



REGULATION REFORM

Learning to fly – student pilots



Learn about the new rules for student pilots – in effect since 1 September 2014.

The full rules are contained in Part 61 of the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations.

Who do the new rules for student pilots apply to?

- › Anyone who does not already hold a pilot licence issued by CASA and is planning on learning to fly in an aircraft that is registered by CASA (has a VH registration mark).
- › Flight instructors and schools involved in pilot training in VH registered aircraft.
- › Pilots holding a student pilot licence issued before 1 September 2014.

When can I start learning to fly?

There is no limitation on when you can start learning to fly when accompanied by a flight instructor, but you must be at least 15 to fly solo.

Do I need a licence to fly as a student pilot?

You don't need a licence to fly as a student pilot because you are under the supervision of a flight instructor and your flying school at all times while you are learning, including when you are flying solo.

However, to fly solo you need to have an aviation reference number (ARN), which you can obtain from CASA, and you need to provide CASA with proof of your identity. There is no fee for this service and you should receive your ARN within one week of submitting an application.

To fly solo, you also need to hold a medical certificate – see page 4 for more details.





Why has the requirement for student pilots to be licensed been removed?

This requirement has been removed to align Australia with international standards set by the International Civil Aviation Organization and other international aviation authorities. The result is the same level of safety but with less red tape and expense for students and flying schools.

Who can teach me to fly and authorise my first solo flight?

Training for a pilot licence can only be given by a flight instructor with a grade 1, 2 or 3 training endorsement.

Only grade 1 or 2 instructors can send pilots on their first solo flight.





When can I fly solo and under what conditions?

To fly solo in VH registered aircraft you need to be at least 15 and have an ARN. The following conditions also apply.

- You need to be approved to fly solo by an authorised instructor.
- You need to be undertaking your training through a flying training school which is authorised under Part 141 or 142 of the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations.
- You can't carry passengers as a student pilot conducting a solo flight (you can carry passengers once you have obtained your recreational pilot licence).
- You can only fly under visual flight rules (VFR).
- To fly solo you need to complete a dual flight in the same type of aircraft within the previous 30 days. As a student pilot you cannot fly more than three hours solo between dual flights (please note the three hour solo limit does not apply to student pilots who are undertaking an integrated training course).
- You can taxi an aircraft and use an aircraft radio if your instructor authorises you to do so.
- If you have a recreational aviation medical practitioner's certificate (RAMPC), you can only fly recreational aircraft and you are not authorised to fly at night.
- If you have a class 2 medical certificate you can fly at night if your instructor authorises you to do so.
- To fly in another country you need to have that country's permission.



What medical requirements apply to student pilots?

There are no medical requirements for learning to fly when you are in the aircraft with your flight instructor. However, if you have any relevant medical conditions or history, you should consider discussing this with a medical practitioner and your flying school before starting to fly, especially if you intend to become a professional pilot. Safety is paramount for you and others, so being fully prepared is essential.

To fly solo you need to have either a CASA class 1 or 2 medical certificate or a RAMPC. If you have a RAMPC you are limited to conducting solo flights in recreational aircraft only. Some other limitations also apply.

If you are considering a career in aviation as a professional pilot you should consider discussing the CASA class 1 medical standards with a CASA Designated Aviation Medical Examiner.

For more details refer to CASA's *Medical requirements for flight crew* information sheet.

What is a recreational aircraft?

A recreational aircraft is an aircraft that has a maximum take-off weight of less than 1500kg, is not turbine or rocket powered and is certified for single pilot operations.

Does my instructor have to be present at the aerodrome while I am flying solo?

You have to be supervised by your instructor while flying solo. This means your instructor must be at the aerodrome, or flying within 15 nautical miles of the aerodrome. Your instructor must also be able to contact you at all times.

Can I start navigation training while I am a student?

Yes, you can start your navigation training while you are a student. You don't have to wait until you have your recreational pilot licence to start this training.

Want to know more?

Visit www.casa.gov.au/licensingregs

The new rules for student pilots are contained in Part 61 of the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations:

- › **Division 61.A.3** – regulations 61.112 to 61.118
- › **Medical requirements** are contained in Part 67 of the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations.

This information sheet was updated May 2015

