



Private Pilot

ORAL EXAM GUIDE



JASON BLAIR

COMPREHENSIVE PREPARATION
FOR THE FAA CHECKRIDE

FIFTEENTH EDITION

Private
Pilot

**ORAL
EXAM
GUIDE**

JASON BLAIR

FIFTEENTH EDITION

COMPREHENSIVE PREPARATION
FOR THE FAA CHECKRIDE



AVIATION SUPPLIES & ACADEMICS, INC.
KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN

Private Pilot Oral Exam Guide

Fifteenth Edition

by Jason Blair

Aviation Supplies & Academics, Inc.
817 Walbridge Street
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007
asa@asa2fly.com | 425-235-1500 | asa2fly.com

Copyright © 2026 Aviation Supplies & Academics, Inc.
First edition published 1992. Fifteenth edition published 2026.

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

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the copyright holder. No part of this publication may be used in any manner for the purpose of training artificial intelligence systems or technologies. While every precaution has been taken in the preparation of this book, the publisher and Jason Blair assume no responsibility for damages resulting from the use of the information contained herein.

None of the material in this book supersedes any operational documents or procedures issued by the Federal Aviation Administration, aircraft and avionics manufacturers, flight schools, or the operators of aircraft.

ASA-OEG-P15

ISBN 978-1-64425-554-4

Additional formats available:

eBook EPUB ISBN 978-1-64425-555-1

eBook PDF ISBN 978-1-64425-556-8

Printed in the United States of America

2030 2029 2028 2027 2026 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Control Number: 2025949990

Contents

About the Author.....	vii
Introduction.....	ix
1 Pilot Qualifications and Limitations	1
A. Certification, Currency, and Proficiency	2
B. Privileges and Limitations.....	7
C. Medical Certificates	17
D. Federal Aviation Regulations (Part 91) and Pilot Operating Limitations	22
2 Aircraft Airworthiness Requirements.....	27
A. Aircraft Certificates and Documents.....	28
B. Aircraft Maintenance Requirements	38
3 Preflight Procedures	51
A. Preflight Assessment	52
B. Flight Deck Management.....	57
C. Engine Starting.....	61
D. Taxiing.....	63
E. Before Takeoff Check	76
4 Postflight Procedures	81
A. After Landing, Parking, and Securing.....	82
B. Aviation Security.....	85
5 Human Factors	89
A. Flight Physiology	90
B. Single-Pilot Resource Management.....	108
C. Aeronautical Decision Making	109
D. Risk Management.....	111

E. Task Management	116
F. Situational Awareness	119
G. CFIT Awareness	121
H. Automation Management.....	122
6 Aircraft Systems	125
A. Aircraft Flight Controls.....	126
B. Engine System Components	130
C. Fuel System.....	139
D. Electrical System.....	142
E. Pitot/Static Flight Instruments.....	148
F. Gyroscopic Flight Instruments.....	155
G. Magnetic Compass	158
H. Avionics Systems	160
I. Anti-Icing and Deicing Systems	165
J. Other Systems	167
7 Performance and Limitations	171
A. Aerodynamics	172
B. Weight and Balance.....	187
C. Aircraft Performance.....	191
8 Airport Operations	205
A. Communications, Light Signals, and Runway Lighting Systems	206
B. Traffic Patterns	220
9 National Airspace System	235
A. General	236
B. Controlled Airspace.....	237
C. Uncontrolled Airspace.....	255
D. Special Use Airspace.....	256
E. Other Airspace Areas.....	261
F. Airspace Classification Summary	268

10	Weather Information	273
	A. Weather Sources.....	274
	B. Weather Products.....	279
	<i>Observations</i>	279
	<i>Aviation Weather Forecasts</i>	283
	<i>Aviation Weather Charts</i>	291
	C. Meteorology.....	295
11	Cross-Country Flight Planning	313
	A. Flight Planning.....	314
	B. Pilotage and Dead Reckoning.....	318
	C. Basic Calculations.....	328
	D. VFR Flight Plan.....	330
	E. Navigation Systems and Radar Services.....	334
	F. Diversion and Lost Procedures.....	344
12	Night Operations	351
	A. Night Vision.....	352
	B. Airport Lighting.....	356
	C. Airplane Equipment.....	360
	D. Pilot Equipment.....	363
	E. Night Flight Operational Environment.....	365
	F. Night Regulations and Currency.....	370
13	Emergency Equipment and Survival Gear	373
14	Scenario-Based Training	383
	Introduction.....	384
	Scenario-Based Questions.....	385
Appendix 1	Maneuvers Table.....	409
Appendix 2	Applicant's Practical Test Checklist.....	411
Appendix 3	Operations of Aircraft Without/With an MEL.....	415

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 4,000 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 five 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 *Private Pilot Oral Exam Guide* is a comprehensive guide designed for student pilots who are involved in training for the Private Pilot Certificate.

This guide is equally applicable to those training at FAA Part 141 training providers or those who are training under Part 61 and not affiliated with a specific FAA-approved school. The guide is beneficial to private pilots who wish to refresh their knowledge or who are preparing for a flight review, and it could even be paired with ASA's *Guide to the Flight Review*.

The *Private Pilot for Airplane Category Airman Certification Standards* (FAA-S-ACS-6) specifies the areas in which knowledge must be demonstrated by the applicant before a pilot certificate or rating can be issued. This *Private Pilot Oral Exam Guide* has been designed to enhance and highlight a pilot's knowledge of those areas. It contains questions and answers organized into thirteen chapters representing those areas of knowledge required for the practical test.

At any time during the practical test, an FAA examiner may ask questions pertaining to any of the subject areas within these divisions. The focus of the Airman Certification Standards (ACS) is for an examiner to evaluate the pilot's knowledge, actual demonstrated skills, and risk management ability related to topic areas. This is done through scenario-based testing. Some of the ways examiners will propose scenarios are highlighted in Chapter 14 to help prepare an applicant to apply knowledge beyond a rote level to understanding, application, and correlation levels of learning.

For additional reference, several appendixes have been included at the end of this guide. Appendix 1 provides a maneuvers table summarizing the objectives and minimum acceptable standards of performance for the maneuver tasks in the ACS. Appendix 2 contains the "Applicant's Practical Test Checklist" to be used when making final preparations for the checkride. Appendix 3, "Operations of Aircraft Without/With an MEL," depicts the typical sequence of events a pilot,

operating with or without a minimum equipment list, should follow when inoperative equipment is discovered to be on board.

You may supplement this guide with other comprehensive study materials as noted in brackets at the end of each answer; for example: [PA.I.A.K3; 14 CFR 61.53, FAA-H-8083-25]. The first item provided is the ACS code for the relevant Area of Operation and Task from the *Private Pilot for Airplane Category Airman Certification Standards* (FAA-S-ACS-6). Additional references pertaining to the questions can be found in the ACS, listed under the Tasks corresponding to the provided ACS code. The next references 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/oegp 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. Future updates may also contain additional study material and new FAA information regarding the Private Pilot checkride.

14 CFR Part 1	<i>Definitions and Abbreviations</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 45	<i>Identification and Registration Marking</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 99	<i>Security Control of Air Traffic</i>
47 CFR Part 87	<i>Telecommunication: Part 87 Aviation Services</i>
49 CFR Part 830	<i>NTSB: Notification and Reporting of Aircraft Accidents or Incidents and Overdue Aircraft, and Preservation of Aircraft Wreckage, Mail, Cargo, and Records</i>

49 CFR Part 1542	<i>Airport Security</i>
AC 00-46	<i>Aviation Safety Reporting Program</i>
AC 20-105	<i>Reciprocating Engine Power-Loss Accident Prevention and Trend Monitoring</i>
AC 20-125	<i>Water in Aviation Fuels</i>
AC 21-40	<i>Guide for Obtaining a Supplemental Type Certificate</i>
AC 39-7	<i>Airworthiness Directives</i>
AC 43-12	<i>Preventive Maintenance</i>
AC 61-67	<i>Stall and Spin Awareness Training</i>
AC 61-91	<i>WINGS—Pilot Proficiency Program</i>
AC 61-134	<i>General Aviation Controlled Flight into Terrain Awareness</i>
AC 68-1	<i>BasicMed</i>
AC 89-3	<i>FAA-Recognized Identification Areas</i>
AC 90-48	<i>Pilots' Role in Collision Avoidance</i>
AC 90-66	<i>Non-Towered Airport Flight Operations</i>
AC 90-100	<i>U.S. Terminal and En Route Area Navigation (RNAV) Operations</i>
AC 90-114	<i>Automatic Dependent Surveillance–Broadcast Operations</i>
AC 91-63	<i>Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR) and Flight Limitations</i>
AC 91-73	<i>Parts 91 and 135 Single Pilot, Flight School Procedures During Taxi Operations</i>
AC 91-78	<i>Use of Electronic Flight Bags</i>
AC 91-92	<i>Pilot's Guide to a Preflight Briefing</i>
AC 107-2	<i>Small Unmanned Aircraft System (Small UAS)</i>
AC 117-3	<i>Fitness for Duty</i>
AC 120-27	<i>Aircraft Weight and Balance Control</i>
AC 120-71	<i>Standard Operating Procedures and Pilot Monitoring Duties for Flight Deck Crewmembers</i>
AERONAV FAQ	<i>FAA Aeronautical Information Services: Frequently Asked Questions</i>

AFM	<i>FAA-Approved Airplane Flight Manual</i>
AIM	<i>Aeronautical Information Manual</i>
AWC	<i>Aviation Weather Center (aviationweather.gov)</i>
CAMI OK-06-033	<i>Basic Survival Skills for Aviation</i>
Chart Supplement	<i>FAA Chart Supplements</i>
DAT	<i>ASA Dictionary of Aeronautical Terms</i>
FAA CUG	<i>FAA Aeronautical Information Services Aeronautical Chart User's Guide</i>
FAA FRAT	<i>FAA Fly Safe Fact Sheet: Flight Risk Assessment Tools</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 OTC Med Guide	<i>Over-the-Counter (OTC) Medications Reference Guide</i>
FAA-P-8740-2	<i>Density Altitude</i>
FAA-P-8740-24	<i>Winter Flying Tips</i>
FAA-P-8740-35	<i>All About Fuel</i>
FAA-P-8740-36	<i>Proficiency and the Private Pilot</i>
FAA-P-8740-41	<i>Medical Facts for Pilots</i>
FAA-P-8740-47	<i>Radio Communications Phraseology and Techniques</i>

FAA-S-ACS-6	<i>Private Pilot for Airplane Category Airman Certification Standards</i>
FAA GA Preflight	<i>General Aviation Pilot's Guide to Preflight Weather Planning, Weather Self-Briefings, and Weather Decision Making</i>
FAA GA Survival	<i>FAA Safety Briefing: General Aviation Survival</i>
FAA Safety ALC-25	<i>Flight Review Prep Guide</i>
FAA Safety: Bias	<i>FAA Safety Briefing: Just a Bit Biased—How to See and Avoid Dangerous Assumptions</i>
FAA Safety Briefing	<i>Passenger SAFETY Briefing</i>
FAA Sustainability	<i>Airport Sustainability (www.faa.gov/airports/environmental/sustainability)</i>
FSSAT	<i>Flight School Security Awareness Training</i>
P/CG	<i>FAA Pilot/Controller Glossary</i>
POH	<i>Pilot's Operating Handbook</i>
SAFO	<i>FAA Safety Alert for Operators</i>
SAFO 11004	<i>Runway Incursion Prevention Actions</i>
SAIB CE-11-17	<i>FAA Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin—Instruments (Maneuvering Speed)</i>
Sectional Chart Legend	<i>FAA Section Chart legend</i>
TCDS	<i>Type Certificate Data Sheet</i>
TSA	<i>Transportation Security Administration</i>

Most of these documents are available on the FAA's website (www.faa.gov). ASA also reprints many of these federal publications and makes them available in printed and ebook formats and in training and study applications.

Pilot Qualifications and Limitations

1

SAMPLE

A. Certification, Currency, and Proficiency

1. What are the eligibility requirements for a Private Pilot (Airplane) Certificate?

- a. Be at least 17 years of age.
- b. Be able to read, speak, write, and understand the English language.
- c. Hold at least a current Third-Class Medical Certificate.
- d. Received the required ground and flight training endorsements.
- e. Meet the applicable aeronautical experience requirements.
- f. Pass the required knowledge and practical tests.

Exam Tip: The evaluator may ask you to demonstrate that you're current and eligible to take the practical test. When preparing for your practical test, verify that you have the required hours and that you're current, and don't forget to double-check all of your endorsements (especially the 90-day solo flight endorsement). Make sure that you have totaled all the logbook columns and that the entries make sense.

[PA.I.A.K1; 14 CFR 61.103]

2. What are the requirements to remain current as a private pilot?

- a. Within the preceding 24 months, a pilot must have accomplished a flight review given in an aircraft for which that pilot is rated by an authorized instructor and received a logbook endorsement certifying that the person has satisfactorily completed the review.
- b. To carry passengers, a pilot must have made, within the preceding 90 days:
 - Three takeoffs and three landings as the sole manipulator of the flight controls of an aircraft of the same category, class, and type (if a type rating is required).
 - If the aircraft is a tailwheel airplane, the landings must have been made to a full stop in an airplane with a tailwheel. If the takeoffs and landings were in a tailwheel aircraft, the currency will apply for tricycle-gear aircraft, but not vice versa.

- If operations are to be conducted during the period beginning 1 hour after sunset and 1 hour before sunrise, with passengers on board, the pilot-in-command (PIC) must have, within the preceding 90 days, made at least three takeoffs and three landings to a full stop during that period in an aircraft of the same category, class, and type (if a type rating is required) of aircraft to be used.

Exam Tip: Many pilots confuse what *category*, *class*, and *type* mean when being asked during the practical test. Be sure to understand what category, class, and type refer to with regard to currency. This is not referring to “make and model” of aircraft as it is during solo authorizations as a student pilot.

[PA.I.A.K1; 14 CFR 61.56, 61.57]

3. With respect to certification, privileges, and limitations of pilots, define the terms *category*, *class*, and *type*.

Category—A broad classification of aircraft, e.g., airplane, rotorcraft, glider.

Class—A classification of aircraft within a category having similar operating characteristics, e.g., single-engine land, multi-engine land.

Type (type rating)—A specific make and basic model of aircraft including modifications that do not change its handling or flight characteristics, e.g., Boeing 737, King Air 350, Cessna 525 (Citation), or Gulfstream IV.

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

4. Are you required to log all of your flights?

No. You are only required to document and record the training and aeronautical experience used to meet the requirements for a certificate, rating, or flight review and the aeronautical experience required for meeting the recent flight experience requirements. However, a best practice is to log all of your flights to show continued proficiency, potentially to meet insurance requirements, and in the event that you need those flights to help you remain current.

[PA.I.A.K1; 14 CFR 61.51]

5. What must a pilot do to regain currency to fly if their flight review is more than 24 months in the past?

If a pilot's flight review is more than 24 months overdue, they must complete a new flight review before acting as pilot-in-command (PIC) of an aircraft, as required by 14 CFR §61.56. A flight review consists of at least one hour of ground instruction and one hour of flight training conducted by an authorized flight instructor. During the flight review, the instructor will assess the pilot's knowledge of current regulations, procedures, and airspace, as well as evaluate their piloting skills.

Until the flight review is completed or an alternative is met, the pilot is not current and cannot legally serve as PIC.

[PA.I.A.K1; AC 61-98, 14 CFR 61.19, 61.56]

6. Are there any other activities a pilot can accomplish that can be substituted for a flight review?

A pilot can meet the flight review requirement through other FAA-approved activities. These include:

- *Earning a new certificate or rating*—Successfully completing a practical test for a new pilot certificate or rating, such as an Instrument Rating or a Commercial Pilot Certificate, also fulfills the requirement.
Note: Receiving a tailwheel, complex, high-performance, or high-altitude endorsement does not meet the requirements of a flight review unless the CFI additionally is willing to sign an endorsement for a flight review.
- *Participating in FAA Wings Program*—Completing a phase of the FAA's Pilot Proficiency Program (WINGS) also satisfies the flight review requirement. This involves completing specific knowledge and flight activities tailored to enhance safety.

[PA.I.A.K1; 14 CFR 61.56]

7. Explain the difference between being current and being proficient.

Being *current* means that a pilot has accomplished the minimum FAA regulatory requirements within a specific time period and can exercise the privileges of their certificate. It means that the pilot is legal to make a flight, but it does not necessarily mean that they are proficient or competent to make that flight.

Being *proficient* means that a pilot is capable of conducting a flight with a high degree of competence; it requires that the pilot have a wide range of knowledge and skills. Being proficient is not just about being legal in terms of the regulations but about being smart and safe in terms of pilot experience and proficiency.

[PA.I.A.R1; FAA-H-8083-2, FAA-P-8740-36]

8. How will establishing a personal minimums checklist help a pilot reduce risk?

Professional pilots live by the numbers, and so should you. Pre-established numbers can make it a lot easier to come to a smart go/no-go or diversion decision, than would the vague sense that you probably can deal with the conditions you face at any given time. A written set of personal minimums also makes it easier to explain tough cancelation or diversion decisions to passengers who are, after all, trusting their lives to your aeronautical skill and judgment.

[PA.I.A.R1; FAA-H-8083-25]

9. The airplane you normally rent has been grounded due to an intermittent electrical problem. You ask to be scheduled in another airplane. During preflight of the new airplane, you discover that it has avionics you're unfamiliar with. Should you go ahead and depart on your VFR flight?

Pilot familiarity with all equipment is critical in optimizing both safety and efficiency. If a pilot is unfamiliar with any aircraft system, this will add to workload and can contribute to a loss of situational awareness. This level of proficiency is critical and should be looked upon as a requirement, not unlike carrying an adequate supply of fuel. As a result, pilots should not look upon unfamiliarity with the aircraft and its systems as a risk control measure but instead as a hazard with high-risk potential. Discipline is the key to success.

[PA.I.A.R2; FAA-H-8083-2]

Private Pilot

ORAL EXAM GUIDE



Other Oral Exam Guides
available from ASA:

- Instrument Pilot
- Commercial 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 fifteenth edition of the *Private Pilot Oral Exam Guide* aligns with the Airman Certification Standards (ACS), covering pilot qualifications, airworthiness, preflight/postflight procedures, human factors, aircraft systems, performance and limitations, airport operations, airspace, weather, flight planning, night operations, emergency equipment, and scenario-based training. This resource prepares applicants for the Private Pilot Airplane checkride and is valuable as a general refresher.



Aviation Supplies & Academics, Inc.
817 Walbridge Street
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007 USA
425-235-1500 | asa2fly.com

ASA-OEG-P15

TRANSPORTATION USD \$19.95

ISBN 978-1-64425-554-4



9 781644 255544