

Private Pilot Ground School

West Valley Flying Club

San Carlos Airport

Course: Private Pilot Ground School
Classes: Tuesdays 6:30pm – 9:00pm
Where: West Valley Flying Club, San Carlos Airport
Instructor: Dan Dyer, AGI, CFI, CFII
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Phone: (415) 305-9051

Course Overview

The course covers the breadth of knowledge required by a Private Pilot, with special emphasis placed on the material covered by the FAA Private Pilot Knowledge Test for Airplanes. Topics include: aerodynamics, aircraft systems, airport operations, FAA regulations, weather theory, weather services, aeronautical decision making, aircraft performance, VFR charts, cross-country planning, and navigation systems. The course material will be supplemented by stories and examples from local San Francisco Bay Area flying whenever possible.

Course Organization

The course will primarily consist of lectures centered on the course text and may include additional articles from the current world of general aviation. The course is taught regularly in cycles, with one cycle beginning as the previous one ends.

Please note, that the modules covered each week are relatively independent from each other, and don't build from one week to the next the way most other classroom courses do. This fact and the cyclical nature of the course allow for new students to join the class at any almost lesson. For example, students that begin with Lesson 6 will continue through Lesson 12, and then return for Lessons 1-5.

Course Materials

#1 – FAA's Pilot's Handbook of Aeronautical Knowledge (FAA-H-8083-25A), 2008.

Many publishers will offer flight training books with a similar name, but you should be sure to buy the original FAA one. After all, the FAA writes the test you will be taking.

#2 – Ground School Workbook for Private Pilots

This workbook contains optional homework assignments tied to chapters in the FAA's Pilot's Handbook of Aeronautical Knowledge. You can do the exercises and grade your work yourself.

#3 – ASA Private Pilot Test Prep

This book has questions and study guides that support the FAA Private Pilot knowledge test, and we will refer to the book for quizzes each week. Other publishers (e.g., Gleim) offer test preparation books, but their format and content differ from the ASA book. You are welcome to bring whatever book you like, but you may be at a disadvantage in locating the questions and figures under discussion.

Other Required Equipment

For Lessons 9, 10, & 11, students will need a plotter and flight computer. I recommend ASA's Rotating Plotter (\$12), and ASA's Aluminum E6B Flight Computer (\$27). The plotter will be used to measure distances and angles on charts, and the E6B is used for calculating speeds, distances, wind correction, and a number of other items needed for cross-country planning. Most airport pilot shops will have these.

Examinations and Grading

To sit for the FAA Knowledge Test, you must first be endorsed to take the test by the instructor who gave the instruction and reviewed your progress. The endorsement states that you "are proficient to pass" the exam. Each week, I will assess your knowledge and capability via a quiz on previously covered material and questions about the reading assignment. 85% is passing. If you pass all lesson quizzes by the end of the course, you will take an online practice test in actual test conditions. If you pass the practice exam with 85% or better, I will endorse you to take the real FAA Knowledge Test.

Instructor Availability

I fly and have flight training at various times during the week and occasionally on weekdays. If you have a question, give me a call at (415) 305-9051 or email me at dan@DanDyerCFI.com. I have an office at West Valley Flying Club in San Carlos and can meet with you there by prior arrangement.