

The Medical Exam

These exams are not a requirement for all aircraft types. However, for the common goal of a Private Pilot Airplane Certification, this is critical. Do your research before taking the exam. If you identify a potential issue, consult an expert. **Pilots have more options if they never take a medical exam than if they take one and fail.** Gliders and Light Sport Airplanes are both great options until obtaining a Medical Certificate becomes a feasible goal.

Common failures for younger pilots involve neurological medications, such as treatments for ADHD, Anxiety, and Depression. Unfortunately, federal regulations lag behind the modern understanding of these conditions. Depending on the medication and how long ago it was prescribed, options vary.

The exam includes a drug test. Pilots must abide by what the federal government says is legal. There are no exemptions for state laws, thus Marijuana remains prohibited.

Additionally, there is a background check for criminal records, especially for DUI charges. Consult an expert if needed. **Under no circumstances should you lie about a criminal record.** You are better off being denied a medical certificate until you are eligible to reapply. Falsifying records will prohibit an applicant from ever getting a Medical Certificate.

The article [What to Expect From An FAA Medical Exam | FAA Safety Briefing](#) offers a brief description. It's a short read which does not cover every topic, but it's a good place to start.

For more information, the medical exams [Questions and Answers](#) page on the FAA's website is exceptional. A few to highlight include:

- [What is a medical certificate?](#)
- [How do I obtain a medical certificate?](#)
- [Who must hold a medical certificate?](#)
- [What class of medical certificate must I hold and how long is it valid?](#)
- [What medical standards must I meet in order to qualify for a medical certificate?](#)
- [What medical conditions does the FAA consider disqualifying?](#)
- [I have some medical problems and would like to learn whether I can be issued airman medical certification. Where can I get further information?](#)

When you are ready, here are instructions to [Get a Medical Certificate](#).

Aeronautical Knowledge Exam

Test Prep Software:

This guide provides you with the resources to learn the content. However, the FAA exam includes some tricky questions and confusing verbiage. To get a high score, most pilots get test-prep software to familiarize themselves with these questions. These are available through multiple companies. One of the best priced options is [Gleim Aviation](#)'s course for \$110.

For the aspiring pilot under the age of 18, there is a way to get the exceptional [Sporty's Pilot Shop Course & Private Pilot Test Prep](#) for free. The Experimental Aircraft Association has a [Young Eagle](#) program with volunteer pilots who take students on introductory flights without charge. After the flight, they will provide a logbook. The back cover includes a code for the Sporty's course, normally a \$250 value.

To take the exam, a student will need an endorsement from either a flight instructor or an approved test prep software. If the student wishes to take the written exam prior to flight training for the potential cost savings, the test prep software's endorsement is key.

In addition to Gleim and Sporty's, other reputable options for those wanting to shop and compare include: [King Schools](#), [Pilot Institute](#), & [ASA](#)

Exam Sign Up:

Step One: To take a written exam, a student must have an FAA Tracking Number (FTN). To get an FTN, a student must register through the [Integrated Airman Certification & Rating Application \(IACRA\)](#). If they already have an IACRA account from another certificate or rating, they do not need to register again - Just login and find the FTN on the top left.

Step Two: Once the student has an FTN, they can schedule their exam. (The exam fee will be paid at this step.) This is done through the [PSI Exams](#) website.

Step Three: The student will need to arrive at the testing center with the appropriate documentation. The [FAA Airman Knowledge Testing Matrix](#) describes these requirements. It also lists the three letter exam codes you will need to sign-up.

Good local testing centers are [McAir Aviation](#) in Broomfield and [Testpro](#) in Centennial.

Private Pilot Checkride Exam

The final step to obtaining one's Private Pilot Certification is to complete the Checkride Exam. This includes a scenario-based oral exam and practical demonstration of flying skills. This will evaluate knowledge, decision making skills, and ability to manage appropriate resources.

For a guide of what the examiner may ask and what flight maneuvers must be demonstrated, reference the appropriate [Airman Certification Standards \(ACS\)](#) document or [Practical Test Standards \(PTS\)](#) document. (The FAA is transitioning from the PTS system to the new ACS system. Each certification will have one or the other, never both simultaneously.)

For those flying airplanes: [Private Pilot - Airplane Airman Certification Standards](#)

For those flying gliders: [Private Pilot - Glider Practical Test Standards](#)

This guide is focused on fixed-wing training. For helicopters and other aircraft, there will be unique PTSs and ACSs for each.

Where to Buy Training Materials

To begin studying, a student needs a sectional chart plotter and an E6-B flight computer. Optionally, paper versions of all the FAA books are available. Once a student starts flying, they may purchase headsets, kneeboards, paper charts, and other tools.

[Sporty's Pilot Shop Home Page \(sportys.com\)](#) is a major online retailer.

If looking for a local option, visit The Pilot Shop at Centennial Airport for training materials, pilot supplies, and all manner of fun aviation merchandise. [7601 S Peoria St, Englewood, CO 80112](#)

Wings Over the Rockies Exploration of Flight also carries plotters, E6-Bs, and some books. Stock up when visiting a showcase or other event. [13005 Wings Way, Englewood, CO 80112](#)

Fight Training Scholarship Providers

National Programs:

[Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association](#)

[Experimental Aircraft Association](#)

[99s](#)

[Women in Aviation](#)

[Federal Aviation Administration](#)

State Programs:

[Wings Over the Rockies](#)

[Colorado Pilots Association](#)

[Colorado 99s](#)

[Colorado Aviation Business Association](#)