



Commercial Pilot

ORAL EXAM GUIDE



JASON BLAIR

COMPREHENSIVE PREPARATION
FOR THE FAA CHECKRIDE

TWELFTH EDITION

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AVIATION SUPPLIES & ACADEMICS, INC.
NEWCASTLE, WASHINGTON

Commercial Pilot Oral Exam Guide
Twelfth Edition
by Jason Blair

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First edition published 1992. Twelfth edition published 2025.

See the Reader Resources at asa2fly.com/oegc for additional information and updates related to this book.

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ASA-OEG-C12
ISBN 978-1-64425-536-0

Additional formats available:
eBook EPUB ISBN 978-1-64425-537-7
eBook PDF ISBN 978-1-64425-538-4

Printed in the United States of America
2029 2028 2027 2026 2025 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Blair, Jason author

Title: Commercial pilot oral exam guide : comprehensive preparation for the FAA checkride / Jason Blair.

Other titles: Commercial oral exam guide | Oral exam guide

Description: Twelfth edition. | Newcastle, Washington : Aviation Supplies & Academics, Inc., 2025. | "ASA-OEG-C12"—Title page verso.

Identifiers: LCCN 2025013760 (print) | LCCN 2025013761 (ebook) | ISBN 9781644255360 trade paperback | ISBN 9781644255377 epub | ISBN 9781644255384 pdf

Subjects: LCSH: United States. Federal Aviation Administration—Examinations—Study guides | Aeronautics, Commercial—Examinations, questions, etc. | Aeronautics—Examinations, questions, etc. | Airplanes—Piloting—Examinations—Study guides | Oral examinations | LCGFT: Study guides

Classification: LCC TL546.5 .B53 2025 (print) | LCC TL546.5 (ebook) | DDC 629.132/5216076—dc23/eng/20250520

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2025013760>

LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2025013761>

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About the Author



Jason Blair is an active single- and multi-engine instructor and an FAA Designated Pilot Examiner (DPE) with over 6,000 hours total time, over 3,500 hours of instruction given, and more than 3,500 hours in aircraft as a DPE. In his role as an Examiner, he has issued more than 2,500 pilot certificates. Blair has worked for and continues to work with multiple aviation associations with his work focusing on pilot training and testing.

His experience as a pilot goes back over 30 years, as an instructor spans over 20 years, and includes more than 100 makes and models of aircraft flown. Blair has written and continues to write for multiple aviation publications with a focus on training and safety.

In addition to ASA's Oral Exam Guide series, Blair is also the author of four books in ASA's Aviator's Field Guide series: *Buying an Airplane*, *Owning an Airplane*, *Tailwheel Flying*, *Middle-Altitude Flying*, and *Pilot Career Path*.

Introduction

The *Commercial Pilot Oral Exam Guide* is a comprehensive guide designed for pilots who are involved in training for the Commercial Pilot Certificate. It was originally designed for use in a Part 141 flight school but quickly became popular with those training under Part 61 who were not affiliated with an approved school. This guide will also prove beneficial to pilots who wish to refresh their knowledge or who are preparing for a flight review.

The *Commercial Pilot for Airplane Category Airman Certification Standards* (FAA-S-ACS-7) specifies the areas in which knowledge and skills must be demonstrated by the applicant before issuance of a pilot certificate or rating. The *Commercial Pilot Oral Exam Guide* is designed to evaluate a pilot's knowledge of those areas.

Commercial pilots are professionals engaged in various flight activities for compensation or hire. Because of their professional status, they should exhibit a significantly higher level of knowledge than a private pilot. This guide assumes that the pilot has the prerequisite knowledge necessary for Private Pilot certification and attempts to cover only those advanced areas of knowledge necessary for Commercial Pilot certification. A review of the information presented within this guide along with a general review of the *Private Pilot Oral Exam Guide* (ASA-OEG-P) should provide the necessary preparation for the oral section of an FAA Commercial Pilot checkride or recertification check.

In this guide, questions and answers are organized into nine chapters which represent those areas of knowledge required for the practical test. At any time during the practical test, an examiner may ask questions pertaining to any of the subject areas within these divisions. Based on intensive debriefings conducted after Commercial Pilot checkrides and input from designated pilot examiners on areas commonly found to have deficiencies, we have provided you with the questions or topics commonly asked along with the information or

the appropriate reference necessary for a knowledgeable response. Additionally, Chapter 10 includes scenario-based questions to help you prepare for typical scenarios that the examiner may present as part of your oral exam.

You may supplement this guide with other comprehensive study materials as noted in brackets at the end of each answer; for example: [CA.I.G; FAA-H-8083-25]. The first items provided are ACS codes for the relevant Areas of Operation and Tasks from the *Commercial Pilot for Airplane Category Airman Certification Standards* (FAA-S-ACS-7). Additional references pertaining to the questions can be found in the ACS listed under the Tasks corresponding to the provided ACS codes. The next reference(s) in the brackets are other study materials for which abbreviations and corresponding titles are listed below.

Be sure that you use the latest revision of these references when reviewing for the test. Also, check the ASA website at asa2fly.com/oegc for the most recent updates to this book due to changes in FAA procedures and regulations as well as for Reader Resources containing additional relevant information and updates.

14 CFR Part 1	<i>Definitions and Abbreviations</i>
14 CFR Part 3	<i>General Requirements</i>
14 CFR Part 21	<i>Certification Procedures for Products and Articles</i>
14 CFR Part 23	<i>Airworthiness Standards: Normal Category Airplanes</i>
14 CFR Part 43	<i>Maintenance, Preventive Maintenance, Rebuilding, and Alteration</i>
14 CFR Part 47	<i>Aircraft Registration</i>
14 CFR Part 61	<i>Certification: Pilots, Flight Instructors, and Ground Instructors</i>
14 CFR Part 67	<i>Medical Standards and Certification</i>
14 CFR Part 91	<i>General Operating and Flight Rules</i>
14 CFR Part 93	<i>Special Air Traffic Rules</i>
14 CFR Part 95	<i>IFR Altitudes</i>
14 CFR Part 99	<i>Security Control of Air Traffic</i>
14 CFR Part 110	<i>Certification and Operations: General Requirements</i>

14 CFR Part 119	<i>Certification: Air Carriers and Commercial Operators</i>
49 CFR Part 830	<i>NTSB, Notification and Reporting of Aircraft Accidents or Incidents and Overdue Aircraft</i>
49 CFR Part 1544	<i>TSA, Aircraft Operator Security: Air Carriers and Commercial Operators</i>
49 CFR Part 1552	<i>TSA, Civil Aviation Security, Flight Schools</i>
AC 20-105	<i>Reciprocating Engine Power-Loss Accident Prevention and Trend Monitoring</i>
AC 21-40	<i>Guide for Obtaining a Supplemental Type Certificate</i>
AC 23-8	<i>Flight Test Guide for Certification of Part 23 Airplanes</i>
AC 39-7	<i>Airworthiness Directives</i>
AC 43-12	<i>Preventive Maintenance</i>
AC 61-65	<i>Certification: Pilots and Flight and Ground Instructors</i>
AC 61-67	<i>Stall and Spin Awareness Training</i>
AC 61-107	<i>Aircraft Operations at Altitudes Above 25,000 Feet Mean Sea Level or Mach Numbers Greater than .75</i>
AC 61-134	<i>General Aviation Controlled Flight into Terrain Awareness</i>
AC 61-142	<i>Sharing Aircraft Operating Expenses in Accordance with 14 CFR §61.113(c)</i>
AC 68-1	<i>BasicMed</i>
AC 90-66	<i>Non-Towered Airport Flight Operations</i>
AC 90-100	<i>US Terminal and En Route Area Navigation (RNAV) Operations</i>
AC 90-109	<i>Transition to Unfamiliar Aircraft</i>
AC 90-114	<i>Automatic Dependent Surveillance–Broadcast Operations</i>
AC 91-37	<i>Truth in Leasing</i>
AC 91-63	<i>Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR) and Flight Limitations</i>

(continued)

AC 91-73	<i>Parts 91 and 135 Single-Pilot, Flight School Procedures during Taxi Operations</i>
AC 91-74	<i>Pilot Guide: Flight in Icing Condition</i>
AC 120-12	<i>Private Carriage vs. Common Carriage of Persons or Property</i>
AC 120-80	<i>Firefighting of General and High-Energy In-Flight Fires</i>
AFM/POH	<i>Airplane Flight Manuals and Pilot's Operating Handbooks</i>
AIM	<i>FAA Aeronautical Information Manual</i>
AWC	<i>Aviation Weather Center</i>
Chart Supplement	<i>Chart Supplement</i>
FAA AME	<i>FAA Guide for Aviation Medical Examiners: Pharmaceuticals (Therapeutic Medications)</i>
FAA BSA	<i>FAA Basic Survival for Aviation, faa.gov/pilots/training/airman_education/media/CAMISurvivalManual.pdf</i>
FAA DRS	<i>Dynamic Regulatory System—Order 8900.1, drs.faa.gov</i>
FAA FRAT	<i>FAA Fly Safe Fact Sheet: Flight Risk Assessment Tools, faa.gov/general/flight-risk-assessment-tool-frat-faa-safety-team</i>
FAA GAS	<i>FAA General Aviation Survival, faa.gov/sites/faa.gov/files/2022-01/General%20Aviation%20Survival.pdf</i>
faa.gov	<i>Federal Aviation Administration website</i>
FAA-H-8083-1	<i>Aircraft Weight and Balance Handbook</i>
FAA-H-8083-2	<i>Risk Management Handbook</i>
FAA-H-8083-3	<i>Airplane Flying Handbook</i>
FAA-H-8083-9	<i>Aviation Instructor's Handbook</i>
FAA-H-8083-15	<i>Instrument Flying Handbook</i>
FAA-H-8083-16	<i>Instrument Procedures Handbook</i>
FAA-H-8083-19	<i>Plane Sense: General Aviation Information</i>
FAA-H-8083-25	<i>Pilot's Handbook of Aeronautical Knowledge</i>
FAA-H-8083-28	<i>Aviation Weather Handbook</i>

FAA-H-8083-30	<i>Aviation Maintenance Technician Handbook—General</i>
FAA-H-8083-31	<i>Aviation Maintenance Technician Handbook—Airframe</i>
FAA-H-8083-32	<i>Aviation Maintenance Technician Handbook—Powerplant</i>
FAA InFO 07015	<i>Information for Operators (InFO) 07015 on the Flight Risk Assessment Tool, faa.gov/sites/faa.gov/files/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/inFO07015.pdf</i>
FAA OTC Med Guide	<i>Over-the-Counter (OTC) Medications Reference Guide, faa.gov/pilots/medical_certification/media/OTCMedicationsforPilots.pdf</i>
FAA-P-8740-13	<i>Engine Operation for Pilots</i>
FAA-P-8740-35	<i>All About Fuel</i>
FAA-P-8740-36	<i>Proficiency and the Private Pilot</i>
FAA-P-8740-44	<i>Impossible Turn</i>
FAA: Pilots and Medication	<i>FAA Fly Safe Fact Sheet: Pilots and Medication</i>
FAA Safety	<i>FAA Safety Briefing Magazine/Fly Safe Fact Sheets</i>
FAA-S-ACS-7	<i>Commercial Pilot for Airplane Category Airman Certification Standards</i>
GADLG	<i>General Aviation Dry Leasing Guide</i>
NOTAMs	<i>Notices to Airmen, notams.aim.faa.gov/notamSearch</i>
P/CG	<i>Pilot/Controller Glossary (from AIM)</i>
SAFO	<i>FAA Safety Alert for Operators</i>
TSA	<i>Transportation Security Administration</i>
USRGD	<i>FAA Aeronautical Chart User's Guide</i>

Most of these documents are available on the FAA's website (faa.gov). Additionally, many of the publications are reprinted by ASA (asa2fly.com) and are available from aviation retailers worldwide.

A review of the information and references presented within this guide should provide the necessary preparation for the FAA Commercial Pilot checkride.

Pilot Qualifications

1

SAMPLE

A. Privileges and Limitations

1. What are the eligibility requirements for a Commercial Pilot (airplane) Certificate?

- a. Be at least 18 years of age.
- b. Be able to read, speak, write, and understand the English language.
- c. Hold at least a Private Pilot Certificate.
- d. Hold at least a current Second Class Medical Certificate to exercise the privileges of a Commercial Certificate (a pilot may complete the practical test with either Third Class Medical or complying with BasicMed).
- e. Received the required ground and flight training endorsements.
- f. Pass the required knowledge and practical tests.
- g. Meet the aeronautical experience requirements.

[CA.I.A.K1; 14 CFR 61.123]

2. What are the aeronautical experience requirements for a Commercial Pilot Certificate?

A person who applies for a Commercial Pilot Certificate with an Airplane Category and Single-Engine Class Rating must log at least 250 hours of flight time as a pilot that consists of at least:

- a. 100 hours in powered aircraft, of which 50 hours must be in airplanes.
- b. 100 hours of PIC flight time, which includes at least:
 - 50 hours in airplanes.
 - 50 hours in cross-country flight of which 10 hours must be in airplanes.
- c. 20 hours of training on the areas of training listed in §61.127(b)(1) that includes at least 10 hours of instrument training. This must include:
 - One 2-hour dual cross-country flight in a single-engine airplane in daytime conditions that consists of a total straight-line distance of more than 100 nautical miles from the original point of departure; and

- One 2-hour dual cross-country flight in a single-engine airplane in nighttime conditions that consists of a total straight-line distance of more than 100 nautical miles from the original point of departure.
 - Five of the 10 hours of instrument training must be in a single-engine airplane.
- d. 10 hours of training in a complex, turbine-powered, or technically advanced airplane (TAA), or any combination thereof.
- e. 10 hours of solo flight time in a single-engine airplane *or* 10 hours of flight time (not logged as instruction received) performing the duties of pilot-in-command in a single-engine airplane with an authorized instructor on board that include:
- One cross-country flight of not less than 300 nautical miles total distance, with landings at a minimum of three points, with one landing point that is a straight-line distance of at least 250 nautical miles from the original departure point. (If this requirement is being met in Hawaii, however, the longest segment need only have a straight-line distance of at least 150 nautical miles.)
 - 5 hours in night VFR conditions with 10 takeoffs and 10 landings (with each landing involving a flight in the traffic pattern) at an airport with an operating control tower.

Exam Tip: The evaluator may ask you to demonstrate that you're current and eligible to take the practical test. The examiner will need to see documented flight and ground instruction time (a commonly forgotten documentary requirement) to show that all experience requirements have been met. This may require documenting items beyond what the standard logbook includes. Take the time to detail this in your logbook, extra training records, or through other methods to ensure that you can provide documentation of all requirements to avoid having to reschedule the practical test.

[CA.I.A.K1; 14 CFR 61.129]

3. What privileges apply to a commercial pilot?

A person who holds a Commercial Pilot Certificate may act as PIC of an aircraft:

- a. Carrying persons or property for compensation or hire.
- b. For compensation or hire.

Note: 14 CFR §61.133 also states that a commercial pilot must be qualified and comply with the applicable parts of the regulations that apply to the particular operation being conducted (e.g., Part 121 or 135).

[CA.I.A.K2; 14 CFR 61.133]

4. What does the term *commercial operator* refer to?

A commercial operator is a person who, for compensation or hire, engages in the carriage by aircraft in air commerce of persons or property, other than as an air carrier or foreign carrier under the authority of 14 CFR Part 375. It is worth noting that this relates to the pilot acting as a commercial operator, something they may do as a Commercial Pilot Certificate holder. There is a difference between a pilot acting in accordance with their commercial pilot privileges versus an aircraft acting in a commercial carriage capacity. A pilot may act commercially in private carriage within commercial pilot privileges while an aircraft or its operation is not engaged in commercial carriage that would constitute holding out or public carriage of passengers or property for hire. Payment is not limited to currency, but could also include anything of value such as services, goods, or trade. A pilot who is acting as a pilot in consideration of gaining benefit of any sort may be considered to be acting in a commercial capacity.

[CA.I.A.K2; 14 CFR Part 1]

5. Explain the difference between your commercial pilot privileges and the operational authority required to conduct a flight for compensation or hire.

The privileges and limitations conferred on pilots are separate and distinct from the operational authority required to conduct the flights. A person who holds an ATP Certificate or Commercial Pilot Certificate may act as PIC of an aircraft operated for compensation or hire and may carry persons or property for compensation for

hire if done in accordance with an operator certificate under Part 119. If the aircraft is generating revenue or benefit, it is also considered to be acting commercially. Unless a valid exception from operational certification applies, in order to “hold out” as being able to transport persons or property for compensation or hire, a commercial pilot or ATP must be operating in accordance with an air carrier certificate or operating certificate under 14 CFR Part 119. These are typically operated then under Part 121 or Part 135 operational approvals.

Note: Even though a Commercial Pilot Certificate allows a pilot to be compensated for their services, it must be done in one of the areas of exception or under private carriage conditions. It does not allow them to act as an air carrier or commercial operator without first obtaining an air carrier or operating certificate.

[CA.I.A.K2; AC 61-142]

6. Would being both the pilot and the provider of an aircraft to someone for compensation or hire require the pilot to also be in possession of a Part 119 operating certificate?

Generally, if you are being compensated for providing a service to another person and have operational control of the aircraft in which that service is provided, you are required to have been issued an operating certificate to conduct that operation under Part 135, or Parts 121 or 125 if larger aircraft and more complex operations are involved.

[CA.I.A.K2; FAA Safety]

7. Define the term *operational control*.

As defined in 14 CFR §1.1, operational control “with respect to a flight, means the exercise of authority over initiating, conducting, or terminating a flight.” This should not be construed with the pilot-in-command, as operational control may be held by an operator, an owner, or other entity hiring and directing the pilot. Operational control involves three basic areas: flight crew, aircraft, and flight management.

[CA.I.A.K2; AC 91-37, 14 CFR 1.1]

Commercial Pilot

ORAL EXAM GUIDE



Other Oral Exam Guides
available from ASA:

- Private Pilot
- Instrument Pilot
- Multi-Engine Pilot
- Flight Instructor
- Airline Transport Pilot
- Helicopter Pilot
- Aircraft Dispatcher
- Flight Review
- Aviation Mechanic

ASA's Oral Exam Guide Series is an excellent study tool for students and instructors alike. Arranged in a question-and-answer format, this comprehensive guide lists the questions most likely to be asked by evaluators during the practical exam and provides succinct, ready responses. FAA references are provided throughout for further study.

This twelfth edition of the *Commercial Pilot Oral Exam Guide* not only aligns with the Airman Certification Standards (ACS), but also connects questions with the applicable ACS code. With expanded information on pilot regulations, airworthiness, weather, airplane systems, emergency procedures, cross-country flight, human factors, flight maneuvers, and scenario-based training, this book is the complete resource to prepare applicants for the Commercial Pilot Airplane checkride.



Aviation Supplies & Academics, Inc.
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Newcastle, Washington 98059 USA
425-235-1500 | asa2fly.com

TRANSPORTATION USD \$19.95

ISBN 978-1-64425-536-0



9 781644 255360



5 1995 >

ASA-OEG-C12