

# Flight Training Overview

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# FLIGHT TRAINING IN THE UNITED STATES



Federal  
Aviation  
Administration



Flight training in the United States is regulated by the **Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)**.



Students typically progress through a structured pathway depending on their goals.

## THE FLIGHT TRAINING PATHWAY



### 1 LEARN

Build knowledge with ground school and classroom instruction.



### 2 TRAIN

Gain hands-on flight experience with a certified instructor.



### 3 PRACTICE

Build skills, confidence, and flight time through practice and cross-country experience.



### 4 EVALUATE

Complete the FAA checkride (oral exam and flight test).



### 5 ACHIEVE

Earn your certificate and continue toward your aviation goals.

SAFE SKIES • BRIGHT FUTURES



YOUR JOURNEY STARTS HERE

# PART 61 VS PART 141

Flight training operates under two main regulatory frameworks:

## PART 61 (FLEXIBLE TRAINING)

Part 61 training is more flexible and commonly conducted at local flight schools or with independent instructors.



### KEY CHARACTERISTICS:

- Flexible schedule (train at your own pace)
- No strict FAA-approved syllabus required
- One-on-one instruction
- Pay-as-you-go structure



### MINIMUM FLIGHT HOURS:

- Private Pilot: 40 hours (most students require 60–80 hours)



### BEST SUITED FOR:

- Students with busy or inconsistent schedules
- Recreational pilots
- Learners who prefer a self-paced environment

## PART 141 (STRUCTURED TRAINING)

Part 141 training is conducted through FAA-approved flight schools or university programs.



### KEY CHARACTERISTICS:

- Structured, FAA-approved curriculum
- Fixed training syllabus with stage checks
- More formal classroom and training environment
- Often integrated into degree programs



### MINIMUM FLIGHT HOURS:

- Private Pilot: 35 hours (most students require 50–70 hours)



### BEST SUITED FOR:

- Full-time students
- Career-oriented pilots
- Students enrolled in aviation degree programs

## KEY DIFFERENCES



Part 61 is flexible, while Part 141 is structured.



Part 61 allows training at your own pace; Part 141 follows a fixed syllabus.



Part 141 may require fewer minimum hours, but actual completion time is often similar.



Part 61 is typically more adaptable; Part 141 is more standardized and efficient for career paths.



# TRAINING PATHWAY

Most pilots follow this sequence:



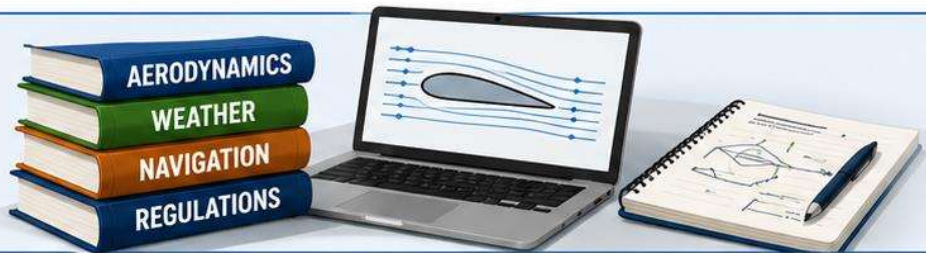
Each step builds the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to achieve your goal of **becoming an airline pilot**.

# HOW FLIGHT TRAINING WORKS

1

## GROUND SCHOOL

Students learn aerodynamics, weather, navigation, and regulations.



2

## FLIGHT LESSONS

Training begins with an instructor (dual instruction), followed by solo flights once proficiency is demonstrated.



3

## TIME BUILDING

Students practice maneuvers and complete cross-country flights to gain experience.



4

## CHECKRIDE

The final FAA evaluation includes an oral exam and a flight test with an examiner.



# COST OF FLIGHT TRAINING

Flight training costs vary based on location, aircraft type, and how quickly a student progresses.



## PRIVATE PILOT LICENSE (PPL)

### TYPICAL COSTS INCLUDE:

	Aircraft rental:	\$190–\$275 per hour
	Instructor fees:	\$50–\$90 per hour
	Ground school Software: (Gleim, Sporty's, Kings, Etc.)	\$300–\$400
	Books and materials: (Headsets, Foreflight, etc.)	\$800–\$1000
	FAA Checkride:	\$1000–\$1,500



### ESTIMATED TOTAL:

**\$15,000 to \$20,000**



## FULL CAREER TRAINING COST (0 to AIRLINE PILOT)

### APPROXIMATE RANGES:

	Private Pilot:	\$15,000 to \$20,000
	Instrument Rating:	\$8,000–\$15,000
	Commercial Pilot:	\$20,000–\$35,000
	CFI/CFII:	\$5,000–\$10,000

### ESTIMATED TOTAL:

**\$70,000 to \$100,000+**



This estimated price is for flight training cost only and does not reflect university tuition costs. University programs may cost more but often include a degree and structured training.