



Private Pilot – What you can expect

FAA **Minimum** Requirements:

- To be eligible:
 - No minimum age to start! However, age 16 is required for solo flight and age 17 to obtain a certificate.
 - Be able to read, speak, write, and understand English
 - Obtain an FAA 3rd class medical certificate from a local physician who is authorized to conduct the exam
- 40 Hours of Flight Training – this includes:
 - 30 hours of dual instruction with an Image Certified Flight Instructor
 - 3 or more of these hours will be cross-country flight
 - At least 3 of these hours will be at night, which includes 1 cross-country flight of over 100 miles total distance, and 10 takeoffs and landings.
 - At least 3 of these hours will be flight by reference to instruments
 - You must have flown at least 3 hours preparing to take your practical test at the end of training within 60 days of taking the test.
 - 10 hours of solo flight
 - 5 of these hours will be solo cross-country flight (flights greater than 50 miles in distance)
 - One of these solo flights is 150 miles in distance and includes landings at 2 other airports
- 15 or more hours of Ground & Classroom Training to include:
 - Discussion of various technical topics and concepts as required by the FAA
 - Some examples are aeronautical charts, aerodynamics, weather
 - Preparation for a written knowledge test based on the required topics
 - This test will be taken at one of a few local testing centers. The fee is generally in the range of \$150 per attempt. You must achieve a 70% to pass.
- Private Pilot Practical Test with an FAA designated examiner
 - This is a test composed of two parts – an oral discussion, and a flight test
 - The fee is typically \$400 per attempt
 - The standards for this test are published and you must perform to these standards to pass.

The Fine Print

- The above numbers are **minimums**, meaning most people obtain their certificates in 50-70 total hours *but may be even higher*. This is due to different rates of learning, frequency of flying, and motivation level.
- A typical lesson is usually about 1 hour, but may vary, for example between 0.9 to 1.3 hours depending on the lesson content and conditions.
- **All flying is billed by engine run time, however a minimum of 0.2 hours or more of instructor time are added to this time each flight.** For example, a 1 hour lesson would be the 1 hour of aircraft/fuel time plus 1.2 hours of instructor time minimum, plus tax.