



# RUSTY PILOT NEW PILOT

Whether you're a licensed pilot who hasn't flown in a few years or you're a brand-new learner just taking off there is no better place to start than the beginning.

First, familiarize yourself with all of the applicable regulations. This includes the regulations from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as well as the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

Regulations change often. On a regular basis minor changes are made to wording and citations. Less often entire sections are re-written. The last major revision was around 1997. For this reason, I do not advocate memorization. What I do advocate is a working knowledge of where to find information and a plan to regularly check for updates.



## Regulations

Why should regulations be first on the list? FAR 91.3(a) states that the pilot in command of an aircraft is directly responsible for, and is the final authority as to, the operation of that aircraft. Thus, it's a good idea to know what the PIC is responsible for.

The Code of Federal Regulations contains all of the FAA Federal Aviation Regulations (FARs) and TSA regulations we need. Several websites are available to read, search, print, or download these. While any may work the government (\*.gov) sites are recommended because they are considered official.

- National Archives ([www.eCFR.gov](http://www.eCFR.gov)) has all the regulations for every government agency.

- FAA's [Dynamic Regulatory System \(drs.faa.gov\)](https://www.faa.gov/drs) has only the FAA regulations but also contains Airworthiness Directives, Advisory Circulars, Legal Interpretations, etc...

- [GovInfo.gov](https://www.govinfo.gov) contains current and historical regulations back to 1997

For the rusty pilot or the beginner, the first thing to look at would be 49 CFR Part 1552 Flight Training Security Program. This is significant for your training because compliance is required before any flight training may begin. In particular know the definition of “Flight Training” and the requirements for Verification of eligibility and recordkeeping.

The FARs are found in 14 CFR Chapter I Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation. Part 91 is sometimes called the “red-letter” or “written in blood” section. The items in Part 91 are a result of incidents, accidents, pilot error/omission, or just plain old common sense that needs to be documented.

For instance, 91.303(e) states aerobatics may not be conducted below 1500 feet AGL. This is a direct result of crashes that happened as a result of beginning maneuvers much lower.

Part 91 is also listed as a requirement for the Flight Review [61.56(a)(1)] because it is what we use the most, but on a regular basis we do have reason to reference others. In particular:

- Part 1 - Definitions and Abbreviations
- Part 39 - Airworthiness Directives
- Part 45 - Identification and Registration Marking
- Part 47 - Aircraft Registration
- Part 91 - General Operating and Flight Rules

Depending on the type of training you intend to pursue:

- Part 61 - Certification: Pilots, Flight Instructors, and Ground Instructors
- Part 141 - Pilot Schools
- Part 142 - Training Centers

Obviously, all of the other parts are helpful, just not necessary unless you are a participant. For example:

Part 71 – Airspace - Useful but mostly contains references to outside sources (also known as Inclusion By Reference or IBR materials)

Also, Part 97 - Instrument Procedures, Part 103 - Ultralight Vehicles, Part 105 - Parachute Operations, Part 107 - Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems. We may not be participating in instrument flights or in any of these other operations, but we will be interacting with them. On any given severe clear VFR day, we should expect to be in the midst of IFR traffic, skydivers, drones, and ultralights. An operational knowledge of these areas is not required, but knowledge of their existence and basic rules will be helpful for your situational awareness.

In greater detail I recommend becoming familiar with:

- 61.1 Applicability and definitions.
- 61.14 Incorporation by Reference. (IBRs)
- 61.19 Duration of pilot and instructor certificates and privileges.
- 61.23 Medical certificates: Requirement and duration.
- 61.51 Pilot logbooks.
- 61.56 Flight review.
- 61 Subparts C, D, E, etc as appropriate
- 91.1 through 91.399
- 91 Any subpart that pertains to your intended flight activities.

Whatever part of the regulations you are currently reading, look near the beginning for items called "Definitions", "Abbreviations", "Applicability", etc... These contain the official use of the word in the listed part. Not all parts have these but if they do it is *usually* found in the first 3 items. 14 CFR 91.303 is an example of an exception where the meaning of a term is listed in the section.

By knowing where to find the intended meaning we may carefully reason and understand the context of words. For instance, "Category" means something different depending on where it's found. Understanding the official usage and

knowing where to find this information will provide clarity and help prevent confusion.

## Pilot Certificate

If you do not already have at least a student pilot certificate, you'll need to apply for that first on the [Integrated Airman Certification and Rating Application \(https://iacra.faa.gov/\)](https://iacra.faa.gov/) website. No one remembers the name, just the sound the initials make "eye-ack-ra" and sometimes "eye-yack-ra"

Depending on how long it's been since you last flew, you may have the traditional (old style) paper certificate or maybe you can't find your pilot certificate. Perhaps you found your certificate but it's in such bad shape it has become unreadable. If any of these are true request a new one on form [AC 8060.56](#)

## Medical Certificate

Once you have made an application or requested a new certificate and have familiarized yourself with the updated regulations decide what kind of medical you want to fly with. If you've never had a medical, you must go with option 1.

Option 1 is the standard [FAA Part 67 Medical classes](#)

The only limitation for this option is based on the chosen medical class and whatever your Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) lists on your medical, the most common being "Must use corrective lens(es) to meet vision standards at all required distances."

Option 2 is [BasicMed](#)

This is the most restrictive, but for the General Aviation pilot that just wants to be in the air, it may be the one that fits you best.

Some of the restrictions include not carrying more than 6 passengers, flying at or below 18,000 feet MSL, not exceeding 250 knots, and not flying for compensation or hire. There are allowances for certain activities, but you'll read about that in the regulations.

Go to [MedExpress \(medxpress.faa.gov\)](https://medxpress.faa.gov) to begin this process.

## Proficiency and Recurrent Training

While your mouse is still warm go ahead and create an account on the [FAASafety.gov](https://faasafety.gov) website. FAA Safety is all about safety as you may imagine. The dominant purpose of the flight review is to determine if the pilot can safely operate an aircraft according to the regulations.

In order to act as pilot in command of an aircraft you must complete one of the items below from the beginning of the 24<sup>th</sup> calendar month prior to the date of acting as pilot in command.

- A flight review (with endorsement) from an authorized instructor in an aircraft in which the pilot is rated.
- Pass a practical test (aka checkride)
- Complete a phase of the FAA Wings program

The Wings program is the FAA-sponsored pilot proficiency program designed to increase safety. Where may this be found? You guessed it, right here at the [FAASafety.gov](https://faasafety.gov) website.

## Online Courses

Since we're already on the [FAASafety.gov](https://faasafety.gov) website let's see what else we can learn that will help us complete a flight review. Look under the tab "Activities, Courses, Seminars & Webinars" then go to courses. There are over 500 to choose from. Most are free but there are a few with an associated cost. I recommend looking for basic courses and anything that interests you. Courses that increase your awareness of safety, increase your understanding of aircraft handling, rules, or best practices are all good.

- ALC-36      Positive Aircraft Control
- ALC-42      Airspace, Special Use Airspace and TFRs
- ALC-48      Hold Short for Runway Safety

- ALC-62      Aeronautical Decision Making for VFR Pilots
- ALC-90      Know Before You Go: Navigating Today's Airspace
- ALC-93      Say it Right: Mastering Radio Communication
- ALC-94      Runway Safety
- ALC-573     Runway Safety Simulator
- ALC-950     AirVenture 2022 Preventing Runway Incursions

## Flight Information and Maneuvers

Download the latest FAA Handbooks, Manuals, and Testing Standards and review. Don't Forget the Errata's and Addendums They are there for a reason.

- PHAK - Pilot's Handbook of Aeronautical Knowledge
  - Introduces pilots to the broad spectrum of knowledge that will be needed as they progress in their pilot training.
- AFH - Airplane Flying Handbook
  - Introduces basic pilot skills
- CUG - Aeronautical Chart Users' Guide
  - It is useful to new pilots as a learning aid, and to experienced pilots as a quick reference guide.
- AIM - Aeronautical Information Manual
  - Official Guide to Basic Flight Information and ATC Procedures
- RM - Risk Management
  - Tool designed to help recognize and manage risk /
  - Enhance Aeronautical Decision Making
- Airman Certification Standards/Practical Test Standards
  - Private Pilot for Airplane Category (FAA-S-ACS-6)
  - Instrument Rating – Airplane (FAA-S-ACS-8)
  - Commercial Pilot for Airplane Category (FAA-S-ACS-7)
  - Flight Instructor for Airplane Category (FAA-S-ACS-25)
  - Airline Transport Pilot and Type Rating for Airplane Category (FAA-S-ACS-11)
  - Flight Instructor Instrument Practical Test Standards for Airplane Rating and Helicopter Rating (FAA-S-8081-9)

A full list of useful references can be found at [www.volanimas.com](http://www.volanimas.com) and clicking on the Aviation Resources link