

Best Practices for Flying an Ultralight Aeroplane

CROSS-COUNTRY FLIGHT

This guide was created by and for ultralight pilots, but it is also a helpful reminder for all pilots to fly safer. In addition, it is important that you understand the specific rules and regulations related to the airspace you're flying in, the limitations of your licence, your plane, and your abilities.

Let's all do our part to improve the safety culture in our community by applying these best practices.

PLANNING YOUR CROSS-COUNTRY ADVENTURE

Being part of a pilot network or social group is a great way to gain and share information that will help you plan your trip. If you're heading somewhere unfamiliar, ask for advice from other pilots and use aviation maps and the *Canada Flight Supplement*. Don't rely on Google Maps, a non-aviation GPS, or your familiarity with highways and landmarks. Create a flight itinerary you can share with someone responsible, and tell them whom to contact if you fail to arrive at your destination. If a flight itinerary isn't possible, file a flight plan. Don't forget to open it prior to departing and close it once you have arrived.

Make sure you map out your fuel sources along the way. If you fly with a two-stroke engine, it's a good idea to always have oil and a means to measure it in the aircraft. If possible, bring enough oil to cover the needs of your entire trip. Consider that headwinds will slow you down, and you might get stuck somewhere overnight due to weather. Always have a backup plan and a means to communicate it to someone responsible in case you get stuck.

Regular use of your aircraft radio will make you more proficient, but it's a good idea to write down any radio frequencies you might need along the way and keep it with your flight plan/itinerary.

When flying cross-country, you'll likely be carrying more weight than usual. Carefully weigh everything you plan to bring and do a thorough weight and balance calculation. Don't forget that your centre of gravity may shift during flight as fuel is burned off, so take the time to calculate the centre of gravity with an empty tank to know if you will still be within the limits.

WHAT TO PACK

- Consider carrying a personal locator beacon (PLB) or installing an emergency locator transmitter (ELT) with automatic activation;
- Pack a basic universal tool set for unforeseen maintenance. Tip: Bring safety wire!;
- Two-stroke oil if required;
- Duct/speed tape, paracord, and a few spare nuts and bolts, but watch the weight and balance;
- Fire extinguisher, first-aid kit, cell phone battery charger, water bottle, appropriate clothing for current weather.

READY TO LEAVE?

Make sure all your batteries are fully charged.

Finalize your flight itinerary and share it with someone who will track you via an app or will simply check in regularly via text message.

Study the layout of the airport you're flying to before taking off at each leg. Plan how you'll join the circuit and check if there are any special procedures.

Always check NOTAMs and weather along your route before departing on each leg.

GENERAL AVIATION SAFETY



WHILE ON ROUTE

Continue to monitor your progress on route. Are you still on course or is a crosswind pushing you off route? Weather can change after you depart so it's important to continue to check weather and winds as you go along.

Regularly check your fuel consumption.

The recommendations in this guide are meant to act as a positive reminder of actions you can all take to make your flying safer. In addition to the above, it is imperative that you understand the specific rules and regulations associated with the airspace you're operating in, your licence limitations and your aircraft limitations when flying.

EN ROUTE

Monitor your progress en route. A written flight plan can help you keep track, or use a GPS. Be aware of crosswinds that could be pushing you off course. Checking weather at every stop should be a habit. If you have the means to check inflight, make it part of your regular cockpit scan, along with a routine check of your fuel quantity.

GENERAL AVIATION SAFETY



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