

TEN STEPS TO GET A PRIVATE PILOT'S CERTIFICATE

Ceci Stratford Rev. September 9, 2018

1. Take a Discovery Flight from a flight school or a Young Eagle's flight (if you're 17 or younger) with your local Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter.
2. Decide you WILL become a pilot! You can become a Sport, Recreational, or Private Pilot (airplane, helicopter, or glider?) You can also become a Drone (UAV) pilot
 - Do you want to fly just for fun?
 - Do you want to be a military pilot?
 - Do you want to become an airline or corporate pilot?
3. Find a flight school (FBO) or Flying Club and flight instructor (CFI), depending on what kind of pilot you want to be.
 - If you want to fly for fun or be any other kind of pilot, go to your local airport and research & interview the flight schools, Flying Clubs, and CFIs and choose one.
 - If military, go to a recruiting office (don't forget the Air National Guard).
 - If you plan to study aviation at a university, many offer flight training.
4. Plan for how you'll pay for training (savings, scholarships, financing, parents, military, tuition, etc.) It costs around \$10K to \$12K. (See Ceci's Tip "List of Scholarships")
5. Take ground training and get an instructor's sign off to take the FAA exam (See Ceci's Tip "Tips for Ground School & Taking the FAA Written Exam")
 - If you have had a Young Eagle flight you can take the Sporty's Online Ground Training Course free! (Google Young Eagles Program or <https://www.eaa.org> and search for Young Eagles) or
 - Choose an online course or
 - Take a Ground School class at your local airport or college or
 - Study on your own
6. Take the FAA written knowledge test. (Passing grade of 70 or better is required before the check ride.)
7. Get your Student Pilot Certificate (by applying through the FAA IACRA website and your CFI; (see Ceci's Tip "Steps for obtaining a Student Pilot Certificate") and your Medical Certificate (by completing MedExpress online & passing a medical exam with an FAA designated Aviation Medical Examiner). Both certificates are required for solo. The Sport Pilot License requires a Student Pilot Certificate, but doesn't require a medical certificate.
8. Start flying! Here are the steps you'll go through in flight training:
 - Fly with your instructor (dual) until solo (flying by yourself).
 - After solo, build solo hours and start dual advanced maneuvers & night flying.
 - Take dual & solo cross-countries (usually one short trip from your airport to another airport 50 nautical miles or more away, and one longer trip landing at 3 airports.)
 - Prepare for the check ride. (It's good practice to have a phase check with another CFI before taking the FAA check ride).
 - You are responsible for knowing the FAA requirements and if you've met them all for the check ride! (Sometimes CFIs miss count number of hours required for solo, cross-country, night, etc.)
9. Take a check ride with an FAA designated examiner, which includes:
 - An oral exam
 - A flight with the examiner in the airplane
 - If you pass, you receive your Certificate!
10. With your Private Pilot's Certificate you can take passengers and cross country trips on your own. This is your "**license to learn**"!! To be a safer pilot, fly often and go for advanced training (instrument rating, Commercial Certificate, multi-engine rating, Flight Instructor, etc.). Attend FAA safety meetings!

For more information, go to the AOPA You Can Fly website <https://youcanfly.aopa.org/>