

Airfreddy's Guide on Learning To Fly

**Step-by-Step Guide On the Private
Pilot License From Start To Finish**



Landings

[Airplane Flying Handbook Chapter 8](#)

LANDINGS: Landings are probably going to be the most frustrating part of your flight training. The first thing I want you to remember is, you are not the only one. Everyone has problems with landings at first, so don't take it out on yourself. I have made another document that you can download.

[TRAFFIC PATTERNS](#)

Normal Landings

[Airplane Flying Handbook page 8-2](#)

NORMAL LANDINGS: In the document above I explain the way I patterns. The main thing I can tell you is they are a lot easier if you fly them using outside references far away as I explained for the rectangular course.

The first problem I see is that most students don't make their turns in the pattern aggressive enough. No, you don't want to use extra steep banks but most students will not turn enough. They just kind of drift around the pattern. Remember when it is time to turn the plane, turn the plane.

The second problem I usually see is on the base turn. Remember the wind is blowing you away from the runway. Most students will try and keep lifting the wing up looking for the runway. (In High wing aircraft) I just tell students this simple thing:

“Turn the plane until you are square to the runway; the runway is not going to go anywhere. (If it does then you have real problems). You want to make the base turn aggressive or you are going to find that you are too far out, especially with a strong wind.

You can also pick a point that is lined up with the wing of the plane. Then just turn the plane until the nose of the plane is lined up with it. Either way it doesn't matter, the point is to make this turn somewhat aggressive so you stay the correct distance from the runway. Remember the runway is your home. Stay close to home.

I have a couple of other rules that I tell students.

1: NEVER GO BELOW TRAFFIC PATTERN ALTITUDE UNTIL YOU ARE READY TO START YOUR FINAL DESCENT TO THE RUNWAY. In most cases in a plane, altitude is your friend with the exception of fires and some other things in more complex airplanes. Generally you should start your descent when you are abeam the numbers of the runway you are landing on. Sometimes the controller will extend your downwind. In this case you will start your descent when they have you turn base.

2: NEVER LET THE NOSE OF THE PLANE GO ABOVE NOSE LEVEL ATTITUDE IN THE TRAFFIC PATTERN. This is another thing you want to keep in mind. Once you start your descent, you should maintain descent attitude all the way down to the runway. There will be times when you will need to adjust

your pitch to slow your airspeed down a little, but the nose should still always be close to descent attitude. There are two times where I allow exceptions to this rule.

a: When you start your flare. When you are over the runway yes you need to get the nose up to land the plane.

b: If you are going around. If you need to go around then you will have to bring the nose to climb attitude but only after you get your power to climb power and get some airspeed.

Cross Wind Takeoffs

CROSS WIND TAKEOFFS: Another problem I find happens on takeoffs with a strong crosswind. If the wind is coming from the left, yes you will need left aileron. Most students will go from not adding enough to adding way too much.

When you start accelerating down the runway, feel the flight controls. Just apply a little pressure to the left. When you feel the wind resisting you then that is all you need, you don't need anymore. Then as the airspeed increases relax the controls. All you need is just that point when you feel the wind resisting you. If you apply just this amount of pressure, you will takeoff nice and wings level.

Once you are at take-off speed, rotate the plane and then let it weathervane into the wind. This will give you the correct wind correction angle right off the bat. Fly straight to a point that is lined up with the extended centerline of the runway.

Cross Wind Landings

[Airplane Flying Handbook page 8-14](#)

CROSSWINDLANDINGS: On crosswind landings I recommend two things you want to keep in your mind:

1: Wings level(or slightly low on the side the wind is on)

2: Nose Straight: Keep the nose straight with the rudders.

This is the reason I teach all students the flat turns on their second flight. So when you are coming in over the runway just think, wings level, nose straight.

Final Approach on all Landings

FINAL APPROACH ON ALL LANDINGS: Final Approach is where you want to make sure you have everything set up. Besides all the things discussed above there is one simple thing you want to understand:

On all landings you are going to have wind. In some cases the wind will be calm, but we don't want to worry about no wind situations because most will have some wind. I find a lot of students distract themselves worrying about where the wind is coming from. Of course we want to know about the wind, but you don't want it to distract you from your number one job of "FLYING THE PLANE".

My home airport is a perfect example of winds changing at different parts of the airport. If we use runway 22 for example, there are three windsocks; one at each end and one at mid field. It is not uncommon in the morning for all three of them to be pointed in different directions.

Now how do you figure this out without getting distracted? The answer is pretty simple: let the plane tell you. As I have been saying all along, the plane will tell you everything you need to know. You just need to know how to pick this up and at times, or in some cases help the plane a little bit so it can help you. Following is how you do it:

You turn to final approach. Make sure the plane is nice and trimmed, and just let it go for a second. The plane will weather vane into the wind in relation to the runway. Now you notice the nose of the plane, for example, is pointing slightly to the left of the runway. Now the plane is pointing into the wind, so you know the wind is coming from the left side. Now if you hear on the ATIS coming in that it is a 15knot wind, you will want to add 10% to your final approach speed. The direction problem is solved for you by just looking at what the plane is telling you.

In this case the wind is coming from the left, so you don't need to worry about looking for the windsock on the airport. You have just eliminated a distraction. Now we have to correct for this. The nose is pointing to the left which means that we need to apply left aileron pressure and opposite or right rudder. Now just as on the takeoffs you don't want to over bank or add too much input apply the left aileron until you feel the pressure back against you. That is all you need. As you come over the runway and start slowing down, keep increasing the pressure, just enough to resist the wind it maybe a slight bit more to keep that left wing slightly low.

If you are going down the run way and get a wind shift the nose of the plane will start moving to one side or the other. Use the rudder to keep the nose straight and the ailerons to keep the wings level. This is the reason I do the flat turns on the second flight. This maneuver will get your brain to start understanding the plane and not automatically drive the car. It is still going to take you a long time after you get your certificate for this light bulb to come on.



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