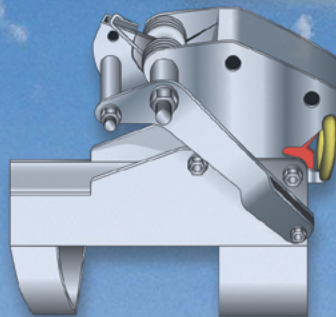


# Glider Flying Handbook



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

Federal Aviation  
Administration



# **Glider Flying Handbook**

**2024**

**U.S. Department of Transportation  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION  
Flight Standards Service**

# Preface

The Glider Flying Handbook is designed as a technical manual for applicants who are preparing for glider category rating and for currently certificated glider pilots who wish to improve their knowledge. Certificated flight instructors will find this handbook a valuable training aid, since detailed coverage of aeronautical decision-making, components and systems, aerodynamics, flight instruments, performance limitations, ground operations, flight maneuvers, traffic patterns, emergencies, soaring weather, soaring techniques, and cross-country flight is included. Topics such as radio navigation and communication, use of flight information publications, and regulations are available in other Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) publications.

The discussion and explanations reflect the most commonly used practices and principles. Occasionally, the word “must” or similar language is used where the desired action is deemed critical. The use of such language is not intended to add to, interpret, or relieve a duty imposed by Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR). Persons working towards a glider rating are advised to review the references from the applicable practical test standards. Resources for study include FAA-H-8083-25, Pilot’s Handbook of Aeronautical Knowledge; FAA-H-8083-2, Risk Management Handbook; and FAA-H-8083-28, Aviation Weather Handbook, as these documents contain basic material not duplicated herein. All beginning applicants should refer to FAA-H-8083-25, Pilot’s Handbook of Aeronautical Knowledge, for study and basic library reference.

It is essential for persons using this handbook to become familiar with and apply the pertinent parts of 14 CFR and the Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM). The AIM is available on the [FAA website](#). The current Flight Standards Service airman training and testing material and learning statements for all airman certificates and ratings can be obtained from the [FAA website](#).

This handbook supersedes FAA-H-8083-13A, Glider Flying Handbook, dated 2013.

This handbook is available for download, in PDF format, from the [FAA website](#).

This handbook is published by the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration, General Aviation & Commercial Division, Training & Certification Group (AFS-810), Testing Standards Section, P.O. Box 25082, Oklahoma City, OK 73125.

Comments regarding this publication should be emailed to [AFS630comments@faa.gov](mailto:AFS630comments@faa.gov).

# Acknowledgments

The Glider Flying Handbook was produced by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The FAA wishes to acknowledge the following contributors:

Sue Telford of Telford Fishing & Hunting Services for images used in Chapter 1.

Jerry Zieba ([www.dianasailplanes.com](http://www.dianasailplanes.com)) for images used in Chapter 2.

Tim Mara ([www.wingsandwheels.com](http://www.wingsandwheels.com)) for images used in Chapters 2 and 12.

Uli Kremer of Alexander Schleicher GmbH & Co for images used in Chapter 2.

Richard Lancaster ([www.carrotworks.com](http://www.carrotworks.com)) for images and content used in Chapter 3.

Dave Nadler of Nadler & Associates for images used in Chapter 6.

Dave McConeghey for images used in Chapter 6.

John Brandon ([www.raa.asn.au](http://www.raa.asn.au)) for images and content used in Chapter 7.

Patrick Panzera ([www.contactmagazine.com](http://www.contactmagazine.com)) for images used in Chapter 8.

Jeff Haby ([www.theweatherprediction.com](http://www.theweatherprediction.com)) for images used in Chapter 8.

National Soaring Museum ([www.soaringmuseum.org](http://www.soaringmuseum.org)) for content used in Chapter 9.

Bill Elliot ([www.soaringcafe.com](http://www.soaringcafe.com)) for images used in Chapter 12.

Tiffany Fidler for images used in Chapter 12.

Phil Klauder, Philadelphia Glider Council, for assistance with graphics revisions and review input.

Additional appreciation is extended to the Soaring Society of America, Inc. ([www.ssa.com](http://www.ssa.com)), the Soaring Safety Foundation, and Mr. Brad Temeyer and Mr. Bill Martin from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for their technical support and input.