their checkride, there is no cancellation fee. Within less than 72 hours, cancellations are only acceptable in cases of valid illnesses and weather. Nerves are not a valid reason.

Arriving at M91:

Please text Charles when you are wheels up and on your way.

When arriving, you may park your plane directly in front of the FBO. Use any available T-spot tie-down directly in front of the brown brick building. (Example spaces circled in red in the photo.)

If the FBO is closed, the after-hours door is to the far right section of the building. (In the blue circle.) Key in the CTAF (1-2-3-0) for the code, then press the Handicap Door button to enter.

Fuel & fees:

If you're planning to stay overnight, the airport manager will require either a \$15 ramp fee or a minimum purchase of 20 gallons of fuel.



Checkride scenarios

PVT - Your best friend (me) found a great deal on an airplane in St. Louis, Missouri, and you and I are going to fly there to take a look at it. You will be renting an aircraft from a local flight school. I weigh 230 lbs. and will bring a 50-lb. bag with me. Please plan a flight, complete with a Nav Log of sorts (FAA accepts EFB flight plans), with the aircraft we will be using for your checkride, the airport you believe best suits our trip, and the weather on the day of your checkride.

IFR - You and your best friend (me) are flying to an Atlanta Braves game at Truist Park. Please choose what airport you feel best suits our trip. I weigh 230 lbs., and I will bring a 50 lb. bag with me. Please plan a flight, complete with a Nav Log of sorts (FAA accepts EFB flight plans), with the aircraft we will be using for your checkride, the airport you believe best suits our trip, and the weather on the day of your checkride.

Commercial Initial - You and your best friend (me) are headed to Oshkosh for [AirVenture](#), the World's Greatest Aviation Celebration, where we'll camp under the wing of our airplane for the week. You determine that our baggage will be 100 lbs., including our tent, camping gear, and clothes. I weigh 230 lbs. Please plan a flight, complete with a Nav Log of sorts (FAA accepts EFB flight plans), with the aircraft you will be using for your checkride and the weather on the day of your checkride.



Commercial Add-on - You and your best friend (me) are headed to Oshkosh, and we'll be working together to plan the flight. I weigh 230 lbs., but I don't know how many bags or friends I'll be bringing yet. Be prepared to discuss, including performance and any necessary fuel stops.

Additional materials to prepare -

- Weight and Balance computations for the checkride itself.
 - Demonstrate on paper or EFB. Plan on us having at least 2 hours of fuel.
 - If you think your checkride could include a question surrounding aircraft limitations, have an EFB profile or at least bring a few blank forms. There is always the possibility of a Safety Inspector joining us on the ride. You don't want to be fumbling around too much if we must put someone in the back to watch your stellar flying.
- Private and Commercial applicants should come prepared with aircraft performance data, i.e. cruise, short-field take-off, short-field landing.
- Please feel free to have a personal story that showcases external pressures.

How to prepare for your checkride day

Tip #1: Take ownership of your training.

You wouldn't normally take a test without knowing the standards. Don't start today. Be familiar with your ACS, and feel free to make notes inside of it. Take the time to understand the requirements. Instructors make mistakes, and you don't want to be sitting at a checkride table realizing that you are 0.1 NM short on your long XC requirement.

That being said, don't try new or different things on the day of your checkride. Trust the work that you and your instructor have done to prepare you for this day.

Tip #2: Dress appropriately.

Business casual is appropriate for checkrides. There is no need for a suit, but the event is worthy of a collared shirt and clean clothes. Of course, we want you to be comfortable, so if it's hot, shorts are acceptable. But no pajamas, please! There is such a thing as *too* comfortable.

Tip #3: Organize your required personal documents, and don't forget your logbook.

There is a *lot* to organize before your checkride. Make sure you've got all of these, and skip down to Tip #5 for a great way to keep it tidy. *The * symbol designates the items I would like my own copy of.*

- Identification: photo / signature ID *
- State- or federally issued & valid
- Pilot certificate *
- Address matches ID and medical
- Current medical certificate or BasicMed qualification (if applicable) *
- Completed IACRA form; or, completed FAA Form 8710-1, Airman Certificate and/or Rating Application with instructor's signature
 - Address matches pilot certificate and ID
 - Do not use SSN
 - Matches medical exactly, including AME's name and "MD" with extra space. Example: John Smith , MD
- Original Airman Knowledge Test Report (Score: _____)
 - Examiner: Note missed question PLT/ACS Codes
- Pilot logbook, with tabs showing where you have met the aeronautical experience requirements
 - Please make sure you have met the requirements. Then ensure you have appropriate instructor endorsements in your logbook.

- Make sure the endorsements are permanently attached.
- If using a digital logbook, make sure endorsements are uploaded.
- See Appendix B for example endorsements, taken from AC 61-65J. There is no such thing as over-endorsing.
- Part 61.105 and 61.107 ground logs, also permanently attached (if applicable).
 - If using a digital logbook, ensure ground log is uploaded.
- FAA Form 8060-5, notice of disapproval (if applicable) *
- Letter of discontinuance (if applicable); valid for 60 days *
- Approved 141 school graduation certificate (if applicable) *
- 141 completion summary (if applicable)
- Evaluator's fee (if applicable: \$_____) after eligibility is determined. An overwhelming majority of examiners prefer cash. We don't know you, and cash is king!
- IACRA username and password. A good spot is on the front page of the applicant's logbook.

Tip #4: Double-check that your aircraft is acceptable, and bring all required documents. Don't just trust your flight school; verify for yourself!

- Aircraft documents: (ARROW) & placards
 - Airworthiness certificate
 - Registration (Exp._____)
 - Operating limitations
 - Pilot's Operating Handbook, FAA-approved Aircraft Flight Manual (POH)
- Aircraft maintenance records (G-AV1ATES). Having a summary helps.
- Logbook record of airworthiness inspections and AD compliance

Tip #5: Prepare a checkride binder.

As you can see from the previous two tips, a checkride comes with a mountain of paperwork. A tidy checkride binder starts the checkride on the right foot and helps you *look* organized, if nothing else.

Visit skytrain.biz/documents for our guide to making a **Checkride Binder and the Personal Documents One-Sheet**.

Appendix A - Aeronautical experience

Private aeronautical experience requirements:

- 40 hours total time, 10 in airplanes
- 20 hours with a flight instructor, including
 - 3 hrs XC flight training
 - 3 hrs simulated or actual instrument
 - 3 hrs night training, including a XC greater than 100 NM, w/ 10 full-stop landings at night
 - 3 hrs checkride prep within the preceding 2 calendar months w/ CFI
- 10 hours of solo, including
 - 5 hrs solo XC, greater than 50 NM
 - 3 takeoffs and full-stop landings at an airport with an operating tower
 - 1 XC of greater than 150 NM: 3 legs, 3 different airports; 1 leg greater than 50 NM. (Letter of interpretation Keller 2009 explains how you must fly greater than 50 NM away from original point of departure. Do yourself a favor on this one . . . go the extra mile or two.)

Instrument aeronautical experience requirements:

- 50 hrs of XC PIC, 10 in airplanes
- 40 hrs of simulated or actual IFR, 15 with a CFII toward the rating
- 1 XC of 250 NM or more, with an instrument approach at each airport; 3 different kinds of approaches
- 3 hrs checkride prep within the preceding 2 calendar months w/ CFII

Commercial aeronautical experience requirements:

- 250 hrs total time, 100 in powered aircraft, 50 in airplanes
- 100 hrs PIC, 50 in airplanes, 50 hrs XC w/ 10 in airplanes
- 20 hrs of flight training, including
 - 10 hrs inst training, 5 in airplanes (class sought)
 - 10 hrs of complex or TAA or combo
 - 2 hr day XC greater than 100 NM, w/ CFI
 - 2 hr night XC greater than 100 NM, w/ CFI
 - 3 hrs checkride prep within the preceding 2 calendar months w/ CFI
- 10 hrs solo OR acting as PIC, including
 - XC not less than 300 NM total, w/ landings at 3 points (one that is greater than 250 NM from departure point; *make it the first leg if you can*)
 - 5 hrs of night VFR, w/ 10 takeoffs and landings at an operating towered airport

Appendix B – Endorsement examples

The appropriate instructor endorsements should be permanently attached to your logbook.

Please make sure you use AC 61-65J. Keeping the alpha number with the endorsement is not necessary but does streamline the process. (And before we get started, there is no such thing as over-endorsing.)

- Private examples
 - A.1 Prerequisites for practical test: Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 61, § 61.39(a)(6)(i) and (ii).
 - A.2 Review of deficiencies identified on airman knowledge test: § 61.39(a)(6)(iii), as required.
 - A.3 Pre-solo aeronautical knowledge: § 61.87(b).
 - A.4 Pre-solo flight training: § 61.87(c)(1) and (2).
 - A.6 Solo flight (first 90 calendar-day period): § 61.87(n).
 - A.9 Solo cross-country flight: § 61.93(c)(1) and (2).
 - A.10 Solo cross-country flight: § 61.93(c)(3).
 - A.14 Endorsement of U.S. citizenship recommended by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA): Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations (49 CFR)
 - A.36 Aeronautical knowledge test: §§ 61.35(a)(1), 61.103(d), and 61.105.
 - A.37 Flight proficiency/practical test: §§ 61.103(f), 61.107(b), and 61.109. The endorsement for a practical test is required in addition to the § 61.39 endorsements provided in paragraphs A.1 and A.2.

- Instrument examples
 - A.1 Prerequisites for practical test: § 61.39(a)(6)(i) and (ii).
 - A.2 Review of deficiencies identified on airman knowledge test: § 61.39(a)(6)(iii), as required.
 - A.42 Aeronautical knowledge test: §§ 61.35(a)(1) and 61.65(a) and (b)
 - A.43 Flight proficiency/practical test: § 61.65(a)(6)
 - A.44 Prerequisites for instrument practical tests: § 61.39(a). The endorsement for a practical test is required in addition to the § 61.39 endorsements provided in paragraphs A.1 and A.2.

- Commercial examples
 - A.1 Prerequisites for practical test: § 61.39(a)(6)(i) and (ii).
 - A.2 Review of deficiencies identified on airman knowledge test: § 61.39(a)(6)(iii), as required.
 - A.38 Aeronautical knowledge test: §§ 61.35(a)(1), 61.123(c), and 61.125.
 - A.39 Flight proficiency/practical test: §§ 61.123(e), 61.127, and 61.129. The endorsement for a practical test is required in addition to the § 61.39 endorsements provided in paragraphs A.1 and A.2.

- Commercial Add-on examples
 - A.1 Prerequisites for practical test: § 61.39(a)(6)(i) and (ii).
 - A.78 Additional aircraft category or class rating (other than ATP): § 61.63(b) or (c).
 - A.72 To act as PIC in a complex airplane: § 61.31(e).
 - A.73 To act as PIC in a high-performance airplane: § 61.31(f).

- Rotary to fixed wing add-on examples
 - Private
 - A.1 Prerequisites for practical test: § 61.39(a)(6)(i) and (ii).
 - A.37 Flight proficiency/practical test: §§ 61.103(f), 61.107(b), and 61.109.
 - A.76 To act as PIC of an aircraft in solo operations when the pilot does not hold an appropriate category/class rating: § 61.31(d)(2).
 - A.78 Additional aircraft category or class rating (other than ATP): § 61.63(b) or (c).

 - Instrument
 - A.1 Prerequisites for practical test: § 61.39(a)(6)(i) and (ii).
 - A.43 Flight proficiency/practical test: § 61.65(a)(6).
 - A.44 Prerequisites for instrument practical tests: § 61.39(a).

 - Commercial
 - A.1 Prerequisites for practical test: § 61.39(a)(6)(i) and (ii).
 - A.39 Flight proficiency/practical test: §§ 61.123(e), 61.127, and 61.129.