Best Practices for Flying an Ultralight Aeroplane
MAINTENANCE

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, your licence and its limitations, your aircraft, and your abilities.

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

KEEP RECORDS

There are lots of good reasons to keep detailed records of all oil changes, repairs, and general maintenance performed on your aircraft. Not only will it help you keep a regular service schedule, it can also ensure better resale value. Buyers like to know the history of the aircraft they're purchasing.

MAINTAIN YOUR ENGINE

It is important to follow a regular maintenance routine as recommended by your engine's manufacturer. This protects both your investment and your life!

Set a schedule for regular service and overhauls. Make sure you are following a schedule based on your engine use, and stay on top of any service bulletins. If you need help, ask a qualified technician for advice.

MAINTENANCE TIPS

- Keep a detailed log book with dates and descriptions of any work
- Keep receipts for warranty and proof of compliance
- Check and observe proper torque values and application
- Make note of excessive wear areas and incorporate inspection of these into your pre-flight checklist
- Avoid deferring maintenance
- Have a budget for things like engine overhauls and fabric replacement. You won't be tempted to put these off if you have the funds saved up

ANNUAL INSPECTIONS

For annual inspections, it's important to follow your aircraft manufacturer's recommendations. The following practices should be included even if the manufacturer hasn't specified them:

- Apply a coloured cross-check torque seal so you can easily identify if a nut becomes loose
- Check the viability of your surface materials (i.e. your fabric, metal, and/or fibreglass composite). Either the aircraft manufacturer or your material supplier will have recommendations on inspecting these
- Inspect the tensions of your control cables and drag/anti-drag wires

REPORT DEFICIENCIES

If you experience any failures or malfunctions with your aircraft, including operational or maintenance-related concerns, be sure to share them with the aircraft manufacturer.

RELATED LINKS

FAA Advisory Circular AC43-13-1B: Acceptable Methods, Techniques, and Practices - Aircraft Inspection and Repair
Experimental Aircraft Association videos on building, maintaining and repairing your plane.