

Aviation Theory Centre

23/148 Chesterville Road,
Cheltenham, Victoria 3192, Australia
Tel: (61) 3 9532 5421 Fax: (61) 3 9532 5423.
Email: aviationtheory@msn.com.au
Web sites: www.aviationtheory.net.au
www.flyingbooks.com.au

How to Begin

The first step is to approach a local flying school and enquire about a Trial Instructional Flight (TIF). A TIF gives you the first real experience of piloting a helicopter. It's an ideal gift, as it allows people to determine if they enjoy flying and are motivated to continue. After the flight you can discuss costs, job prospects and training options with the instructor. Ask lots of questions!

The next step is a medical examination by an approved examiner. For a career pilot a Class 1 medical is required. A Class 2 is acceptable for private flying. The school will issue your Student Pilot Licence once your medical is complete and you have started training.

Which Flying School?

Choose your first school carefully. The school, the helicopter and, in particular, the instructor that you choose, will influence the rest of your aviation future. Choose a person with whom you are comfortable. If you can fly only infrequently, choose the simplest and most economical helicopter.

You may find it cheaper to do some fixed-wing flying as it counts towards your helicopter licence.

It is important to gain the most value from the training and to retain knowledge and skill from one flight to the next, so schedule your flights and budget so that you are able to have regular instruction (at least once a week is good) and study as much as you can. The more you can prepare and subsequently relive, the flight training exercises the more you will retain the training and the better the value for your training dollar.



Phases of Training, Tests and Examinations

As a student pilot you will progress from the TIF, through initial training in the local training area and the circuit, until your first solo flight.

Before each flight, there should be a comprehensive briefing, and after the flight, a debriefing. You can help prepare for each flight by use of your school's instruction manual, which explains each flight lesson and the associated briefing.

You will maintain a personal log of all your flights. This logbook also becomes a wonderful lifetime record of your flying adventures.

The next phase prepares you for flights in the local training area and when ready, you will undergo the General Flying Progress Test (GFPT) and a written examination in Basic Aeronautical Knowledge (BAK).



After GFPT, and with the authorisation of your Chief Flying Instructor (CFI), you can carry passengers on local flights.

Now begins the serious study where you are prepared for cross-country flights. You will learn navigation, meteorology, flight planning, helicopter loading, performance and flight rules.

At the end of this phase, you will undergo a written examination and a flight test for the Private Pilot's Licence and a specific examination for the issue of your flight radio operator's licence.

With the PPL, you can fly anywhere in Australia with private passengers, in clear weather, during daylight.

For many people this is enough training and they happily continue to enjoy their flying and maintain currency with occasional flights and a helicopter flight review, a very

reasonable check flight, every two years. Your medical category also needs to be reviewed regularly.

Those who are going on to be professional pilots, now begin more serious study and training for the CPL and ATPL - and the ratings, especially for turbine and IFR operations.

What about Study?

If you read and study before and after each flight lesson, you will retain more information. Understanding the principles of helicopter flight makes it easier and quicker to learn the practical aspects. This, in turn, will make learning to fly easier, the training more productive and will save money. Further study is especially important before the cross-country and instrument training phases.

Aviation Theory Centre

We have prepared a complete range of reference material including sample examinations to assist with your studies. All reference material for all licences is available in manuals and kits from the Aviation Theory Centre. These publications

are recognised as the best available and are also used as the basis for manuals in England and the United States. We also import the very best books and products from England and the United States. These products are available from Pilot Shops or may be ordered directly from Aviation Theory Centre. A complete catalogue can be down-loaded from our website or by contacting Aviation Theory Centre by post or by fax.

Becoming a Helicopter Pilot



Photo by Glenn Alderton