

# Frequently Asked Questions About Getting Your Private Pilot License



## **How quickly can I obtain my private pilot certificate?**

That depends on how often you can fly each week. Typically, if a student schedules 1-3 lessons each week, training can be completed in 4-8 months.

Whether you are an academic student, in the work force, or retired, our training program is structured toward you, the individual. There is no specific time limit for training completion and optimistically, flying 1-3 times per week (usually 2-hour blocks of time) is the best. However, we realize that this is not always possible, so we structure our training to meet your personal schedule. Generally, the program can be completed within 4-8 months.

## **How long does a lesson last?**

While most lessons are based on a 1.2 hour flight, they will take 2 hours + from start to finish because there's more to it than flying. There are pre and post-flight discussions, where you and your certificated flight instructor (CFI) talk about what you're going to do, how you did, what you did well, suggestions for improvement, and what preparation you'll need for your next lesson.

## **How many lessons per week should I schedule?**

If you fly 2-3 times per week your skill and memory retention are significantly higher. Students who can only fly on weekends may need a few more hours overall to finish their training. However, during summer months, the days are longer, thus allowing people who work during the day to fly later in the evenings.

## **How many lessons should I schedule at one time?**

Most students find it convenient to schedule 1-3 lessons in advance. This is especially important if there are only certain times of the week that you can fly. Also, students often have a "favorite" airplane they want to fly. Thus, "the early bird gets the worm."

## **How much "homework" there is per week outside of flying?**

There's about a 1:1 ratio with home studying and lessons; for example, scheduling 1-2 lessons per week will usually result in approximately 2-4 hours of flying and lessons, in which you can expect 2-4 hours of studying.

## **What happens during bad weather?**

During days with low visibility, low ceilings, or stormy weather, instructors will call their students if the lesson is cancelled. Pilot certificates generally require ground instruction. This can be accomplished on days when the weather is uncooperative.

## **After I get my private pilot certificate, can I rent an airplane on my own?**

Yes. After earning your private pilot certificate, you can rent the same airplane type without any additional instruction.

### **What if I want to rent an airplane other than the type I trained in?**

Upgrading to bigger and faster airplanes is easy. Schedule a “check-out” with an instructor, normally this takes 1-2 hours. This also allows you to have more flexibility since you are able to fly a variety of airplanes.

### **What are the Costs \$?**

Again this varies greatly with the individual. The more prior knowledge and home study, the less time you will spend in the aircraft and with the instructor. Individual dedication and learning abilities also have a great impact on the number of hours.

### **How do I Pay for the training?**

We prefer using a credit card, Visa, Master Card, Discover, American Express. We will charge the card weekly to cover the flying costs for that week. This is our preferred method.

Payment as you go is acceptable; however most people, (and North Air), usually prefer the student to deposit approximately \$ 500. in advance of training. Then keeping up with flying costs to keep a credit on account. This assures you the best prices, availability, and no hassles with paying for each lesson. Statements will be sent when credit balances fall under \$ 100.

### **Financing?**

Financing is now available through an outside company called Pilot Finance that specializes in exactly that. They will extend the payments for the flight and ground training over thirty six to sixty months. Interest rates are reasonable and are based on your credit rating. Applications are available at North Air. This must be pre authorized.

### **What Aircraft will I fly?**

North Air offers several aircraft for Rental and Instruction, or your own aircraft may be used.

Piper Cherokee PA-28-140 IFR, Two Kx155 digital Nav/Com with glide scope / obs, DME, ADF, Intercom, Tannis Heaters, 100Kts. Easy to fly, great instrument panel, warm and quiet.

Piper Tomahawk PA-38-118 VFR Narco equipped, Intercom, excellent visibility, great trainer.

### **What about Ground School?**

We now offer ground schools throughout the year. Typically it consists of 10 weeks of 2-1/2 hour evening sessions at the airport. We use the best video training systems available, Jeppesen Guided Flight Discovery and King Test Prep along with our own PowerPoint presentation. Then assisted by a “human” Certified Flight Instructor to answer questions, to encourage student interactions, and add provides additional comments and suggestions. The average class size is seven students.

### **How old do I have to be?**

Sixteen to solo and seventeen to acquire a private pilot license; however you can start flight training at a younger age.

### **What about a Recreational Pilot License?**

The costs and requirements for a Recreational Pilot License are similar to Private Pilots License, Therefore we feel is worth the couple extra dollars and hours to get the full Private Ticket. As the Recreational license has many limitations in comparison to the Private.

### **What are the Medical requirements?**

To solo or get your Private Pilot License you will need to schedule a visit with an Aviation Medical Examiner and pass a basic physical. He will issue your Student Pilot License and Medical, a third class medical will be valid for 24 months (36 Months if you are under 40). AME are available at Fergus Falls, Fargo Detroit Lakes and many others.

### **What about Computer Flight Simulators?**

We highly recommend using the Microsoft Flight Simulator or the Jeppesen Flight Pro IFR Simulator. These are very economical way to learn flight systems, navigation, and all related elements while getting the feel of varying conditions of flight. As they say "It's as real as it gets".

### **What is the best time of year to start?**

Any time that fits your schedule. Fall and winter work great to get started, everyone has an abundance of time to study, however the nice flying days are somewhat limited .

### **Why train in a rural airport like Perham, Detroit Lakes and Fergus Falls?**

There is minimal air traffic at rural airports. You will get more time flying and less time taxing and waiting for clearances. This also gives you more real world flying and crosswind experience. Then when you are ready for the tower controlled airport environment it is only a few minute flight away.

### **What comes first?**

Study, Study, Study, the greater understanding of basics before you jump in the airplane the more beneficial the time will be. Usually an introductory flight to get comfortable with the aircraft is advisable at the same time as you start your studies. We encourage students to spend some time with the textbooks and videos before starting the weekly flying lessons.

### **What should I do next?**

Call Dale today at 218-346-5110 to schedule an introductory flight and to acquire the Private Pilot training kit.

I am looking forward to seeing you soon!

**NORTH AIR, Inc.**  
**Perham / Detroit Lakes**  
[www.northair.net](http://www.northair.net)

**Dale J. Fehrenbach**  
Chief Flight Instructor,  
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# Aviation Websites



***NORTH AIR***                      [www.northair.net](http://www.northair.net)

***Federal Aviation Administration***  
FAA                                      [www.faa.gov](http://www.faa.gov)

***Minnesota Dept. of Aeronautics***  
MN DOT                                [www.dot.state.mn.us/aero/](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/aero/)

## ***Organizations***

AOPA                                      [www.aopa.org](http://www.aopa.org)  
Be A Pilot                                [www.beapilot.com](http://www.beapilot.com)  
EAA                                         [www.eaa.org](http://www.eaa.org)  
Flight Training                         [www.flighttraining.org](http://www.flighttraining.org)

## ***Weather***

DTN                                        [www.dtn.com/mndot/](http://www.dtn.com/mndot/)                      Password, Last Name & SSN

## ***Training***

Jeppesen Sanderson                 [www.jeppesen.com](http://www.jeppesen.com)  
King Schools                             [www.kingschools.com](http://www.kingschools.com)

## ***Commercial***

AV Web                                    [www.avweb.com](http://www.avweb.com)  
Landings Com                         [www.landings.com](http://www.landings.com)  
Trade A Plane                         [www.trade-a-plane.com](http://www.trade-a-plane.com)  
Sporty's Pilot Shop                   [www.sportys.com](http://www.sportys.com)  
Aircraft Spruce Co.                   [www.aircraftspruce.com](http://www.aircraftspruce.com)  
Piper Aircraft                          [www.piperaircraft.com](http://www.piperaircraft.com)  
Cessna Aircraft                         [www.cessna.com](http://www.cessna.com)

## ***Magazines***

AOPA Pilot                                [www.aopa.com](http://www.aopa.com)  
Plane & Pilot Magazine             [www.planeandpilot.com](http://www.planeandpilot.com)

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**North Air** is an authorized dealer for Jeppesen Sanderson Training Products, Sporty's training systems, King Schools programs. Contact Dale; we may have many of the items you may be looking for at a great price to boot.

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V.03.20.06