

## Frequently asked questions:

### Q: I am interested in learning how to fly an airplane. How do I get started?

A: Stop at virtually any airport and look for the flight school. You can speak with someone who will explain what's involved. Additionally, for a small fee, you can be taken on an introductory flight where you'll fly the plane!

### Q: What is the minimum age requirement?

A: Since the instructor is always "pilot in command" there's no minimum age for starting lessons. However, you must be 16 to fly solo and 17 to earn a pilot's license.

### Q: Are there any health limitations that would prohibit me for learning?

A: A few, but, for a private license, the requirements aren't terribly strict. Potentially debilitating conditions like epilepsy and heart disease will, unfortunately, keep you from piloting.

### Q: Do I need to acquire a permit/license to learn to fly?

A: No, but you do need a combination student pilot's license and medical certificate before you can solo. It's available from a medical examiner certified by the FAA. Your flight instructor can recommend one.

### Q: Are there any other requirements that I should know about?

A: You must also be able to read, speak and understand the English language.

### Q: What will I learn from taking a flight course?

A: A lot! In addition to learning the skill needed to fly the plane, you'll learn about the theory of flight, weather (a leading cause of accidents), how to plan a flight, navigation, radio communications, the air traffic control system, federal regulations, etc., etc., etc.

### Q: When are courses offered?

A: Whenever you want! For the most part, instruction is private; it's you and your instructor. You'll be able to find an instructor who will work with you to plan your schedule, even if it's irregular. While a few instructors teach the theory in scheduled "ground school" classes, you can easily find one who'll do that privately if you wish.

### Q: How do I prepare for flight lessons?

A: The best way to learn is to integrate the flying lessons and ground instruction. That way, both aspects make more sense. Therefore, a bit of reading before each class is recommended.

### Q: How many hours do sessions last and how many weeks will it take to finish?

A: Generally, lessons are about an hour long in the beginning. As you start your "cross country" work, they get a bit longer. It's a good idea to take a minimum of one or two lessons a week. There's no good rule of thumb on calendar time. The FAA requires a minimum of 40 hours flying time but most people take more.

### Q: Are there classroom sessions before actually going up in the air?

A: Not normally. You'll generally go up in the air the first day, then combine the air and ground work so that both make sense. It's a lot easier to understand navigation, for example, by actually practicing it.

### Q: How much does it cost?

A: That varies. For the most part, individual instruction costs around \$15-30 per hour. The rental of the plane, including gas, etc. generally costs \$55-70 per hour depending on the size and type of plane. There are some incidental expenses for educational materials, medical certificate, testing, etc.

### Q: Who teaches it?

A: You'll be taught by a "CFI" or Certified Flight Instructor, the certification coming from the FAA. Many CFI's work for an "FBO" or "fixed base operator". That's the operation that provides services (like fuel and hangers) at an airport. Some CFI's, however, are free-lance. You can find them by asking around the airport.

### Q: What local airports offer courses?

A: You name it, starting right here at WBW (Wyoming Valley). In addition, you'll find instructors at Avoca, Tunkhannock, Hazelton, Mount Pocono, Factoryville, Honesdale, etc.

### Q: Once I have received my license, what do I need to do to maintain it?

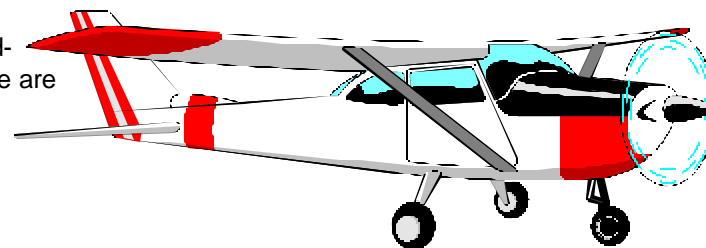
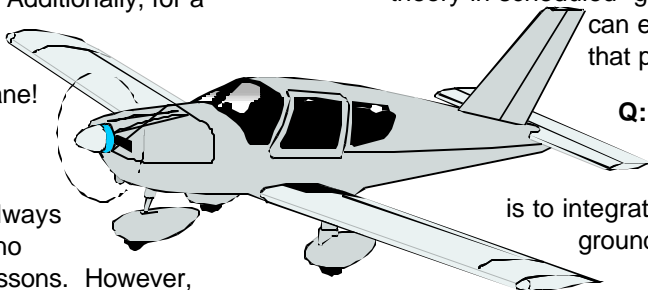
A: Unless the FAA takes it away, you'll always have it. However, to keep flying, you need to have a medical examination and a "flight review" every two years.

### Q: Will I need to purchase a plane?

A: No. Planes can be rented at most airports. Depending on local costs as well as the type of plane, rental costs for a single engine plane start at about \$55/hr. including fuel. The cost is based on the time the engine is running.

### Q: In addition to buying and renting a plane, what are my other options?

A: In addition to renting and purchasing on your own, there are two options. Many people form a partnership with one or more other individuals and buy a plane jointly. That cuts down a lot on each partner's investment and fixed expenses. Some people join a "flying club" which owns one or more planes. Some clubs are quite large and have several planes.



**Q: How much does a plane cost?**

A: The price varies widely based on type, equipment, age, and condition. If you're willing to take an older model, you'll be able to find a plane for under \$15,000, though most people buy something a bit more expensive. Check the web at <http://www.aso.com> for an idea of what's available.



**Q: Where would I store it?**

A: Ideally, in a hanger, but hanger space is often hard to find and can be expensive. Otherwise, you'll tie it down outside.

**Q: What are the costs associated with owning and maintaining an airplane?**

A: The plane must be inspected annually for safety. In a normal year, that costs about \$600 - \$1000 for a small plane. However, if a major problem is encountered, the cost could be a lot more. Insurance costs about \$1,000 per year and tie-down space \$25-50 per month (hangars go for \$100-250 per month). Fuel costs about \$2.30/gal. And, depending on the plane and the way you fly, you'll burn 6-10 gal/hr. in a small airplane.

**Q: How long does it take before a new student can fly the plane solo?**

A: It depends on the student and instructor but it'll generally take 10-15 hours flying with the instructor before you can fly alone. The first solo flight is one of the greatest thrills you'll ever have and every pilot remembers it for the rest of his or her life!

**Q: How long does it take before a new student can fly the plane and take a guest?**

A: You can't fly as Pilot in Command and take a passenger until you get your license. That happens after you've learned to fly the plane within certain standards, know how to navigate, etc., have passed certain minimum flight requirements, taken a "written" (actually computerized) test, and passed the oral test and "checkride". This last hurdle is administered by an examiner

designated by the FAA. You prove that you have the knowledge and skill to be a pilot by passing an oral exam, then flying a number of maneuvers. At the end of that examination, if you've done things within standards set by the FAA, you'll hear the words you've always longed for, "Congratulations, you're a new private pilot!"

**Q: Where can I fly?**

A: You name it! Except for certain prohibited or restricted airspace (like over the White House, military bases, etc.), you can go essentially wherever you want. You're ready for an adventure that'll last a lifetime! Now, it's time to stop dreaming and start flying!!!

Need more information? Talk to other pilots! One of the great things about flying is the camaraderie of the pilots. We love our sport and love to share our knowledge of it.

For additional information, check the links on our web site: <http://www.wvpilots.org>

This information offered as a public service by the:

**Wyoming Valley Pilot's Club**



**Wilkes-Barre/Wyoming Valley Airport**

**Forty Fort, PA**


**(570) 288-9709**


**info@wvpilots.org**


**http://www.wvpilots.org**


# Imagine...



 Soaring freely high above the beautiful lakes and hills of North-eastern Pennsylvania.

 Seeing your neighborhood - and the world - from a whole new perspective.

 Visiting Maryland for a lunch of fresh blue crabs or Block Island for Lobster.

 Enjoying the camaraderie of that small group of individuals who can FLY!

**Are you interested in becoming a pilot?  
It's easier than you think!**