



PART 61 · AIRPLANE SINGLE-ENGINE LAND

FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR PROGRAM

What the program is, how it runs, and what it asks of you.

LESSONS	PHASES	GROUND	DUAL	PROGRAM
42	4	44.4 hr	26.0 hr	70.4 hr

These are program hours, not a prediction of what you will personally fly. The certificate is an initial flight instructor certificate, airplane single-engine land, tested against FAA-S-ACS-25.

START HERE

WHAT THIS PROGRAM IS

The whole program on paper: every lesson, what it covers, and the hours booked for it.

You already hold a commercial pilot certificate and an instrument rating. We are not going to re-teach you how to fly. This program teaches you to instruct, and that is a different skill. Every technical subject lesson and every maneuver lesson ends with you teaching, because teaching is what the practical test asks of you.

The other thing that makes this program different: you do not sit through months of ground school before you fly. Flying starts at lesson 10, from the right seat, and ground and flight alternate from there. The right-seat sight picture fades fast in a rusty pilot, so we build it early and keep coming back to it.

WHAT THE HOURS MEAN

Ground and dual are **program hours**: what we book for each lesson. They are not a guarantee of when you finish. Needing extra time on something is normal, and the assessment section explains how that works.

READING THE LESSON TABLES

- **Ground** and **Dual** are the hours for that lesson.
- **ACS tasks** are the task codes from FAA-S-ACS-25, the standard your practical test is built from. Each lesson names the tasks it covers.
- A lesson in **bold** is one where something changes: flying starts, the airplane stays on the ground, or a second instructor runs the session.

Everything you study from is a free FAA download: the ACS, the handbooks, the regulations. We give you the full list, with current editions, when you enroll.



OVERVIEW

THE FOUR PHASES

Forty-two lessons in four phases. Phase 1 is ground only. Flying begins at lesson 10 and does not stop after that.

PHASE	LESSONS	WHAT IT COVERS	FLYING
1	1 to 7	Fundamentals of instruction. How people learn, and how you teach	Ground only
2	8 to 24	Technical subjects, mixed with the right-seat introduction and early maneuver work	Begins at lesson 10
3	25 to 38	Teaching the maneuvers, private and commercial	Every lesson except 31
4	39 to 42	Checkride preparation, mock oral, mock flight	Lesson 41

PROGRAM TOTALS

PHASE	LESSONS	GROUND	DUAL	TOTAL
1	7	10.5	0	10.5
2	17	15.5	4.5	20.0
3	14	11.9	19.5	31.4
4	4	6.5	2.0	8.5
Program	42	44.4	26.0	70.4

These totals match the sum of the lesson tables on the next pages exactly. The pages that follow list every lesson in order, so you can see the whole road before you start.



PHASE 1

FUNDAMENTALS OF INSTRUCTION

Seven ground lessons: how people learn, and how you teach them.

Nothing in phase 1 flies, and that is not a delay. This material is the first thing both of your knowledge tests draw on, and it is the vocabulary the rest of the program uses. Lesson 3 runs a half hour longer than its neighbors because you write a real lesson plan in it instead of reading about one.

#	TOPIC	ACS TASKS	GROUND	DUAL
1	Orientation, human behavior, and communication	FI.I.A	1.5	0
2	The learning process	FI.I.B	1.5	0
3	Course development, lesson plans, and classroom training techniques	FI.I.C	2.0	0
4	Student evaluation, assessment, and testing	FI.I.D	1.5	0
5	Instructor responsibilities, professionalism, and exposure	FI.I.E, AI.II.J	1.5	0
6	Risk management, human factors, and accident prevention as teaching content	FI.I.F	1.5	0
7	Consolidation and knowledge test readiness	FI.I.A to FI.I.F	1.0	0
Phase 1 subtotal			10.5	0

AFTER LESSON 7

You sit the fundamentals of instructing knowledge test while phase 1 is still fresh. The phase is the test prep; there is no separate studying to do on the side.

PHASE 2

TECHNICAL SUBJECTS AND THE RIGHT SEAT

Seventeen lessons. Flying begins at lesson 10.

HOW PHASE 2 WORKS

Every technical subject lesson ends with you teaching the subject to your instructor, who plays the part of a student. Once flying starts, ground and flight alternate, so the right seat never goes cold for long.

Lesson 10 is your first time instructing from the right seat, working toward private pilot standards. There is no gate; extra work runs alongside. After lesson 24 you sit the flight instructor airplane knowledge test, so phase 3 is flying, not studying.

#	TOPIC	ACS TASKS	GROUND	DUAL
8	Teaching a technical subject: the shape, and principles of flight	AI.II.D	1.5	0
9	Pilot qualifications, 14 CFR, and publications	AI.III.A, AI.II.J	1.0	0
10	Right-seat introduction. Flying begins	AI.V.A to AI.V.D, AI.V.F, AI.VI.A, AI.VI.B, AI.VII.A, AI.VII.B, AI.VIII.A to AI.VIII.D	1.0	1.5
11	The National Airspace System	AI.II.G	1.0	0
12	Airworthiness requirements and the squawk decision	AI.III.B	1.0	0
13	Right-seat consolidation: traffic pattern, normal takeoff and landing	AI.VI.B, AI.VII.A, AI.VII.B	0.5	1.5
14	Aircraft flight controls and operation of systems	AI.II.E	1.0	0
15	Performance and limitations	AI.II.F	1.0	0
16	Human factors and aeromedical factors	AI.II.A	0.75	0
17	Visual scanning, collision avoidance, and runway incursion avoidance	AI.II.B, AI.II.C	0.75	0
18	Night operations and high altitude operations	AI.II.M, AI.II.N, AI.II.O	0.75	0
19	Navigation systems and radar services	AI.II.H	0.75	0
20	Navigation and cross-country flight planning	AI.II.I	1.0	0
21	Weather information and the taught briefing	AI.III.C	1.0	0
22	Endorsements and logbook entries	AI.II.K	1.0	0
23	Fundamentals of flight from the right seat	AI.VIII.A to AI.VIII.D	0.5	1.5
24	Consolidation and knowledge test readiness	Areas II and III	1.0	0
Phase 2 subtotal			15.5	4.5

PHASE 3

MANEUVER TEACHING

Fourteen lessons across the private and commercial maneuver sets.

Every flying lesson in this phase runs the same four-part cycle: brief, demonstrate, talk through, then critique and debrief. The ground briefing before each flight is graded, because teaching a maneuver on the ground is itself one of the ACS tasks. Emergencies are not saved for the end; they are built into lessons throughout the program, so lesson 38 is a capstone rather than a first look.

#	TOPIC	ACS TASKS	GROUND	DUAL
25	Maneuver teaching: the four-part cycle	AI.IV.A, AI.VIII.A to AI.VIII.D	0.8	1.5
26	Talk while flying	AI.IV.A, AI.VIII.A to AI.VIII.D	0.8	1.5
27	Ground reference maneuvers	AI.IV.A, AI.IX.E	0.8	1.5
28	Steep turns and steep spiral	AI.IV.A, AI.IX.A, AI.IX.B	0.8	1.5
29	Chandelles, lazy eights, and eights on pylons	AI.IV.A, AI.IX.C, AI.IX.D, AI.IX.F	0.8	1.5
30	Slow flight and the flight characteristics demonstration	AI.IV.A, AI.X.A, AI.X.B	0.8	1.5
31	Spin ground lesson. Ground only	AI.X.I	1.5	0
32	Stall series, part one: power-off, power-on, accelerated	AI.IV.A, AI.X.C, AI.X.D, AI.X.E	0.8	1.5
33	Stall series, part two: cross-controlled, elevator trim, secondary	AI.IV.A, AI.X.F, AI.X.G, AI.X.H	0.8	1.5
34	Normal and crosswind takeoffs and landings, and the go-around	AI.IV.A, AI.VII.A, AI.VII.B, AI.VII.N	0.8	1.5
35	Short-field and soft-field takeoffs and landings	AI.IV.A, AI.VII.C to AI.VII.F	0.8	1.5
36	Slips and the power-off 180 accuracy landing	AI.IV.A, AI.VII.M, AI.VII.O	0.8	1.5
37	Basic instrument maneuvers	AI.IV.A, AI.XI.A to AI.XI.E	0.8	1.5
38	Emergency operations and postflight procedures	AI.IV.A, AI.XII.A to AI.XII.D, AI.XIV.A	0.8	1.5
Phase 3 subtotal			11.9	19.5

Some of these flights are recorded, and you will review your own teaching from the recording. The recording section at the end of this guide explains how that works and why.



PHASE 4

CHECKRIDE PREPARATION

Four lessons. Two of them are run by a second instructor who has not trained you.

Lesson 40 is a mock oral at the full scope of the practical test, scheduled at four hours. An initial CFI oral is one of the longest in general aviation, and a mock that finishes in an hour would be easier than the real thing, which defeats the purpose. Lessons 40 and 41 are run by a second North Aero instructor who has never trained you, so your mock is as honest as the checkride itself.

#	TOPIC	ACS TASKS	GROUND	DUAL
39	Checkride preparation and document review	All	1.5	0
40	Mock oral. Second instructor	All	4.0	0
41	Mock flight. Second instructor	All	0.5	2.0
42	Deficiency closure and the recommendation	All	0.5	0
Phase 4 subtotal			6.5	2.0

WHAT THE MOCK PRODUCES

A written list of anything that needs work, with a fix assigned to each item. Not a pass, not a fail. Lesson 42 closes that list, and your practical test recommendation comes after it.

REQUIREMENTS

THE TWO KNOWLEDGE TESTS

Both are required before the practical test. Neither needs separate studying; the phases are the preparation.

TEST	TAKEN AFTER	WHY THERE
Fundamentals of instructing	Lesson 7	Phase 1 is the whole of the material, and it is never fresher than the week you finish it
Flight instructor airplane	Lesson 24	Phase 2 covers the technical subjects the test draws on. Taking it here keeps phase 3 about flying, not studying

YOU MAY BE EXEMPT FROM THE FUNDAMENTALS TEST

Under 14 CFR 61.183(e), you do not need the fundamentals of instructing test if you already hold a flight or ground instructor certificate, hold a teacher's certificate for 7th grade or higher, or teach at an accredited college or university. Tell us at enrollment so you do not pay for a test you do not need. The exemption is from the test, not the training; phase 1 happens either way.

HOW LONG A RESULT LASTS

24 calendar months, under 61.39(a)(1)(i). Taking each test right after its phase leaves every pacing scenario in this guide comfortably inside that window.

THE CHECKRIDE AIRPLANE

Your practical test is conducted in N41459, our Piper Warrior. It meets the aircraft requirements of 14 CFR 61.45 for this certificate. You pay for all aircraft time on checkride day, including the flight to and from the examiner, and the examiner's fee is paid directly to the examiner. We tell you this now so the cost of examiner location is visible while you plan, not after.

PLANNING

HOW LONG THIS TAKES

Time to certificate follows from the pace you pick. It is not a score we measure you against.

A candidate training once a week around a full-time job takes roughly three times as long as one training four times a week, and both outcomes are right for the person living them. Pick the pace that matches the life you actually have. The durations below include realistic allowances for weather, test scheduling, and examiner availability.

PACE	WHO IT FITS	REALISTIC CALENDAR TIME
Four sessions a week	A time builder training full time	16 to 19 weeks , about 4 to 5 months
Two sessions a week	A candidate with a flexible job, or part-time work	28 weeks , about 6 to 7 months
One session a week	A second-career candidate around full-time work	54 weeks , about 12 to 13 months

A few lessons build directly on the one before them, and we schedule those close together at any pace. Your instructor manages that; you will never be asked to figure it out yourself.

WHAT PACING DOES NOT CHANGE

- **The lesson set.** All 42 lessons happen at every pace. Nothing is dropped for speed.
- **The standards.** There is no fast version of a completion standard.
- **The order of the phases.**

EXPECTATIONS

HOW YOU ARE ASSESSED

Your instructor's judgment moves you forward. The paperwork just keeps everyone honest.

Each lesson tracks two separate things. **Coverage** is which ACS tasks your teaching actually touched, taken from the transcript of what you said. It exists to find gaps. **Proficiency** is your instructor's judgment of how well you performed, and it is the only thing that moves you forward. The one gate in the program is at the very end: the practical test recommendation, which requires every applicable ACS area at proficient.

Needing extra time on something is normal and expected. Ten more minutes on a maneuver or a second run at a teaching block is just instruction. It only becomes a sit-down conversation if the same lesson needs a third attempt, or your cumulative hours run 20 percent over plan. Either way it is a conversation, not a penalty, and it never blocks the next lesson.

YOUR LESSONS ARE RECORDED

Being recorded is a condition of enrolling in this program, and we say so up front because you are entitled to decide against it before you enroll. It is not a formality: you will critique your own teaching from a transcript of what you actually said, not what you remember saying, and that is one of the most useful things this program does for you.

WHAT	WHEN	HOW
Ground lessons you teach	Every one	Google Meet, onto North Aero's shared drive
Cockpit audio and video	At least four phase 3 flights	In-aircraft capture, already in place at the school

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE FOOTAGE

Raw footage is kept for 30 days and then deleted by default. Anything that matters to your training is written down at review time; the written record is the record.

READY TO TALK?

If this reads like the program you have been looking for, come see us. We will look at your logbook, answer your questions, and give you a written cost estimate built on these same lesson hours.

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