

## **Sport Pilot Frequently Asked Questions:**

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## **What Are The Sport Pilot Privileges And Limitations?**

Sport pilot will allow ultralight pilots additional privileges to what they have been previously used to. However some operating limitations will still apply.

Basic Sport Pilot Privileges include:

- You can only fly when visibility is 3 miles or greater
- You CAN carry a passenger
- You can fly in basic airspace with no communication with Air Traffic Control (class E & G)
- You can fly in a LSA that goes less than 100 MPH

Some limitations include:

- You cannot fly for compensation or hire
- You must stay below 10,000 ft
- You cannot tow any object

The rule has been designed to incorporate "building blocks", which will allow the Sport Pilot to, with additional training and endorsements:

- Fly in class B, C and D airspace
- Additional category and class endorsements may be added
- Fly over 100 mph

Sport Pilots are limited to flying the following aircraft:

- Ultralights,
- Registered LSA that we previously affectionately called "Fat Ultralights" and 2 place trainers
- Newly manufactured LSA
- Experimental LSA
- Kit built LSA
- Already certificated aircraft that meets LSA definitions

### **I Have An Old Champ. Can I Fly It As A Sport Pilot Under LSA?**

Previously certificated aircraft can be piloted by a Sport Pilot. Some Standard Category aircraft (some early Cessnas, Piper, Champs etc.) will apply, as well as some Experimental Category aircraft (Kitfox, Rans, etc.), as long as they fit LSA definitions when originally certificated. Aircraft with modifications are not eligible, only ORIGINAL CERTIFICATION DEFINITIONS WILL APPLY. All previously certificated aircraft will need to fit LSA definitions. Annual condition inspections will be required.

FAA will provide a list of eligible aircraft on the FAA website. USUA.ORG will provide links to these lists and other critical FAA information.

### **How Do I Register As A Sport Pilot?**

A new airman application form has been created by FAA for SP to be used for new pilot registrations. Sport Pilot certificates will have no Category/Class rating printed on the identification (wallet) card. It will just say Sport Pilot - the cat/class privileges will be endorsements in your logbook. Also recorded in the logbook will be additional privileges and additional cat/classes. SPORT PILOTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO CARRY THEIR LOGBOOK WITH THEM ON EACH AND EVERY FLIGHT.

The requirements for the Sport Pilot certificate are:

- Meet SP Medical requirements (3<sup>rd</sup> class medical or valid US drivers license)
- Applicant must be at least 17 years of age (16 for balloons and gliders)
- 20 Hours Total
  - 15 Hours Flight training
  - 5 Hours Solo

including:

- 2 Hours Dual Cross Country
- 1 Solo Cross Country
- 3 Hours Prep
- Successful completion of knowledge and practical tests

If you are registered as an Ultralight pilot with an FAA-recognized ultralight registration program BEFORE September 1, 2004:

- Applicant must be at least 17 years of age (16 for balloons and gliders)
- Must be able to read and speak the English language
- Meet SP Medical requirements (3<sup>rd</sup> class medical or valid US drivers license)
- Applicant must be at least 17 years of age (16 for balloons and gliders)

- Successful completion of knowledge and practical tests
- Registered Ultralight pilots will have until January 31, 2007 to take advantage of the credit FAA allows for their ultralight pilot registration. After this date, ALL SPORT PILOT APPLICANTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO HAVE ACCUMULATED ALL TRAINING AND FLIGHT TIME REQUIREMENTS. As proof of your ultralight Pilot registration, FAA will accept certified proof of that registration, as provided by the FAA-recognized ultralight registration organization with whom you are registered. USUA has tried to get some exact description of what this "certified" document should be, but apparently we will need to consult the upcoming Advisory Circular for details. Preliminary discussions indicate that your USUA issued member and airman card should suffice. If additional documentation is required, USUA will provide that documentation at no charge to current USUA members. All updates and additional information will be posted on the [USUA website](#).

If you are registered as an Ultralight pilot with an FAA-recognized ultralight registration program AFTER September 1, 2004:

- Applicant must be at least 17 years of age (16 for balloons and gliders)
- Meet SP Medical requirements (3<sup>rd</sup> class medical or valid US drivers license)
- Must be able to read and speak the English language
- 20 Hours Total
- 15 Hours Flight training
- 5 Hours Solo

including:

- 2 Hours Dual Cross Country
- 1 Solo Cross Country
- 3 Hours Prep
- Successful completion of knowledge and practical tests
- Credit is available for time logged as an ultralight pilot with an FAA-recognized ultralight registration program until January 31, 2007

Compliance with NTSB guidelines will be required. ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION WILL BE REAL AND HANDLED BY THE NTSB.

If you fly in airspace that requires special equipment (transponder etc.) you will need to have that equipment.

### **How Do I Become A Sport Pilot CFI?**

Sport Pilot CFI requirements are:

- Applicant must be at least 18 years of age
- Must be able to read and speak the English language
- Applicant must meet Medical Eligibility: either a 3<sup>rd</sup> class medical or current and valid U.S. driver's license
- Sport Pilot certificate or higher
- CFI or CFI-SP Recommendation

- Successful Completion of FAA Administered FOI (Fundamentals Of Instructing) written test
- Successful completion of Sport Pilot CFI Knowledge and Practical tests

CFI Sport Pilot Flight Time Requirements:

- Airplane: 150 hours total time, 25 hours of cross country time
- Glider: 25 hours flight time
- Gyroplane: 125 hours flight time (at least 50 hours in a gyroplane) and 10 hours cross country
- Trike: 150 hours total (50 in weight-shift,) 25 hours cross country
- Powered parachute: 100 hours total (50 in a powered parachute,) 15 hours cross country

If you are registered as an Ultralight Basic Flight Instructor with an FAA-recognized ultralight registration program BEFORE September 1, 2004:

- Applicant must be at least 18 years of age
- Must be able to read and speak the English language
- Applicant must meet Medical Eligibility: either a 3<sup>rd</sup> class medical or current and valid U.S. driver's license
- Sport Pilot certificate or higher
- CFI or CFI-SP Recommendation
- Successful Completion of FAA Administered FOI (Fundamentals Of Instructing) written test
- Successful completion of Sport Pilot CFI Knowledge and Practical tests

Flight Experience requirements are waived for BFIs registered with an FAA-recognized ultralight registration program before September 1, 2004. An ultralight instructor must transition to sport pilot instructor by January 31, 2008 if he wants credit for his ultralight flight time.

If you are registered as an Ultralight Basic Flight Instructor with an FAA-recognized ultralight registration program AFTER September 1, 2004:

Sport Pilot CFI requirements are:

- Applicant must be at least 18 years of age
- Must be able to read and speak the English language
- Applicant must meet Medical Eligibility: either a 3<sup>rd</sup> class medical or Current and valid U.S. driver's license
- Sport Pilot certificate or higher
- CFI or CFI-SP Recommendation
- Successful Completion of FAA Administered FOI (Fundamentals Of Instructing) written test
- Successful completion of Sport Pilot CFI Knowledge and Practical tests

CFI Sport Pilot Flight Time Requirements:

- Airplane: 150 hours total time, 25 hours of cross country time
- Glider: 25 hours flight time

- Gyroplane: 125 hours flight time (at least 50 hours in a gyroplane) and 10 hours cross country
- Trike: 150 hours total (50 in weight-shift,) 25 hours cross country
- Powered parachute: 100 hours total (50 in a powered parachute,) 15 hours cross country

Flight Experience can be credited toward flight time requirements for BFIs registered with an FAA-recognized ultralight registration program after September 1, 2004. An ultralight instructor must transition to sport pilot instructor by January 31, 2008 if he wants credit for his ultralight flight time.

### **What About The Medical?**

The Drivers License medical is the most talked about issue in Sport Pilot. In all other FAA airmen programs (Rec Pilot, Private Pilot, etc.), there is a provision that requires applicants to pass and possess a valid 3<sup>rd</sup> class medical or higher. This certifies FAA that the pilot's physical condition is such that there should be no medical factors that will affect his/her ability to safely pilot an aircraft. Sport Pilot has brought about the possibility of using a current and valid US Driver's License to satisfy the medical requirements. Originally presented as a way in which pilot's who have lost their medical will again be allowed to fly, the final rule took an unsuspected turn.

- You have the option to use a 3<sup>rd</sup> class medical OR a drivers license
- If you use the Driver's License option you must comply with the limitations of your Driver's License (eyeglasses etc.)
- If you lose your license to drive for any reason (parking tickets etc.) you have lost your license to fly.
- **YOUR MOST RECENTLY ISSUED MEDICAL CANNOT HAVE BEEN DENIED, SUSPENDED OR REVOKED - IF SO YOU CANNOT USE YOUR DRIVERS LICENSE AS A MEDICAL.**
- **YOUR MOST RECENT MEDICAL APPLICATION CANNOT HAVE BEEN DENIED - IF SO YOU CANNOT USE YOUR DRIVERS LICENSE AS A MEDICAL.**
- **IF YOUR MOST RECENTLY ISSUED SPECIAL ISSUANCE IS NO LONGER VALID - YOU CAN NOT USE YOUR DRIVERS LICENSE AS A MEDICAL.**
- **IF YOU DID NOT LOSE YOUR MEDICAL (IT WAS NOT DENIED, BUT YOU HAVE FELT THAT YOU MIGHT BE UNABLE TO PASS THE EXAM), YOU CAN USE YOUR DRIVER'S LICENSE.**

If you think that you might be affected by these provisions, or to just check your medical records with FAA, go to your [Regional Medical Office of the Aerospace Medical Certification Division](#). At this site, you will find regional office contact information. Contact the appropriate office, and they will be able to assist you. In order for FAA to provide you with this information, you will need to properly identify yourself (name, date of birth, social security number, etc.) for this service.

In any event, everyone, before acting as PIC (Pilot In Command) of an aircraft, must determine if they are physically fit before flying. You must act responsibly.

### **What Are Light Sport Aircraft?**

LSA is defined by FAA as being:

- Simple low performance low energy aircraft including airplanes, gliders, gyroplanes, balloons, airships, weight shift control (trikes), and powered parachutes.
- With a maximum weight of 1320 lbs/1430 lbs for seaplanes
- Single reciprocating engines (which includes diesel & rotary engines - but does not allow jets)
- Maximum stall speed of 45 knots (with no lift enhancing devices)
- Maximum top speed of 120 knots
- Fixed landing gear (except if equipped with amphibious floats - which can be repositionable once in flight)
- Fixed pitch propeller (unless equipment is ground-only repositionable)

### **What Is Not A Light Sport Aircraft?**

- True ultralights (any vehicle that meets, but does not exceed, the definition of ultralight vehicle found in FAR Part 103)
- Paragliders and powered paragliders
- Hang gliders
- Multi engine aircraft (because of their complexity)
- Helicopters and powered lifts (also because of their complexity)
- Any other complex aircraft with retractable gear or in flight repositionable pitched propeller

### **How Can I Transition My "Fat Ultralights" Or Trainer?**

These aircraft will be registered as Experimental Light Sport Aircraft. **YOU HAVE ONLY UNTIL **JANUARY 31, 2008** TO TRANSITION THE AIRPLANE YOU ARE NOW FLYING - AFTER THIS DATE, THE TRANSITION OPTION WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE. ANY EXISTING FAT ULTRALIGHT OR TRAINER NOT REGISTERED, AS AN EXPERIMENTAL LIGHT SPORT AIRCRAFT BY THAT DATE WILL BE NOT LEGAL TO FLY!**

To register your existing airplane, you will need to:

- Register it as an aircraft (get an N-number from FAA - after October 1, 2004 and before January 31, 2008)
- Complete a condition inspection with a DAR (Designated Airworthiness Representative) - if determined safe to fly, an EXPERIMENTAL LIGHT SPORT AIRWORTHINESS CERTIFICATE will be issued
- Operating limitations will be established for this existing fleet
- Aircraft registrations for ELSA (Experimental Light Sport Aircraft) will be accepted October 2004

At this time, you will be allowed to use your ELSA for flight training, tow, compensation or hire until January 2010, but you are limited to operations in uncongested areas. Annual condition inspections will be required.

### **What About The Factory Built LSA?**

These aircraft will be registered as Special Light Sport Aircraft. Industry has been meeting for the past few years to establish definitions and consensus standards for LSA. The aircraft that meet these definitions of Light Sport Aircraft will be available

as ready-to-fly aircraft that meet the manufacturers' consensus standards. Each aircraft built under these standards will have a manufacturer issued STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE FOR THE AIRCRAFT (manufactured in accordance with the industry consensus standard). To register your factory built LSA you will need to:

- Register the aircraft; get N-number from FAA (after October 1, 2004)
- A condition inspection will be completed and a DAR will issue the SPECIAL LIGHT SPORT AIRWORTHINESS CERTIFICATE
- FAA will establish the operating limitations for these aircraft
- Manufacturers safety recommendations will be REQUIRED (Periodically, manufacturers will release bulletins detailing modifications and procedures that are recommended for safety concerns. These recommendations are required to be performed on this type of LSA.)
- Aircraft registrations for LSA will be accepted October 2004
- Annual condition inspections will be required of your aircraft.

YOU CAN fly over congested areas because FAA now knows how the aircraft is designed, produced, flight tested and maintained. Annual condition inspections will be required.

### **What About The New LSA Kits?**

Kit builders will be able to take advantage of the LSA rule as well. A manufacturer will issue a STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE FOR THE KIT (manufactured in accordance with the industry consensus standard)

*"IF THE MANUFACTURER HAS THE AUTHORITY TO MANUFACTURE AN AIRCRAFT TO BE ISSUED A SPECIAL LIGHT SPORT AIRWORTHINESS CERTIFICATE, AND HAS DONE THAT AT LEAST ONCE, THEN THAT MANUFACTURER HAS THE AUTHORITY TO BUILD KIT AIRCRAFT TOO."*

FAA is allowing KITS can be produced as either an 80% kit or 51% kit. When registering your kit built LSA, keep in mind that LSA that are assembled from an eligible kit can be exempt from the "51% rule".

Some privileges and limitations regarding LSA kits are:

- Kits are not eligible for compensation or hire or rental operations
- Possibly no flight over congested areas (this depends on modifications performed to the specific aircraft)
- Manufacturers safety recommendations will be recommended, not required
- Annual condition inspections will be required.
- Aircraft registrations for LSA will be accepted October 2004
- Annual condition inspections will be required.

Original designs and "built from plans" aircraft that meet the LSA definition, can be registered as Experimental Homebuilt, and are subject to the 51% rule. A Sport Pilot, as long as they meet the LSA definition, can fly these aircraft.

### **I Want To Buy An Imported Aircraft. Can It Be Eligible For LSA?**

Yes. However, the same core requirements apply:

- Manufacturers will issue a STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE FOR AIRCRAFT OR KIT (manufactured in accordance with the industry consensus standard)
- The country of manufacture must have an agreement with the US to assure that there is at least a dialog between the US and that country
- The aircraft must be eligible in that country for flight authority (if that country doesn't want the aircraft flying there, FAA doesn't want it flying here).

### **Do I Have To Put The N-Number On The Airplane?**

N-Numbers will be required to be displayed on all LSA including powered parachutes and trikes. Displayed N-Numbers will be at least 3 inches high and positioned on a structural member. On some aircraft, there is no structural member that will accommodate this size marking, so a 3-inch plate will need to be permanently affixed to allow for this. In addition to the N-Number, appropriate placarding is required. Experimental LSA will have the word EXPERIMENTAL on the side of the aircraft, and special LSA (newly built) will have the words LIGHT SPORT on the side.

### **Who Can Do The Inspections And Maintenance On My LSA?**

Inspections on LSA can be performed by the holder of a Repairman certificate with an Inspection rating. You can earn that certificate by attending one of the 16-hour courses that will be sponsored by USUA and others, to be held around the country. As soon as FAA releases the guidelines for this course, the classes will be scheduled and announced via the USUA web site.

Maintenance is another issue. You may maintain your own aircraft, but you may not charge for your services. In order to perform maintenance on some else's aircraft for a fee, you will need to hold the Repairman certificate with a Maintenance Rating. This can be obtained by successfully completing a much more involved training course.

These courses are designed to accommodate all types of aircraft (airplane, trike PPC, etc.) and are broken down into core modules.

3 core modules are required. They cover regular maintenance procedures, and will each have a 50-question test that will bring the repairman to a level 3 rating (authorized to perform maintenance without supervision). Each of these core modules will be 24 hours long, totaling 72 hours. These modules are described as such:

Core Module 1: Regular Maintenance Overview; 24 hours

Core Module 2: Airframe; 32 hours

Core Module 3: Engine & Propellers; 32 hours

5 electives will be offered that will be particular to your category of aircraft, and will be of varying duration. The break down will be:

- Airplane: 32 hours;
- Weightshift: 16 hours
- PPC: 16 hours

TOTAL HOURS REQUIRED FOR AIRPLANE RATING IS 120 HOURS

TOTAL HOURS REQUIRED FOR WEIGHTSHIFT RATING IS 104 HOURS

TOTAL HOURS REQUIRED FOR PPC RATING IS 104 HOURS

At this time, USUA is actively involved in discussions with FAA concerning the Repairman certificate. Issues are being discussed that might change some of the requirements listed above, as well as issues connected to the registration of instructors for each of the related courses.