

Why Learn To Fly?

Aside from the exhilaration that flying offers, some of the best reasons for learning to fly are the most practical. First of all, flying saves a lot of time. You set your own departure and arrival times, there's no waiting for tickets and baggage, you aren't "cattle herded" into lines and you travel in business-like privacy, not a crowd.

Why Not Just Drive Or Take The Airlines?

Driving is obviously the slower way to get where you need to go. Not only that, but when you think about the highways being jammed with over 124,000,000 other vehicles, you'd much rather pick your "highway in the sky" and avoid much of the traffic.

The airlines can only access about 500 airports, whereas, private airplanes can access any of the 12,000 airports located in the U.S. alone. You will also know where your luggage is at all times and don't have the nightmare of losing it. Private airplanes are just that, private. You can conduct business en route with complete privacy.

How Much Will Learning To Fly Cost?

The cost of learning to fly will depend on how fast you complete the course of instruction. We recommend taking two lessons a week. Taking two lessons a week will reduce the time spent on reviewing the previous lesson. This will result in less money invested toward your private license.

What Physical Requirements Are Needed For A Pilot's License?

People often make the mistake of thinking that they need to meet the same demanding physical standards as astronauts to earn a private pilot's license. Actually, wearing glasses and many other physical handicaps do not necessarily prevent you from flying. General good health and being at least 16 years old are the only real requirements. There is no age limit as long as you can pass the periodic medical examinations. We have had students ranging from the ages of 16 to 72 years. Student and private pilots need a "third class" medical certificate, issued by doctors specially designated by the FAA, and are good for 2 to 3 years, depending on age.

What Is Involved In Becoming A Private Pilot?

There are three stages to becoming a private pilot.

- 1) During the first stage, you need to purchase the required books and audiovisual materials. Then you begin your flight training toward solo. This takes around 15 hours. During this time you need to get a third class medical certificate from an approved flight surgeon. When you're ready, you will be endorsed to solo!
- 2) During the second stage, you fly cross-country flights with your flight instructor (4-5 hours). You will then need to fly 5 hours of solo cross-countries to places like Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, Dubuque, Rochester and others.
- 3) For the third and final stage, you begin your finish-up instruction and practice (5-10 hours of instruction, 3-5 hours of solo) in preparation for your oral test and flight check ride. This stage requires about 5-10 hours of ground instruction.

Afterward, your instructor will schedule you with a pilot examiner to take your oral test and flight check ride (@1-2 hours oral, 1-2 hours flight time.)

At any time during these three stages, you need to study for your written test. There are about 60 questions on this pass / fail test in which you have to score 70% or above. This test is required in order to receive your private pilot license and needs to be accomplished prior to your oral test and flight check ride.

What Do I Have To Do After Becoming A Private Pilot?

You need to make three takeoffs and landings within the previous 90 days for passenger carrying privileges. If you rent aircraft from Johnson Aviation, Inc., you must make three takeoffs and landings every 60 days. You need to get a fresh flight physical every 3 years (under 40) or 2 years (over 40). A biennial flight review from any flight instructor every 2 years is needed to maintain your license and to make sure you're still a safe pilot.

What Type Of Airplane Will I Be Flying?

At Johnson Aviation, Inc., we train in and rent four-place, low wing, Piper aircraft. We also rent and train in complex aircraft. We suggest that you take our introductory flight to get a "hands on" experience flying an airplane with our full-time instructor at your side, prior to enrolling in our flight training program. The introductory flight lesson really helps in the decision making process of whether you want to obtain your private pilot's license.