

## **§ 61.103 – Eligibility requirements: General.**

*[Doc. No. 25910, 62 FR 16298, Apr. 4, 1997, as amended by Amdt. 61-124, 74 FR 42558, Aug. 21, 2009]*

To be eligible for a private pilot certificate, a person must:

- (a) Be at least 17 years of age for a rating in other than a glider or balloon.
- (b) Be at least 16 years of age for a rating in a glider or balloon.
- (c) Be able to read, speak, write, and understand the English language. If the applicant is unable to meet one of these requirements due to medical reasons, then the Administrator may place such operating limitations on that applicant's pilot certificate as are necessary for the safe operation of the aircraft.
- (d) Receive a logbook endorsement from an authorized instructor who:
  - (1) Conducted the training or reviewed the person's home study on the aeronautical knowledge areas listed in § 61.105(b) of this part that apply to the aircraft rating sought; and
  - (2) Certified that the person is prepared for the required knowledge test.
- (e) Pass the required knowledge test on the aeronautical knowledge areas listed in § 61.105(b) of this part.
- (f) Receive flight training and a logbook endorsement from an authorized instructor who:
  - (1) Conducted the training in the areas of operation listed in § 61.107(b) of this part that apply to the aircraft rating sought; and
  - (2) Certified that the person is prepared for the required practical test.
- (g) Meet the aeronautical experience requirements of this part that apply to the aircraft rating sought before applying for the practical test.
- (h) Pass a practical test on the areas of operation listed in § 61.107(b) of this part that apply to the aircraft rating sought.
- (i) Comply with the appropriate sections of this part that apply to the aircraft category and class rating sought.
- (j) Hold a U.S. student pilot certificate, sport pilot certificate, or recreational pilot certificate.

## § 61.109 – Aeronautical experience.

[Doc. No. 25910, 62 FR 40902, July 30, 1997, as amended by Amdt. 61-104, 63 FR 20287, Apr. 23, 1998; Amdt. 61-110, 69 FR 44868, July 27, 2004; Amdt. 61-124, 74 FR 42558, Aug. 21, 2009; Amdt. 61-124A, 74 FR 53645, Oct. 20, 2009; Amdt. 61-125, 75 FR 5220, Feb. 1, 2010; Amdt. 61-142, 83 FR 30278, June 27, 2018]

(a) *For an airplane single-engine rating.* Except as provided in paragraph (k) of this section, a person who applies for a private pilot certificate with an airplane category and single-engine class rating must log at least 40 hours of flight time that includes at least 20 hours of flight training from an authorized instructor and 10 hours of solo flight training in the areas of operation listed in § 61.107(b)(1) of this part, and the training must include at least—

(1) 3 hours of cross-country flight training in a single-engine airplane;

(2) Except as provided in § 61.110 of this part, 3 hours of night flight training in a single-engine airplane that includes—

(i) One cross-country flight of over 100 nautical miles total distance; and

(ii) 10 takeoffs and 10 landings to a full stop (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) at an airport.

(3) 3 hours of flight training in a single-engine airplane on the control and maneuvering of an airplane solely by reference to instruments, including straight and level flight, constant airspeed climbs and descents, turns to a heading, recovery from unusual flight attitudes, radio communications, and the use of navigation systems/facilities and radar services appropriate to instrument flight;

(4) 3 hours of flight training with an authorized instructor in a single-engine airplane in preparation for the practical test, which must have been performed within the preceding 2 calendar months from the month of the test; and

(5) 10 hours of solo flight time in a single-engine airplane, consisting of at least—

(i) 5 hours of solo cross-country time;

(ii) One solo cross country flight of 150 nautical miles total distance, with full-stop landings at three points, and one segment of the flight consisting of a straight-line distance of more than 50 nautical miles between the takeoff and landing locations; and

(iii) Three takeoffs and three landings to a full stop (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) at an airport with an operating control tower.

(b) *For an airplane multiengine rating.* Except as provided in paragraph (k) of this section, a person who applies for a private pilot certificate with an airplane category and multiengine class rating must log at least 40 hours of flight time that includes at least 20 hours of flight training from an authorized instructor and 10 hours of solo flight training in the areas of operation listed in § 61.107(b)(2) of this part, and the training must include at least—

- (1) 3 hours of cross-country flight training in a multiengine airplane;
  - (2) Except as provided in § 61.110 of this part, 3 hours of night flight training in a multiengine airplane that includes—
    - (i) One cross-country flight of over 100 nautical miles total distance; and
    - (ii) 10 takeoffs and 10 landings to a full stop (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) at an airport.
  - (3) 3 hours of flight training in a multiengine airplane on the control and maneuvering of an airplane solely by reference to instruments, including straight and level flight, constant airspeed climbs and descents, turns to a heading, recovery from unusual flight attitudes, radio communications, and the use of navigation systems/facilities and radar services appropriate to instrument flight;
  - (4) 3 hours of flight training with an authorized instructor in a multiengine airplane in preparation for the practical test, which must have been performed within the preceding 2 calendar months from the month of the test; and
  - (5) 10 hours of solo flight time in an airplane consisting of at least—
    - (i) 5 hours of solo cross-country time;
    - (ii) One solo cross country flight of 150 nautical miles total distance, with full-stop landings at three points, and one segment of the flight consisting of a straight-line distance of more than 50 nautical miles between the takeoff and landing locations; and
    - (iii) Three takeoffs and three landings to a full stop (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) at an airport with an operating control tower.
- (c) *For a helicopter rating.* Except as provided in paragraph (k) of this section, a person who applies for a private pilot certificate with rotorcraft category and helicopter class rating must log at least 40 hours of flight time that includes at least 20 hours of flight training from an authorized instructor and 10 hours of solo flight training in the areas of operation listed in § 61.107(b)(3) of this part, and the training must include at least—
- (1) 3 hours of cross-country flight training in a helicopter;
  - (2) Except as provided in § 61.110 of this part, 3 hours of night flight training in a helicopter that includes—
    - (i) One cross-country flight of over 50 nautical miles total distance; and
    - (ii) 10 takeoffs and 10 landings to a full stop (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) at an airport.
  - (3) 3 hours of flight training with an authorized instructor in a helicopter in preparation for the practical test, which must have been performed within the preceding 2 calendar months from the month of the test; and

(4) 10 hours of solo flight time in a helicopter, consisting of at least—

(i) 3 hours cross-country time;

(ii) One solo cross country flight of 100 nautical miles total distance, with landings at three points, and one segment of the flight being a straight-line distance of more than 25 nautical miles between the takeoff and landing locations; and

(iii) Three takeoffs and three landings to a full stop (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) at an airport with an operating control tower.

(d) *For a gyroplane rating.* Except as provided in paragraph (k) of this section, a person who applies for a private pilot certificate with rotorcraft category and gyroplane class rating must log at least 40 hours of flight time that includes at least 20 hours of flight training from an authorized instructor and 10 hours of solo flight training in the areas of operation listed in § 61.107(b)(4) of this part, and the training must include at least—

(1) 3 hours of cross-country flight training in a gyroplane;

(2) Except as provided in § 61.110 of this part, 3 hours of night flight training in a gyroplane that includes—

(i) One cross-country flight of over 50 nautical miles total distance; and

(ii) 10 takeoffs and 10 landings to a full stop (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) at an airport.

(3) 3 hours of flight training with an authorized instructor in a gyroplane in preparation for the practical test, which must have been performed within the preceding 2 calendar months from the month of the test; and

(4) 10 hours of solo flight time in a gyroplane, consisting of at least—

(i) 3 hours of cross-country time;

(ii) One solo cross country flight of 100 nautical miles total distance, with landings at three points, and one segment of the flight being a straight-line distance of more than 25 nautical miles between the takeoff and landing locations; and

(iii) Three takeoffs and three landings to a full stop (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) at an airport with an operating control tower.

(e) *For a powered-lift rating.* Except as provided in paragraph (k) of this section, a person who applies for a private pilot certificate with a powered-lift category rating must log at least 40 hours of flight time that includes at least 20 hours of flight training from an authorized instructor and 10 hours of solo flight training in the areas of operation listed in § 61.107(b)(5) of this part, and the training must include at least—

(1) 3 hours of cross-country flight training in a powered-lift;

(2) Except as provided in § 61.110 of this part, 3 hours of night flight training in a powered-lift that includes—

(i) One cross-country flight of over 100 nautical miles total distance; and

(ii) 10 takeoffs and 10 landings to a full stop (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) at an airport.

(3) 3 hours of flight training in a powered-lift on the control and maneuvering of a powered-lift solely by reference to instruments, including straight and level flight, constant airspeed climbs and descents, turns to a heading, recovery from unusual flight attitudes, radio communications, and the use of navigation systems/facilities and radar services appropriate to instrument flight;

(4) 3 hours of flight training with an authorized instructor in a powered-lift in preparation for the practical test, which must have been performed within the preceding 2 calendar months from the month of the test; and

(5) 10 hours of solo flight time in an airplane or powered-lift consisting of at least—

(i) 5 hours cross-country time;

(ii) One solo cross country flight of 150 nautical miles total distance, with full-stop landings at three points, and one segment of the flight consisting of a straight-line distance of more than 50 nautical miles between the takeoff and landing locations; and

(iii) Three takeoffs and three landings to a full stop (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) at an airport with an operating control tower.

(f) *For a glider category rating.*

(1) If the applicant for a private pilot certificate with a glider category rating has not logged at least 40 hours of flight time as a pilot in a heavier-than-air aircraft, the applicant must log at least 10 hours of flight time in a glider in the areas of operation listed in § 61.107(b)(6) of this part, and that flight time must include at least—

(i) 20 flights in a glider in the areas of operations listed in § 61.107(b)(6) of this part, including at least 3 training flights with an authorized instructor in a glider in preparation for the practical test that must have been performed within the preceding 2 calendar months from the month of the test; and

(ii) 2 hours of solo flight time in a glider in the areas of operation listed in § 61.107(b)(6) of this part, with not less than 10 launches and landings being performed.

(2) If the applicant has logged at least 40 hours of flight time in a heavier-than-air aircraft, the applicant must log at least 3 hours of flight time in a glider in the areas of operation listed in § 61.107(b)(6) of this part, and that flight time must include at least—

(i) 10 solo flights in a glider in the areas of operation listed in § 61.107(b)(6) of this part; and

(ii) 3 training flights with an authorized instructor in a glider in preparation for the practical test that must have been performed within the preceding 2 calendar months from the month of the test.

(g) *For an airship rating.* A person who applies for a private pilot certificate with a lighter-than-air category and airship class rating must log at least:

(1) 25 hours of flight training in airships on the areas of operation listed in § 61.107(b)(7) of this part, which consists of at least:

(i) 3 hours of cross-country flight training in an airship;

(ii) Except as provided in § 61.110 of this part, 3 hours of night flight training in an airship that includes:

(A) A cross-country flight of over 25 nautical miles total distance; and

(B) Five takeoffs and five landings to a full stop (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) at an airport.

(2) 3 hours of flight training in an airship on the control and maneuvering of an airship solely by reference to instruments, including straight and level flight, constant airspeed climbs and descents, turns to a heading, recovery from unusual flight attitudes, radio communications, and the use of navigation systems/facilities and radar services appropriate to instrument flight;

(3) Three hours of flight training with an authorized instructor in an airship in preparation for the practical test within the preceding 2 calendar months from the month of the test; and

(4) 5 hours performing the duties of pilot in command in an airship with an authorized instructor.

(h) *For a balloon rating.* A person who applies for a private pilot certificate with a lighter-than-air category and balloon class rating must log at least 10 hours of flight training that includes at least six training flights with an authorized instructor in the areas of operation listed in § 61.107(b)(8) of this part, that includes—

(1) *Gas balloon.* If the training is being performed in a gas balloon, at least two flights of 2 hours each that consists of—

(i) At least one training flight with an authorized instructor in a gas balloon in preparation for the practical test within the preceding 2 calendar months from the month of the test;

(ii) At least one flight performing the duties of pilot in command in a gas balloon with an authorized instructor; and

(iii) At least one flight involving a controlled ascent to 3,000 feet above the launch site.

(2) *Balloon with an airborne heater.* If the training is being performed in a balloon with an airborne heater, at least—

(i) At least two training flights of 1 hour each with an authorized instructor in a balloon with an airborne heater in preparation for the practical test within the preceding 2 calendar months from the month of the test;

(ii) One solo flight in a balloon with an airborne heater; and

(iii) At least one flight involving a controlled ascent to 2,000 feet above the launch site.

(i) *For a powered parachute rating.* A person who applies for a private pilot certificate with a powered parachute category rating must log at least 25 hours of flight time in a powered parachute that includes at least 10 hours of flight training with an authorized instructor, including 30 takeoffs and landings, and 10 hours of solo flight training in the areas of operation listed in § 61.107 (b)(9) and the training must include at least—

(1) One hour of cross-country flight training in a powered parachute that includes a 1-hour cross-country flight with a landing at an airport at least 25 nautical miles from the airport of departure;

(2) Except as provided in § 61.110, 3 hours of night flight training in a powered parachute that includes 10 takeoffs and landings (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) at an airport;

(3) Three hours of flight training with an authorized instructor in a powered parachute in preparation for the practical test, which must have been performed within the preceding 2 calendar months from the month of the test;

(4) Three hours of solo flight time in a powered parachute, consisting of at least—

(i) One solo cross-country flight with a landing at an airport at least 25 nautical miles from the departure airport; and

(ii) Twenty solo takeoffs and landings to a full stop (with each landing involving a flight in a traffic pattern) at an airport; and

(5) Three takeoffs and landings (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) in an aircraft at an airport with an operating control tower.

(j) *For a weight-shift-control aircraft rating.* A person who applies for a private pilot certificate with a weight-shift-control rating must log at least 40 hours of flight time that includes at least 20 hours of flight training with an authorized instructor and 10 hours of solo flight training in the areas of operation listed in § 61.107(b)(10) and the training must include at least—

(1) Three hours of cross-country flight training in a weight-shift-control aircraft;

(2) Except as provided in § 61.110, 3 hours of night flight training in a weight-shift-control aircraft that includes—

(i) One cross-country flight of over 75 nautical miles total distance that includes a point of landing that is a straight-line distance of more than 50 nautical miles from the original point of departure; and

(ii) Ten takeoffs and landings (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) at an airport;

(3) Three hours of flight training with an authorized instructor in a weight-shift-control aircraft in preparation for the practical test, which must have been performed within the preceding 2 calendar months from the month of the test;

(4) Ten hours of solo flight time in a weight-shift-control aircraft, consisting of at least—

(i) Five hours of solo cross-country time; and

(ii) One solo cross-country flight over 100 nautical miles total distance, with landings at a minimum of three points, and one segment of the flight being a straight line distance of at least 50 nautical miles between takeoff and landing locations; and

(5) Three takeoffs and landings (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) in an aircraft at an airport with an operating control tower.

*(k) Permitted credit for use of a full flight simulator or flight training device.*

(1) Except as provided in paragraphs (k)(2) of this section, a maximum of 2.5 hours of training in a full flight simulator or flight training device representing the category, class, and type, if applicable, of aircraft appropriate to the rating sought, may be credited toward the flight training time required by this section, if received from an authorized instructor.

(2) A maximum of 5 hours of training in a full flight simulator or flight training device representing the category, class, and type, if applicable, of aircraft appropriate to the rating sought, may be credited toward the flight training time required by this section if the training is accomplished in a course conducted by a training center certificated under part 142 of this chapter.

(3) Except when fewer hours are approved by the Administrator, an applicant for a private pilot certificate with an airplane, rotorcraft, or powered-lift rating, who has satisfactorily completed an approved private pilot course conducted by a training center certificated under part 142 of this chapter, need only have a total of 35 hours of aeronautical experience to meet the requirements of this section.

*(l) Permitted credit for flight training received from a flight instructor with a sport pilot rating.* The holder of a sport pilot certificate may credit flight training received from a flight instructor with a sport pilot rating toward the aeronautical experience requirements of this section if the following conditions are met:

(1) The flight training was accomplished in the same category and class of aircraft for which the rating is sought;



(2) The flight instructor with a sport pilot rating was authorized to provide the flight training; and

(3) The flight training included either—

(i) Training on areas of operation that are required for both a sport pilot certificate and a private pilot certificate; or

(ii) For airplanes with a  $V_H$  greater than 87 knots CAS, training on the control and maneuvering of an airplane solely by reference to the flight instruments, including straight and level flight, turns, descents, climbs, use of radio aids, and ATC directives, provided the training was received from a flight instructor with a sport pilot rating who holds an endorsement required by § 61.412(c).