

# Airman Testing Questions & Answers

(revised October 2018 – *new material shown in shaded box*)

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## Certification: Pilot & Medical Certificates [\[back\]](#)

### **What is the minimum age requirement for a Sport Pilot Certificate, Recreational Pilot Certificate, or Private Pilot Certificate?**

*An applicant must be 17 years of age. Although, applicants for the private pilot glider or free balloon rating may be 16 years of age. [\[back\]](#)*

### **What is the difference between a recreational pilot certificate and a private pilot certificate?**

*The recreational pilot has fewer privileges than a private pilot holds. All privileges and limitations of the recreational pilot certificate are listed in [14 CFR part 61, section 61.101](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **What are the eligibility requirements for a student pilot?**

*The specific aeronautical experience requirements are outlined in [14 CFR part 61](#). For the Student Pilot Certificate requirements, refer to [subpart C, section 61.83](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **When do I need a Student Pilot Certificate?**

*You must have a Student Pilot Certificate prior to solo flight. [\[back\]](#)*

### **What are the requirements for a Student Pilot Certificate?**

*To be eligible for a Student Pilot Certificate, a person must be at least 16 years of age, except for the operation of a glider or balloon, in which case the applicant must be at least 14 years of age and be able to read, speak, write, and understand the English language. [\[back\]](#)*

### **How do I obtain a Student Pilot Certificate?**

*You must apply through a Flight Standards District Office, designated pilot examiner, airman certification representative associated with a pilot school, or certificated flight instructor. Aviation Medical Examiners will no longer issue a combination medical certificate and Student Pilot Certificate. Student Pilot Certificates are issued on the same medium as other pilot certificates and have no expiration date. All Student Pilot Certificates issued before April 1, 2016, will expire according to their terms unless they are replaced by another pilot certificate. For details, please click [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **How long are my Student Pilot and medical certificates valid?**

*For information on duration of the Student Pilot Certificate, please refer to [14 CFR 61.19\(b\)](#). Student Pilot Certificates issued on or after April 1, 2016, do not have an expiration date. For information on medical certificate validity periods, please see the information and tables shown in [14 CFR 61.23\(a\) and 14 CFR 61.23\(d\)](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **Can my Student Pilot Certificate be renewed?**

*As stated above, a Student Pilot Certificate issued on or after April 1, 2016, does not have an expiration date. An existing Student Pilot Certificate cannot be renewed, but must be replaced by a new Student Pilot Certificate issued in accordance with the new rule. [\[back\]](#)*

**If I only want to be a Sport Pilot, how do I obtain a Student Pilot Certificate?**

The method to pursuing a Sport Pilot Certificate is the same as for any certificate. Refer to “How do I obtain a Student Pilot Certificate” above. [\[back\]](#)

**Where can I get information about the Sport Pilot Program?**

Sport pilot enthusiasts may find information on the FAA’s [Light Sport Aviation Branch’s webpage](#). [\[back\]](#)

**Is there a charge for the Student Pilot Certificate?**

There is no FAA charge for issuing an initial Student Pilot Certificate under the regulations that took effect on April 1, 2016, but an FAA-designated pilot examiner is allowed to charge a reasonable fee for issuing Student Pilot Certificates and processing the necessary reports. The FAA-authorized aviation medical examiner will charge a fee for the physical examination in connection with issuing the combination medical and Student Pilot Certificate. [\[back\]](#)

**Is there a charge for the pilot certificate?**

No. There is no charge for any original certificate issued by the FAA; however, fees will be charged by the FAA-authorized aviation medical examiner for the medical examination and by the FAA-designated pilot examiner for conducting the practical test. The FAA does charge to replace any pilot or medical certificate. [\[back\]](#)

**What’s the story on BasicMed?**

For detailed information on BasicMed, which took effect on May 1, 2017, please click [here](#). Please refer to the Q&A below for current guidance on medical certification. [\[back\]](#)

**When do I need a medical certificate?**

Except for Sport Pilot applicants, you will need a medical certificate prior to solo flight if you are operating an airplane, helicopter, gyroplane or airship. It is a good idea to obtain your medical certificate prior to beginning flight training. This practice will assure you are aware of any condition that could prevent you from obtaining a medical certificate prior to making a financial investment in flight training. [\[back\]](#)

**Must I have my medical certificate when I am piloting an aircraft in solo flight?**

Yes. The certificate must be in your physical possession when operating an aircraft in solo flight. [\[back\]](#)

**When required, what class of medical certificate must a student pilot have?**

Third-class, although any class will suffice. Medical certificates are designated as first-class, second-class, or third-class. Generally, the first-class is designed for the airline transport pilot; the second-class for the commercial pilot; and the third-class for the student, recreational, and private pilot. A medical is not required for student pilots engaged in training for a Sport Pilot Certificate. [\[back\]](#)

### **Where do I obtain an FAA medical certificate?**

Information on how to obtain a medical certificate is available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)

### **Where do I get my medical certificate?**

From any FAA-authorized aviation medical examiner. There are numerous physicians who are FAA-authorized aviation medical examiners. An Aviation Medical Examiner Locator is available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)

### **Where can I get a list of FAA-authorized aviation medical examiners?**

An Aviation Medical Examiner Locator is available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)

### **If I have had a medical certificate application denied, can I just get a Sport Pilot Certificate and fly on the basis of my driver's license?**

No. You may fly as a Sport Pilot using a driver's license in lieu of a medical certificate only if your **last** FAA-medical exam was not suspended, revoked, or denied, even if it is expired. [\[back\]](#)

### **If I have a physical disability, is there any provision for obtaining a medical certificate?**

Yes. Medical certificates can be issued in many cases where physical disabilities are involved. Depending upon the certificate held and the nature of the disability, operating limitations may be imposed. If you have any questions, contact an FAA-authorized aviation medical examiner or the local Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) prior to beginning flight training. [\[back\]](#)

## **Certification: Privileges & Limitations** [\[back\]](#)

### **What should I know about Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) prior to my first solo flight?**

Your flight instructor will determine that you are familiar with appropriate portions of [14 CFR part 61](#), the general and visual flight rules of [14 CFR part 91](#), and will administer and grade a pre-solo written test prior to solo endorsement. The pre-solo written test will also include questions on the flight characteristics and operational limitations of the make and model aircraft to be flown. [\[back\]](#)

### **Does a student pilot automatically have the privilege of cross-country flying after soloing?**

No. An instructor must first provide dual instruction on cross-country flying before a student pilot can be authorized to conduct solo cross-country flights. The instructor must also review the pilot's preflight planning and preparation for solo cross-country flight and determine that the flight can be made safely under the known circumstances and conditions. The instructor must endorse the student pilot's logbook prior to each cross-country flight, stating the pilot is considered competent to make the flight. Under certain conditions, an instructor may authorize repeated solo flights over a given route. [\[back\]](#)

**As a student pilot, am I permitted to carry passengers prior to receipt of my recreational pilot certificate or private pilot certificate?**

No. Refer to [14 CFR part 61](#), section 61.89 (a)(1). [\[back\]](#)

**For the purpose of obtaining an additional certificate or rating, may the holder of a recreational pilot certificate act as pilot in command on flights: (1) between sunset and sunrise; and (2) in airspace which requires communication with air traffic control?**

Yes, provided an authorized flight instructor has given the recreational pilot the required ground and flight training in these areas, and endorsed the pilot's logbook. The recreational pilot will be required to carry the logbook with the required endorsements on such flights.

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**How can the holder of a sport or recreational pilot certificate ensure that no inadvertent entry is made into airspace requiring communication with air traffic control?**

The pilot must select readily identifiable landmarks that are well beyond the boundaries of the airspace requiring communication with air traffic control. During training, instruction in identification of airspace requiring communication with air traffic control will be provided.

Refer to [14 CFR part 61](#), section 101 (a)(i)(1)(2)(3) [\[back\]](#)

**What aircraft can I fly as a Sport Pilot?**

You are limited to flying an aircraft that meets the definition of a light-sport aircraft (LSA). An LSA is any certificated aircraft that meets the following performance parameters: (1) 45 knots (51 mph) Max Landing Configuration Stall speed; (2) 120 knots (138 mph) Max. Straight & Level; (3) Single or Two Seat Aircraft; (4) Fixed Pitch or Ground Adjustable Propeller; (5) Fixed Landing Gear (except for amphibious aircraft.); and a maximum gross weight of 1320 obs. (1430 lbs. for seaplanes). [\[back\]](#)

**What are the restrictions on a sport pilot?**

For information on Sport Pilot privileges and limitations, please see [14 CFR 61.301-327](#).

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**May I exercise the privileges of my pilot certificate immediately after passing my practical test?**

Yes. The evaluator will issue a temporary pilot certificate, which is effective for a specific time period, normally 120 days. This temporary pilot certificate is issued to a qualified applicant after successful completion of the practical test. The temporary pilot certificate is subject to a review of qualifications and the issuance of a permanent certificate by the Administrator. The permanent certificate is issued to an applicant found qualified. The temporary certificate must be carried when exercising the privileges of that certificate. [\[back\]](#)

## Testing: Knowledge Test Changes [\[back\]](#)

### **Why did the FAA knowledge test include so many questions I had never seen before?**

*The FAA makes every effort to maintain the integrity and security of actual knowledge test questions through regular review and revision of the test question item bank. We have recently intensified this review and revision process, so it is increasingly unlikely that applicants will see an exact match between sample questions and actual test questions.*

*The FAA does not publish actual knowledge test questions, in part because at least two independent studies indicate that publication of active questions could negatively affect learning and understanding, as well as undermine the validity of the knowledge test as an assessment tool.*

*The agency does provide sample knowledge tests on the FAA website. The questions in these sample tests are intended to help applicants understand the scope and type of knowledge that will be tested to qualify for the target certificate or rating. The goal is for applicants to devote their efforts to mastering the fundamental aeronautical knowledge necessary for safe operations in the National Airspace System (NAS) rather than to memorizing specific questions and answers.*

*The questions that you may have seen and studied in commercially-available materials have been developed by test preparation providers for similar reasons – that is, to enable applicants to study concepts and practice calculations specified in the 14 CFR part 61 “aeronautical knowledge” requirements for each airman certificate or rating. These are not, and should not be represented to be, “real” questions.*

*In some cases, unscrupulous test preparation providers have sought to obtain actual test questions by overtly or otherwise encouraging knowledge test takers to share information about actual questions and possible answers immediately after taking the knowledge test. The FAA has taken action against such companies. You should also be aware that an applicant’s participation in such practices could be a violation of 14 CFR part 61, section 61.37 (“Knowledge tests: Cheating or other unauthorized conduct.”) [\[back\]](#)*

### **Why did the FAA make such significant changes to the ATP knowledge test?**

*The FAA revised the ATP knowledge test to comply with regulatory changes in 14 CFR part 61, section 61.155, which describes the aeronautical knowledge required for the Airline Transport Pilot (ATP) certificate, and the addition of a new section (14 CFR part 61, section 61.156), regarding training requirements for an ATP certificate in the Airplane Category, multiengine class rating. [\[back\]](#)*

### **How can I get updates to airman testing information?**

*The FAA publishes a great deal of information on airman testing and training on its website at [https://www.faa.gov/training\\_testing/testing/](https://www.faa.gov/training_testing/testing/). In addition to links to a broad range of resources (e.g., reference handbooks, practical test standards, computer testing supplements), the upper right section of this page includes a “subscribe” link that you can use to sign up for email updates to these materials. [\[back\]](#)*

### **I've been hearing about the ACS – Airman Certification Standards. What is that?**

*The Airman Certification Standards (ACS) is a single-source document that describes the standards for knowledge, risk management, and skill needed to pass both the knowledge test and the practical test for an airman certificate or rating. For detailed information on the ACS, please click [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **What should I do if I have a recommendation to improve a handbook, PTS, knowledge test guide, or other testing document?**

*Send comments regarding FAA testing publications in e-mail form to [AFS630comments@faa.gov](mailto:AFS630comments@faa.gov). [\[back\]](#)*

### **Can I suggest a question that should be included on a future knowledge test?**

*Yes, you can submit a proposed airman knowledge test question by completing the form available on the [Airman Testing Standards Branch's webpage](#). [\[back\]](#)*

## **Testing: Knowledge Test Registration [\[back\]](#)**

### **How do I register for a Remote Pilot certificate knowledge test?**

*To register for a Remote Pilot certificate knowledge test, you should call the Airman Knowledge Testing (AKT) Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) directly to register.*

*AKT ODA contact info:*

- *Computer Assisted Testing Service (CATS): 1-800-947-4228*
- *PSI/LaserGrade Computer Testing: 1-800-211-2753*

*A list of airman knowledge testing centers is available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **Where can I find a list of places where I can go to take my knowledge test?**

*The most current listing of airman knowledge testing centers is available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **What is an "authorization" to take a knowledge test?**

*"Authorization" means that you have met all of the requirements to take or retake the knowledge test for the certificate and or rating sought. Specific authorization requirements for each airman knowledge test can be found in the [Applicant Identification, Information Verification, & Authorization Requirements Matrix](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **What constitutes an "endorsement" to take a knowledge test?**

*As it relates to an airman knowledge test, an "endorsement" documents that an authorized instructor, an inspector, or an FAA approved training organization finds an applicant is competent to pass the knowledge test. It is important to understand that there are different requirements for the many airman certificates issued by the FAA, and there are also different requirements when additional testing is required after a failed test attempt. Pilots, ground instructors, and flight instructors should refer to the 14 CFR part 61; air traffic control tower operators, aircraft dispatchers, mechanics, repairmen and parachute riggers should refer to 14 CFR part 65. [\[back\]](#)*

### **Do all knowledge tests require an "endorsement" before someone can take the test?**

No, the [Applicant Identification, Information Verification, & Authorization Requirements Matrix](#) indicates which knowledge tests require an endorsement prior to taking the knowledge test. [\[back\]](#)

### **How much does it cost to take a knowledge test?**

Organizations ("ODA holders") authorized to administer the knowledge test establish the knowledge test prices, which are subject to change. For current prices, contact your local airman knowledge testing center. A list of airman knowledge testing centers is available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)

### **Am I eligible to take an FAA exam through the Joint Service Aviation Maintenance Technician Certification Council (JSAMTCC) Airman Knowledge Testing (AKT) Program?**

You may be eligible to take an FAA exam, at no cost to you, if you are: an active-duty, guard, or reserve member of the U.S. Military; a dependent of an active-duty, guard, or reserve member of the U.S. Military; a U.S. Military retiree; or a Department of Defense or Department of Homeland Security civilian. You may contact a [JSAMTCC AKT Center](#) for additional information.

### **What information/materials (identification, authorization) do I need to take my exam?**

Information regarding test aids and materials allowed for use by airman knowledge test applicants is available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)

### **What is the age requirement to take the sport pilot, recreational pilot, or private pilot knowledge test?**

An applicant must be at least 15 years of age to take the test, although applicants for the balloon or glider tests must be 14 years of age. Prior to taking the knowledge test, an applicant shall be asked to present a birth certificate or other official documentation as evidence of meeting the age requirement. [\[back\]](#)

### **What document or documents must I present prior to taking a knowledge test?**

An applicant for a knowledge test must present appropriate personal identification. The identification must include a photograph of the applicant, the applicant's signature, and the applicant's actual residential address (if different from the mailing address). This information may be presented in more than one form. The applicant must also present one of the following:

- A certificate of graduation from an FAA-approved pilot school or pilot training course appropriate to the certificate or rating sought, or a statement of accomplishment from the school certifying the satisfactory completion of the ground-school portion of such a course.
- A written statement or logbook endorsement from an FAA-certificated ground or flight instructor, certifying that the applicant has satisfactorily completed an applicable ground training or home-study course and is prepared for the knowledge test.

- *A certificate of graduation or statement of accomplishment from a ground-school course appropriate to the certificate or rating sought conducted by an agency, such as a high school, college, adult education program, the Civil Air Patrol, or an ROTC Flight Training Program.*
- *A certificate of graduation from a home-study course developed by the aeronautical enterprise providing the study material. The certificate of graduation must correspond to the FAA knowledge test for the certificate or rating sought. The aeronautical enterprise providing the course of study must also supply a comprehensive knowledge test which can be scored as evidence that the student has completed the course of study. When the student satisfactorily completes the knowledge test, it is sent to the course provider for scoring by an FAA- certificated ground or flight instructor. The instructor personally evaluates the test and attests to the student's knowledge of the subjects presented in the course. Upon satisfactory completion, a graduation certificate is sent to the student.*

*In the event of retesting after a failure, the applicant must present the unsatisfactory airman knowledge test report. If the applicant elects to retest for a higher score, the satisfactory airman knowledge test report must be surrendered to the test administrator.*

*For additional information on applicant eligibility, identification, authorization, and retesting requirements, refer to the [Knowledge Testing Authorization Requirements Matrix](#). [\[back\]](#)*

## Testing: Knowledge Test Study Resources [\[back\]](#)

### **Where can I find information on the subjects that will be tested on my knowledge test?**

*This information is available in the applicable [airman knowledge test guide](#). [\[back\]](#)*

*Special Note: As of June 2017, the FAA will make no additional changes to the airman knowledge test guides, which are being phased out as the FAA transitions information now provided in the airman knowledge test guides to the Airman Certification Standards (ACS).*

### **Where can I get copies of AFS-630's airman training and testing publications?**

*Information on airman training and testing publications is available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **What specific knowledge test must I pass to obtain the airman certificate I desire?**

*This information is available in the applicable [airman knowledge test guide](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **What study materials are available to help me prepare for my certification test?**

*Airman knowledge test guides are available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **Where can I find the figures, charts, and diagrams that may appear on my knowledge test?**

*This information is contained in the applicable [computer testing supplement](#). [\[back\]](#)*

**Where can I find the PTS for the aircraft class/category in which I want to obtain certification?**

*Electronic copies of all current and available practical test standards are available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

**Where can I find the current regulations (14 CFR)?**

*To find the most current version of the aviation-related regulations in 14 CFR, please see [Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations \(14 CFR\)](#). [\[back\]](#)*

**Can I keep a list of the questions on my knowledge test?**

*No. It is strictly prohibited to copy or remove test questions from the test facility. Furthermore, you are not allowed to take and/or leave with any materials necessary for creating a list of the knowledge test questions. For more information, see the [Test Aids and Materials That May be Used by Airman Knowledge Testing Applicants Advisory Circular \(AC 60-11C\)](#). [\[back\]](#)*

**What companies have a list of all the current knowledge test questions?**

*The FAA does not release current knowledge test questions to any company. You may, however, access samples of the airman knowledge test questions [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

**Does the FAA publish a list of all the knowledge test questions?**

*The FAA does not release current knowledge test questions to the public. You may, however, access samples of the airman knowledge test questions [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

**Does the FAA publish a list of all the practical test oral questions?**

*No, there is not a list of oral questions to be asked on practical tests. The evaluator conducting the practical test formulates the oral questions. [\[back\]](#)*

**Do the knowledge test questions ever change?**

*Yes. The FAA continuously reviews and revises knowledge test questions in order to keep them up to date with changes to regulations and guidance, and to enhance knowledge test integrity and security. [\[back\]](#)*

**Does everyone take the same knowledge test for a particular airman certificate?**

*No. All knowledge tests for a given airman certificate include questions covering the required knowledge areas, but the sequence and the wording of the specific questions used will vary. [\[back\]](#)*

**Where can I find the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) regulations on which I may be tested?**

*The NTSB's Accident/Incident Reporting Requirements can be found in [49 CFR part 830](#). [\[back\]](#)*

## Testing: Knowledge Test Reports [\[back\]](#)

### **What is a knowledge test report?**

*A knowledge test report is a document issued by the FAA upon completion of an airman knowledge test. It shows the applicant's name, applicant ID number, Exam ID number, exam type, exam date, site ID for the location where the exam was taken, exam score, pass/fail status, take number, learning statement codes pertaining to the questions answered incorrectly, and other information required by [FAA Order 8080.6 \(as amended\)](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **What do I do with my knowledge test report?**

*Your knowledge test report is an important document. You should review it with your instructor and put in a safe place to prevent its loss. You will need to present the test report (with embossed seal) to the evaluator in order to take the practical test. You will notice that the report includes Learning Statement Codes (LSCs), which refer to the subjects answered incorrectly on your knowledge test.*

*The FAA knowledge testing code system will change as the Airman Certification Standards (ACS) are created and implemented for various airman certificates and ratings. When the test report moves to ACS codes instead of LSCs, you will refer the appropriate ACS document to review the task elements corresponding to questions answered incorrectly on your knowledge test.*

*During the practical test, the evaluator will re-test the subject areas you missed on the knowledge test. The original test report will not be returned to you unless you do not pass the practical test. You may, however, make a copy of your knowledge test report prior to taking the practical test. [\[back\]](#)*

### **How do I get another copy of my knowledge test report?**

*An applicant who requires a duplicate test report due to loss, theft, or destruction of the original must send a signed request, including a check or money order for \$12, to: Federal Aviation Administration, Airmen Certification Branch, Written Test Section, P.O. Box 25082, Oklahoma City, OK, 73125-0082. The request must include:*

- *name*
- *date of birth*
- *social security number*
- *type of test*
- *date you took the test*

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### **Where can I gather information about the PLT codes for the questions I missed on my knowledge test?**

You can use the [Learning Statement Reference Guide](#) to identify the areas pertaining to the questions missed on your exam. The applicable [airman knowledge test guide](#) provides a list of reference material for knowledge testing.

In the future, ACS codes that link to a specific knowledge, skill, or risk management element will be used on the Airman Knowledge Test Report in lieu of today's Learning Statement Codes. You can learn more about the ACS [here](#). [\[back\]](#)

### **What if my airman knowledge test report has a PLT code that I cannot find in one of these documents?**

Please contact [AFS630comments@faa.gov](mailto:AFS630comments@faa.gov), and we can assist in identifying the code needed to support your retraining on the missed topic. [\[back\]](#)

### **What does my instructor do with my knowledge test report?**

Your instructor should review your knowledge test report with you and provide additional training on the areas that you missed on the test. You and your instructor will refer to the Learning Statement Codes (LSC) or, in the future, to ACS codes, to review deficient areas. The test report includes a section titled "AUTHORIZED INSTRUCTOR'S STATEMENT." This endorsement is to be used solely to document retraining in the event of a knowledge test failure. It should not be used to meet the requirement to document retraining areas missed on the knowledge test for the practical test. Please refer to AC 61-65E for practical test endorsements. [\[back\]](#)

### **What does my DPE do with my knowledge test report?**

The evaluator (usually a Designated Pilot Examiner, or DPE) uses your knowledge test report to determine that you have met the acceptable standards or knowledge in each of the areas covered by the practical test. Upon passing your practical test, the DPE sends the original copy of the knowledge test report to the Airman Registry in Oklahoma City, OK. If you do not pass your practical test, the DPE will return the knowledge test report to you for submission when you retake the practical test. [\[back\]](#)

### **What recourse do I have if I believe there was an invalid question on my test?**

*If you feel that your test contained an invalid question, you may request that your test be hand scored. If an applicant wishes to have a test hand-scored, he or she must submit a request, in the form of a signed letter, to the Airman Testing Branch. Along with the request, the applicant must submit a legible copy of his or her knowledge test report and a legible photocopy of proof of identification, including an official photograph of the applicant and his or her signature. The mailing address is:*

*U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Airman Testing Branch  
P.O. Box 25082  
Oklahoma City, OK 73125 [\[back\]](#)*

### **What happens if my name as shown on the knowledge test report is different from my name as it appears in IACRA?**

*FAA [Order 8080.6 \(as amended\)](#), Chapter 3, par.11 (page 3-9) provides guidance on this issue. Under the “Erroneous AKTR” heading, it states that: “If an error is detected on an AKTR, the applicant must present proof of correct information at the time of the practical test or at the time of certificate application. If proof is presented at the time of the practical test, the practical Test Examiner (TE) must provide a certifying statement that the correct information was presented. This statement, along with a photocopy of the applicant’s identification, must accompany the airman’s certification file that is forwarded to the Airmen Certification Branch.” As long as the evaluator follows this procedure to verify the applicant’s correct name, the Airmen Certification Branch will process the documentation for the certificate or rating.*

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## Testing: Knowledge Test Tips and Tools [\[back\]](#)

### **When should I take my knowledge test?**

*The FAA recommends that the student pilot complete a solo cross-country flight prior to taking the knowledge test. The operational knowledge gained by this experience can be advantageous for the student when taking the knowledge test. However, the student pilot's CFI is the best person to determine when the applicant is ready to take the knowledge test. [\[back\]](#)*

### **How should I prepare for the knowledge test?**

*To adequately prepare for the knowledge test, your instructor should review with you: (1) [14 CFR part 61, section 61.97](#) (if preparing for the recreational pilot knowledge test); or (2) [14 CFR part 61, section 61.105](#) (if preparing for the private pilot knowledge test). The regulations require an applicant to have logged ground training from an authorized instructor, or to present evidence of having satisfactorily completed a course of instruction or home-study course in the knowledge areas appropriate to the category and class aircraft for the rating sought.*

*Because the FAA continuously reviews and revises the wording of knowledge test questions, it is not a good idea to focus on memorizing practice test questions and answers. Rather, you should focus on mastering the fundamental concepts – not only to pass the knowledge test, but also to ensure that you have acquired the knowledge needed to be a safe and competent pilot. [\[back\]](#)*

### **What aids and materials can I take with me into the room where I will take my knowledge test?**

*Information regarding test aids and materials that airman knowledge test applicants may use is available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **Can I bring reference materials when taking my knowledge test?**

*You may use aids, reference materials, and test materials within the guidelines listed in the applicable [knowledge test guide](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **A private pilot test applicant noted that the sectional chart in Figures 21 and 24 of the *Airman Knowledge Testing Supplement for Sport, Recreational and Private Pilot* (FAA-CT-8080-2F) is off scale. Scales on the side of the figure are correct, but most students prefer using a plotter to take the knowledge test. Is there something you can do to address this issue?**

*We have deleted questions involving scalability (i.e., those questions requiring the use of non-standard scales for measurement or calculation) from the Private Pilot Airplane test question bank. We intend to take similar action for other test banks. In the meantime, it is best to use the scaled dimensions available on the printed chart in lieu of a plotter to accurately analyze a sectional chart in lieu of a plotter when taking other FAA knowledge tests. [\[back\]](#)*

### **Is Big Brother watching while I take my knowledge test?**

*No, but the testing site is. [FAA Order 8080.6 \(as amended\)](#) states that "The unit member must be able to clearly and fully view all applicants at all times, be aware of all activities in the testing room, and be alert for any misconduct....If video monitoring is used, a sign must be*

visible to the applicants advising that the testing area is being video monitored." [\[back\]](#)

**I have a learning disability. Can I still take a knowledge test, a practical test, and receive a pilot certificate?**

*Yes. If you are an applicant with a learning or reading disability, you may request approval from the Airman Testing Standards Branch, through the local FSDO or IFO, to take an airman knowledge test using one of the following three options, listed in preferential order: Refer to the Testing Procedures for Applicants with Learning or Reading Disabilities at the following link in FAA Order [8080.6 \(as amended\)](#).*

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**What happens if I fail the knowledge test?**

*Your instructor should review your knowledge test report with you and cover the areas that you missed on the test. You and your instructor will refer to the Learning Statement Codes (LSCs) or, in future, the ACS codes, to identify the deficient areas that require retraining. Please note that the "AUTHORIZED INSTRUCTOR'S STATEMENT" is to be used only in the event of a knowledge test failure. It is not intended to document retraining of areas missed on the knowledge test. Please refer to AC61-65E for practical test endorsements. (**Note:** Does not apply to the Unmanned General Aircraft (UAG) drone test. The UAG does not require an endorsement to retest.) [\[back\]](#)*

**If I fail the knowledge test, is there any way to determine the areas in which I need additional work so I can study for a retest?**

*Yes. You will receive an airman knowledge test report from the testing center. The test report will contain your test score and will also list the subject matter knowledge codes for the areas in which you were deficient. An outline of the subject matter knowledge codes is located in the appendix of the appropriate knowledge test guide. A knowledge test guide provides information for obtaining authorization to take a knowledge test. The knowledge test guide provides lists of reference materials and subject matter knowledge codes, and a list of computer testing designees (CTDs). An electronic version of all current knowledge test guides is available [here](#).*

*In the future, you will receive this information via ACS codes, which are linked to specific knowledge, skill, and risk management elements shown in the Airman Certification Standards document for the target certificate or rating. For more information on the ACS, please see the ACS FAQs and other information posted [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

**If I pass the knowledge test, will I receive the same information concerning areas in which I need additional work as I would if I failed the test?**

*Yes. (see previous answer.) [\[back\]](#)*

## Testing: Knowledge Test Validity Periods [\[back\]](#)

### **How soon can I take my practical test, and how long does the knowledge test remain valid?**

*You can apply to take the practical test immediately after receiving your knowledge test report indicating a passing grade. In the case of most FAA knowledge test reports, you will have up to 24 calendar months after successfully passing your knowledge test take the practical test. For example, if you pass the knowledge test on July 12, 2016, it would be valid until midnight on July 31, 2018.*

*If you are pursuing a Flight Engineer certificate, the expiration date of your test results may be extended if you meet the requirements of [section 63.35\(d\)](#). [\[back\]](#)*

## Testing: The Practical Test [\[back\]](#)

### **Prior to taking the practical test, what aeronautical experience must I have?**

*The specific aeronautical experience requirements are outlined in [14 CFR part 61](#). For the Sport Pilot Certificate requirements, refer to [subpart J section 61.309](#), Recreational Pilot Certificate requirements, refer to [subpart D section 61.99](#). For the Private Pilot Certificate requirements, refer to [subpart E section 61.109](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **When can I take the sport pilot, recreational pilot, or private pilot practical test?**

*[14 CFR part 61](#) establishes the ground school and flight experience requirements for the Recreational Pilot Certificate and Private Pilot Certificate. However, your flight instructor can best determine when you are qualified for the practical test. Your instructor should take you through a practice practical test. [\[back\]](#)*

### **Where can I take the practical test?**

*Due to the workload of FAA FSDOs, the agency delegates most practical tests to pilot examiners designated by FSDOs. You should schedule your practical test by an appointment to avoid conflicts and wasted time. Your local FSDO can provide a list of evaluator names. [\[back\]](#)*

### **Who can administer my practical test?**

*Designated Pilot Examiners (DPEs) administer practical tests. You can find a DPE in your area by using the [Designee Locator](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **Is there any charge for taking the practical test?**

*Since an FAA-designated pilot examiner serves without pay from the government for conducting practical tests and processing the necessary reports, the FAA-designated pilot examiner is allowed to charge a reasonable fee. However, there is no charge for the practical test when it is conducted by an FAA inspector. [\[back\]](#)*

### **Must I provide the aircraft for my practical test?**

*Yes. An applicant must provide an airworthy aircraft with equipment relevant to the Areas of Operation required for the practical test. [\[back\]](#)*

### **What papers and documents must I present prior to taking my practical test?**

*The application for an airman certificate and/or rating maybe made in a paper form or electronically through the Integrated Airman Certification and Rating Application (IACRA). For most pilot applicants, IACRA is the preferred method of applying for a certificate or rating. All other applications for airman certificates will be made in paper form.*

*The applicant must present:*

1. An airman knowledge test report with a satisfactory grade
2. A medical certificate (not required for glider or balloon), and a Student Pilot Certificate endorsed by a flight instructor for solo, solo cross-country (airplane and rotorcraft), and for the make and model aircraft to be used for the practical test. (Driver's license or medical certificate for Sport Pilot applicants)
3. The pilot's log book records
4. A graduation certificate from an FAA-approved school (if applicable)

*The applicant will be asked to produce and explain the:*

1. Aircraft's Registration Certificate
2. Aircraft's Airworthiness Certificate
3. Aircraft's operating limitations or FAA-approved aircraft flight manual (if required)
4. Aircraft equipment list
5. Required weight and balance data
6. Maintenance records
7. Applicable Airworthiness Directives [\[back\]](#)

### **What pilot maneuvers are required on the practical test, and how will my performance of these operations be evaluated?**

*A detailed explanation of the required pilot maneuvers and performance standards is available in the applicable practical test standards or airman certification standards. An electronic version of all current practical test standards is available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

### **What happens if I miss the answer to a question during the oral portion of my practical test?**

*The outcome of incorrectly answering an oral question on a practical test is at the discretion of the evaluator. The evaluator uses oral questions to verify that the applicant has adequate knowledge of the necessary topics for safe flight operations. Depending on the nature of the question, the evaluator may use the applicant's response as a basis for further questioning to verify the applicant's level of knowledge on the topic. [\[back\]](#)*

### **What happens if I am unable to finish my practical test due to a problem with the aircraft?**

*When a practical test is discontinued for reasons other than unsatisfactory performance (i.e., equipment failure, weather, illness), the FAA Form 8710-1, Airman Certificate and/or Rating Application, and, if applicable, the airman knowledge test report, is returned to the applicant.*

The evaluator then must prepare, sign, and issue a Letter of Discontinuance to the applicant. The Letter of Discontinuance must identify the Areas of Operation and the associated Tasks of the practical test that were successfully completed. The applicant must be advised that the Letter of Discontinuance must be presented to the evaluator to receive credit for the items successfully completed when the practical test is resumed, and made part of the certification file. [\[back\]](#)

### **What happens if I am unable to finish my practical test because I, or the evaluator, get sick?**

If a practical test is discontinued, the applicant is entitled credit for those areas of operation that were passed, but only if the applicant: (1) Passes the remainder of the practical test within the 60-day period after the date the practical test was discontinued; (2) Presents to the evaluator for the retest the original notice of disapproval form or the letter of discontinuance form, as appropriate; (3) Satisfactorily accomplishes any additional training needed and obtains the appropriate instructor endorsements, if additional training is required; and (4) Presents to the evaluator for the retest a properly completed and signed application. ([14 CFR part 61, section 61.43](#)) [\[back\]](#)

### **What happens if I fail the practical test?**

The evaluator or applicant may discontinue the test at any time when failure of an Area of Operation makes the applicant ineligible for the certificate or rating sought. The test may be continued only with the consent of the applicant. If the test is discontinued, the applicant is entitled to credit for only those Areas of Operation satisfactorily performed. However, during the retest and at the discretion of the evaluator, any Task may be re-evaluated, including those previously passed. [\[back\]](#)

## **Training** [\[back\]](#)

### **Where can I obtain my ground and flight school training?**

Most airport operators can furnish this information, or you may contact the nearest FSDO. [\[back\]](#)

### **Is there a set number of flight instructional hours I will receive before I solo?**

No. The instructor will not allow you to solo until you have learned to perform certain maneuvers. These maneuvers include safe takeoffs and landings. You must be able to maintain positive control of the aircraft at all times and to use good judgment. [\[back\]](#)

### **What does the term “appropriate logbook endorsement for solo” mean?**

It refers to verification by an authorized flight instructor showing that on the date specified, the instructor provided dual instruction and found the student competent to make solo flights. [\[back\]](#)

### **When is the first solo endorsement required?**

A student pilot must have a first solo endorsement dated within 90 days prior to any solo flight. [\[back\]](#)

**Should my flight instructor endorse my logbook before or after my first solo flight?**

*The logbook endorsement certifying that the holder is competent to solo must be made by the flight instructor prior to the first solo flight. [\[back\]](#)*

**If I solo in more than one make and model aircraft, must I have an endorsement for in my logbook?**

*Yes. Your flight instructor must make this endorsement prior to the first solo flight in each make and model aircraft. [\[back\]](#)*

**Does the endorsement to fly solo permit me to make solo cross-country flights?**

*No. Your flight instructor must specifically endorse your logbook to permit cross-country flights. [\[back\]](#)*

**Must I carry my Student Pilot Certificate when I pilot an aircraft in solo flight?**

*Yes. The certificate should be in your physical possession or readily accessible. [\[back\]](#)*

**If my original Student Pilot Certificate has been endorsed for solo, do I lose this endorsement on my new certificate?**

*The endorsements are still valid, but they are not transferred to the new certificate. Retain the old certificate as a record of these endorsements. If your Student Pilot Certificate was issued on or after April 1, 2016, your instructor will make all endorsements in your logbook. [\[back\]](#)*

**FAA Resources [\[back\]](#)**

**How do I find my local FAA office?**

*Information regarding the location of FAA offices is available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

**How do I find my local FSDO?**

*A listing of all Flight Standards District Offices, by state, is available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

**Where can I find someone close to me who can give me official information regarding FAA policies?**

*Your local Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) can provide this information. A listing of all Flight Standards District Offices, by state, is available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

**Where can I find the form I need to apply for an airman certificate?**

*The Airman Certificate and/or Rating Application is available [here](#). [\[back\]](#)*

**Do you have a question not addressed here?** If so, please send it to [AFS630comments@faa.gov](mailto:AFS630comments@faa.gov).

**Do you have questions about or suggestions for improving the ACS?** *If so, please contact the ACS Focus Team ([9-AVS-ACS-Focus-Team@faa.gov](mailto:9-AVS-ACS-Focus-Team@faa.gov))* [\[back\]](#)

Miscellaneous [\[back\]](#)

**Why does the FAA call a pilot license a certificate?**

*The term "certificate" more accurately encompasses certain characteristics applicable to the document, such as the fact that they do not expire and that they are awarded without a fee. For a complete explanation of certificates, ratings, and endorsements, please refer to Appendix C of the Aviation Instructor's Handbook (FAA-H-8083-9A).* [\[back\]](#)

**Why does the FAA use the term airman? Why not use pilot?**

*The regulations use the term "airman" to encompass the full range of aviation functions that require an FAA certificate or rating. Not all airman certificates and ratings are for pilots or aviators; some apply to aircraft maintenance technicians, dispatchers, and other specialties. We continued to use this term because it includes all aviation functions that require an FAA certificate or rating, and because it is used in the regulations.* [\[back\]](#)

**Must I have a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) radiotelephone operator's permit to operate an aircraft radio transmitter?**

No. [\[back\]](#)