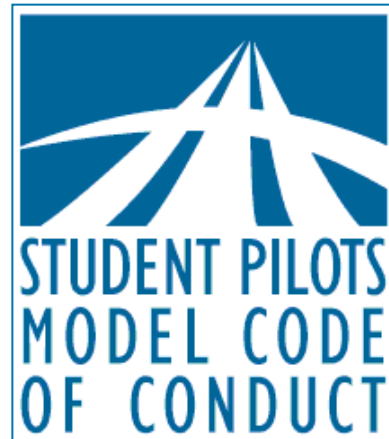


VERSION 1.2

# STUDENT PILOTS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT



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**Tools for student pilots to  
advance general aviation  
safety and citizenship**

**Provided to the aviation community by:**

*[Insert Sponsoring Organization]*

***Welcome to the world of General Aviation!***

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Becoming a pilot is an exhilarating and rewarding endeavor. As a newcomer to general aviation (GA) you will be exposed to many new and exciting precepts.

As you pursue the goal of learning to fly, careful attention to understanding safety and excellence greatly enhances the quality of your current and future training (and may even accelerate it). It also helps you to cultivate a philosophy or attitude toward flying that will serve you and society well throughout your flying career.

The STUDENT PILOTS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT (Code of Conduct) is not a *standard* and is not intended to be implemented as one. Instead, the Code of Conduct presents a vision of excellence for student pilots (whether they are seeking a Sport Pilot, Recreational Pilot, or Private Pilot certificate). Its principles complement and underscore legal requirements.

Some of the provisions of the Code of Conduct have been simplified to accommodate the novice. After gaining more knowledge and experience, student pilots should refer to the applicable version of the Code of Conduct:

- AVIATORS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT
- GLIDER AVIATORS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT
- LIGHT SPORT AVIATORS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT
- SEAPLANE PILOTS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT

See *ADDITIONAL RESOURCES*, below.

### ***The Principles:***

The Code of Conduct has seven sections, each containing Principles and Sample Recommended Practices.

- I. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT PILOTS
- II. PASSENGERS AND PEOPLE ON THE SURFACE
- III. TRAINING AND PROFICIENCY
- IV. SECURITY
- V. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES
- VI. USE OF TECHNOLOGY
- VII. ADVANCEMENT AND PROMOTION OF GENERAL AVIATION

### ***The Sample Recommended Practices:***

*Sample Recommended Practices* are basic suggestions for using the Code of Conduct

principles and tailoring the principles to specific aviation communities and organizations. ***The Sample Recommended Practices may be modified to satisfy the unique capabilities and requirements of each pilot, mission, aircraft, and GA organization.*** Some Sample Recommended Practices exceed the provisions of their associated Code of Conduct principles. They are not presented in any particular order.

### ***Benefits of the Code of Conduct:***

The Code of Conduct benefits student pilots and the GA community by:

- ❑ highlighting important practices to make student pilots better, safer aviators,
- ❑ promoting improved pilot training, better airmanship, appropriate pilot conduct, personal responsibility, and pilot contributions to the GA community and society at large,
- ❑ encouraging the development and adoption of good judgment and ethical behavior,
- ❑ advancing self-regulation through the GA community as an alternative to government regulation, and
- ❑ promoting GA and making flying a more rewarding experience.

*Note:* Not all flight operations are authorized in all jurisdictions. References to the United States Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) are used as examples. In other jurisdictions, applicable laws and regulations must be followed.

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## *STUDENT PILOTS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT - PRINCIPLES*

### **I. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT PILOTS**

**Student pilots should:**

- a. make safety the number one priority,**
- b. seek excellence in airmanship,**
- c. develop and exercise good judgment, and apply sound principles of aeronautical decision-making,**
- d. recognize and manage risks effectively,**
- e. maintain situational awareness, and adhere to prudent operating practices and personal operating parameters (e.g., minimums), as developed with their flight instructors,**
- f. aspire to professionalism,**
- g. act with responsibility and courtesy, and**
- h. adhere to applicable laws and regulations.**

*Explanation:* Code of Conduct Section I serves as a preamble to the Code of Conduct's other principles. It emphasizes safety, excellence, risk management, and responsibility.

*Sample Recommended Practices:*

- Approach flying with seriousness and diligence, recognizing that your life and the lives of your future passengers and others depend on you.
- Recognize, accept, plan for, and do not underestimate the costs of implementing proper safety practices.
- Learn to identify and adapt to changing flight conditions. Be prepared to alter or abort your flight plan accordingly.
- Recognize the increased risks associated with flying in inclement weather, at night, in congested areas, over water, and over rugged, mountainous or forested terrain. Plan for and manage such risks prudently.
- Develop, use, periodically review, and refine personal checklists and personal minimums for all phases of flight. Review these materials regularly with your flight instructor.
- Make personal wellness and an honest self-evaluation of your fitness a precondition of each flight (for example, by using the *I'M SAFE* checklist).

- See and be seen. Learn and practice techniques for seeing and avoiding other aircraft. Scan for traffic continuously. Enhance your visibility through appropriate use of lights and strobes.
- Listen and be heard. Monitor appropriate frequencies to remain aware of the location of other aircraft, and concisely inform other pilots of your position and intentions.
- Avoid turns and maneuvers below 500 feet AGL except as required during takeoff and landing.
- Plan every flight carefully. Calculate weight and balance, consider the effect of wind on fuel reserves and range, and consider diversion alternatives. Remain aware of deteriorating weather and other circumstances that may make continued flight unsafe.
- File a flight plan or communicate your intended flight itinerary to ground personnel prior to departure, even when flying locally.
- Adhere to applicable rules and operating practices of your flying club or school, your FBO, flight center, or aircraft rental provider.
- Operate rental aircraft as if you owned them. Communicate all discrepancies affirmatively and promptly.

### **II. PASSENGERS AND PEOPLE ON THE SURFACE**

**Student pilots should:**

- a. bear ever in mind that safety of future passengers is always more important than comfort,**
- b. manage risks and avoid unnecessary risks to future passengers, to people and property on the surface, and in other aircraft,**
- c. learn to brief future passengers on planned flight procedures and inform them of any significant or unusual risks associated with the flight,**
- d. learn to prevent unsafe conduct by future passengers, and**
- e. learn to avoid operations that may alarm or disturb future passengers or people on the surface.**

*Explanation:* When flying solo, you are responsible for your personal safety and the safety of people on the ground and in other aircraft. Although student pilots do not carry passengers, your training should prepare

you to take on the additional responsibilities of doing so once you achieve your pilot certificate.

Pilots are responsible for the safety and comfort of their passengers. Passengers place their lives in pilots' hands, and pilots should exercise sufficient care on their behalf. Such care includes, but is not limited to, disclosing unusual risks, and exercising prudent risk management. Pilot responsibility also extends to people on the ground and in other aircraft.

**Sample Recommended Practices:**

- ❑ Learn how to keep your future passengers as safe as possible, *as though they were your closest loved ones*.
- ❑ Plan and fly conservatively to improve safety margins.
- ❑ Learn to tactfully disclose risks to each future passenger and accept a prospective passenger's decision to refrain from participating.
- ❑ Require that your future passengers wear seat belts and shoulder harnesses, and consider providing hearing protection, such as intercom-equipped headsets.
- ❑ Learn to provide a thorough passenger briefing prior to flight (see *ADDITIONAL RESOURCES* below).
- ❑ Learn to determine the experience, background, and concerns of each passenger. Incorporate them into the preflight briefing and flight activities.
- ❑ Instruct your future passengers to avoid touching or obstructing critical flight controls. Brief and maintain a sterile cockpit for takeoff, landings, and other workload-intensive times.
- ❑ Learn how to use, and encourage your future passengers to serve as safety resources – for example, by having them identify nearby aircraft, organize charts, and keep track of landmarks.
- ❑ Learn to assess unfamiliar passengers for potential safety and security problems.
- ❑ Remember that passenger safety begins on the ramp before ever entering the aircraft. Watch passengers closely and keep them clear of ground-based hazards (e.g., fuel trucks, propellers, slippery surfaces).
- ❑ Avoid refueling aircraft with people on board.

### III. TRAINING AND PROFICIENCY

**Student pilots should:**

- a. **participate in training to master the art of flying and achieve proficiency beyond legal requirements,**
- b. **participate in flight safety education programs,**
- c. **remain vigilant and avoid complacency,**
- d. **train to recognize and deal effectively with emergencies,**
- e. **accurately log hours flown and maneuvers practiced to satisfy training requirements, and**
- f. **demand professionalism from your flight instructor.**

**Explanation:** Training and proficiency underlie aviation safety. Each contributes significantly to flight safety and neither can substitute for the other. Training sufficient to promote flight safety may well exceed what is required by law—all to the student pilot's benefit.

**Sample Recommended Practices:**

- ❑ Pursue a rigorous, lifelong course of aviation study.
- ❑ Use the manufacturer's flight manual to determine your aircraft's limitations, calculate performance, plan flights, properly secure cargo, determine fuel requirements, and calculate weight and balance.
- ❑ Follow and periodically review programs of study or series of training exercises to improve proficiency. Consider a training plan that will yield new ratings, certificates, and endorsements.
- ❑ Supplement stick-and-rudder training with scenario-based training to build decision-making and risk-management skills.
- ❑ Train for flight over challenging environments such as water or remote, desert, or mountainous terrain. Train for survival, and carry adequate survival equipment and drinking water.
- ❑ Understand and use appropriate procedures in the event of system malfunctions (e.g., electrical failure, lost communications, instrument problems).
- ❑ Achieve and maintain proficiency in the operation of avionics and automation.
- ❑ Know current aviation regulations and understand their implications and rationale.

- ❑ Understand and comply with the privileges and limitations of your student pilot certificate.
- ❑ Attend aviation training programs offered by industry organizations and the FAA.
- ❑ Stay updated with diverse and relevant aviation publications.
- ❑ Study and develop a systematic approach to obtaining timely weather briefings and evaluating flight conditions.
- ❑ Conduct a periodic review of recent accidents and incidents, focusing on probable causes.
- ❑ Perform the flights and maneuvers required to exceed published minimum training and currency requirements, and properly document them in your flight record.
- ❑ Complete scenario-based training to supplement stick and rudder training with decision making and risk management skills.
- ❑ Avoid practicing training maneuvers in busy airspace or over congested areas.
- ❑ Obtain training at least once every week to optimize your flight training experience.
- ❑ Develop a practical understanding of the mechanics and systems of each aircraft you fly.
- ❑ Consider maintaining a log to track errors and lessons learned on each flight.
- ❑ Communicate with your flight instructor and other flight school personnel on a continuous basis. Communication is the key to all good relationships. If your training needs are not being satisfied, discuss them with your flight instructor and consider changing flight instructors.
- ❑ Register at <[www.faa.gov](http://www.faa.gov)> to receive announcements of safety meetings and literature, and review appropriate safety courses online.

#### IV. SECURITY

**Student pilots should:**

- a. seek to maintain the security of all persons and property associated with their aviation activities,**
- b. remain vigilant and immediately report suspicious, reckless, or illegal activities,**
- c. conform to designated flight school procedures to secure their aircraft to prevent unauthorized use, and**
- d. avoid special-use airspace except when approved or necessary in an emergency.**

**Explanation:** Enhanced security awareness is essential for the aviation community. Threats to security demand responsive action. This Section addresses GA's role in promoting national security and preventing criminal acts.

**Sample Recommended Practices:**

- ❑ Check NOTAMS thoroughly during preflight preparation, and obtain updates during long flights, including NOTAMS for airspace restrictions.
- ❑ Confirm that ramp access gates are closed securely behind you to prevent "tailgating" by unauthorized persons.
- ❑ Become familiar with *Airport Watch* (866-GA-SECURE) and other means to report and deter suspicious activities.
- ❑ Learn and periodically review military intercept procedures.
- ❑ Do not deviate from an active flight plan or clearance without notifying ATC.

#### V. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

**Student pilots should:**

- a. recognize and seek to mitigate the environmental impact of aircraft operations,**
- b. minimize the discharge of fuel, oil, and other chemicals into the environment during refueling, preflight preparations, servicing, and flight operations,**
- c. avoid environmentally sensitive areas,**
- d. comply with applicable noise-abatement procedures and mitigate aircraft noise over noise-sensitive areas, and**
- e. review and adhere to prudent hazardous materials handling procedures.**

**Explanation:** Reducing pollution caused by aviation will reduce health problems, environment impact, and unfavorable public perceptions of GA. Environmental issues can also close airports and increase regulatory burdens on GA.

**Sample Recommended Practices:**

- ❑ Use a Gasoline Analysis Test Separator (GATS) jar or other environmentally sound device/procedure for all fuel sampling. Return fuel samples to the fuel tanks or dispose of them properly.
- ❑ Adhere to applicable noise abatement procedures while maintaining safety.

- ❑ Be aware of the noise signature of your aircraft, and follow procedures to reduce noise such as reducing engine power and propeller RPM, as soon as practicable after takeoff, as prescribed by your flight instructor.
- ❑ If practicable, fly well above noise-sensitive areas, or avoid them altogether.
- ❑ Consider the impact of aircraft on wildlife, and conform to recommended practices (such as National Park Service minimum altitudes) when flying near wilderness and environmentally sensitive areas.

## VI. USE OF TECHNOLOGY

**Student pilots should:**

- a. **become familiar with and properly use appropriate affordable technologies,**
- b. **monitor applicable airport advisory frequencies and report position concisely when approaching airports without an operating control tower and other higher-risk areas, if radio-equipped, and**
- c. **use transponders or other position-indicating technologies during in-flight operations, if available or otherwise directed by ATC, and become familiar with and use ATC radar advisories for VFR enroute operations.**

**Explanation:** Innovative, compact, and inexpensive technologies have greatly expanded the capabilities of GA aircraft. This Section encourages the use of such safety-enhancing technologies.

**Sample Recommended Practices:**

- ❑ When practicable, learn new technologies that advance flight safety. Train to use them properly. Learn and understand the features and limitations of such technologies.
- ❑ Consider keeping a back-up communication/navigation device accessible during flight operations; including extra batteries or a back-up power supply. Consider use of a personal locator beacon.
- ❑ Avoid programming navigation systems while taxiing (particularly during single-pilot operations).
- ❑ Recognize that programming avionics may cause distractions, and that distractions may lead to errors.

## VII. ADVANCEMENT AND PROMOTION OF GENERAL AVIATION

**Student pilots should:**

- a. **advance and promote general aviation safety and adherence to the Code of Conduct,**
- b. **volunteer in and contribute to organizations that promote general aviation,**
- c. **demonstrate appreciation for aviation service providers,**
- d. **advance a general aviation culture that values openness, humility, positive attitudes, and the pursuit of personal improvement, and**
- e. **promote ethical behavior within the general aviation community.**

**Explanation:** General aviation has a well-recognized and worsening public relations problem. Vigilance and responsive action are essential to ensure GA vitality and to enhance the GA experience.

**Sample Recommended Practices:**

- ❑ Strive to conform fully to the Code of Conduct.
- ❑ Recognize that your actions reflect upon the entire aviation community.
- ❑ Volunteer in support of general aviation.
- ❑ Express appreciation to controllers and service personnel for their assistance and good service.
- ❑ Participate in aviation-related fundraising events.
- ❑ Seek feedback from your flight instructor to enhance your training.
- ❑ Adhere to the highest ethical principles in all aviation dealings, including business practices.
- ❑ Seek to resolve disputes informally and congenially.

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### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ❑ The AVIATORS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT, the GLIDER AVIATORS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT, the LIGHT SPORT AVIATORS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT, the SEAPLANE PILOTS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT, and the STUDENT PILOTS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT are available at <[www.secureav.com](http://www.secureav.com)>.
- ❑ Resources to help [*insert your organization here*] advance pilot skills and promote flight safety are available at <[www.\[your organization\].org](http://www.[your organization].org)>.
- ❑ Further information about GA is available at:
  - FAA:** <[www.faa.gov](http://www.faa.gov)>, and <[www.faasafety.gov](http://www.faasafety.gov)>
  - AOPA:** <[www.aopa.org](http://www.aopa.org)>
  - EAA:** <[www.eaa.org](http://www.eaa.org)>
  - NAFI:** <[www.nafinet.org](http://www.nafinet.org)>
- ❑ Annotated *Commentary* helps implementers interpret the Code of Conduct and provides source materials and supplemental aides. Available at <[www.secureav.com](http://www.secureav.com)>.
- ❑ Sample passenger briefing materials should help pilots compose and deliver consistent, comprehensive passenger briefings. Use of these materials should improve passenger safety and comfort, enjoyment, provide evidence that pilots have fulfilled (indeed, surpassed) minimum disclosure requirements, and help manage pilot liability. Available at <[www.secureav.com/Passenger-Briefing-Listings-Page.html](http://www.secureav.com/Passenger-Briefing-Listings-Page.html)>.

#### Abbreviations

AGL	Above Ground Level
ATC	Air Traffic Control
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FBO	Fixed Base Operator
GA	General Aviation
NOTAM	Notice to Airmen
VFR	Visual Flight Rules

### NOTICE

The [*insert your organization's Code of Conduct*] is a customized version of the STUDENT PILOTS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT created by Michael S. Baum. ©2003-2007 Michael S. Baum. All Rights Reserved. Terms of Use are available at <[www.secureav.com](http://www.secureav.com)>.

Pilots and the aviation community may use the STUDENT PILOTS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT as a resource for code of conduct development, although it is recommended that this be supported by independent research on the suitability of its principles for specific or local applications and situations. It is not intended to provide legal advice and must not be relied upon as such.

### EDITS, ERRATA, COMMENTS

The STUDENT PILOTS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT is a living document, intended to be updated periodically to reflect changes in aviation practices and the aviation environment. Please send your suggestions, edits, errata, questions and comments to: <[PEB@secureav.com](mailto:PEB@secureav.com)>.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The STUDENT PILOTS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT has had the benefit of extensive editorial comment and suggestions by a diverse body of the GA community, and beyond. See "ACKNOWLEDGMENTS" at <[www.secureav.com/ack.pdf](http://www.secureav.com/ack.pdf)>. The Permanent Editorial Board of the Code of Conduct is presented at <[www.secureav.com/PEB.pdf](http://www.secureav.com/PEB.pdf)>.

### PERSONAL PLEDGE (Optional)

I voluntarily commit to myself that I will adhere to this CODE OF CONDUCT to advance my flight training and safety and to better the aviation community.

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Pilot

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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