Academy of Model Aeronautics

AMA Guide for Introductory Pilot Instructor Selection Criteria
and Flight Proficiency Demonstration

Question: What is the most important decision any pilot can make?

Answer: When ***not*** to fly…..

Explanation: If the pilot isn't ready, if the equipment isn't ready, or if the conditions aren't right…….. *do not fly*!

These are good words to go by no matter what kind of airplanes you fly……full scale or models.

Are you an R/C instructor? How did you get the job? Were you asked by your club president? Were you the only one willing to do it? Do you like the prestige of being a club instructor? Are you the best instructor in your club?

When successfully introducing newcomers to the hobby/sport of aeromodeling or helping intermediate pilots improve their skill level there are various items that need to be considered. Choosing an effective, efficient and experienced instructor is very important.

People vary greatly on their ideas of what makes a good instructor. Some think that good instructors are born and possess a kind of charismatic presence that results in highly motivated learners. This view tends to result in instructors that are more likely to credit their own performance as the key to learning instead of the ability of the learner.

Some believe that instructional ability is something acquired, involving training, discipline, and a good deal of patience. They strive for instructional excellence, and assess their effectiveness by how well the learner performs.

Most agree, however, that good instructors share a love for instructing and learning, and that a good instructor must be a learner, and must possess strong motives and a positive attitude toward learning.

There is a tie between effective instruction and effective learning, but instructors only enhance learning. They set up a situation that provides the student with the opportunity to learn. Effective instructors are often those who look for ways of matching individual learning styles to their own instructional style.

The measurement of an instructor should not be how few hours, or how few flights it took for their student to solo, but instead, what skills, what presence of mind, and what judgment that student can demonstrate.

So what things constitute a good instructor?

Besides being a qualified pilot, there are other important attributes that need to be considered. In 1998 the AMA held three Introductory Pilot Program meetings at different trade shows. One of the main subjects discussed was the definition of a good instructor. The following lists the various traits that are important in choosing an individual:

> ➢ Good communicator
> ➢ Patience and even temperament
> ➢ Reliability
> ➢ Consistency
> ➢ Dedication
> ➢ Good teaching skills
> ➢ Good team player
> ➢ Thorough knowledge of equipment
> ➢ Thorough understanding of safety issues
> ➢ Good preflight skills
> ➢ Good piloting skills
> ➢ Ability to judge piloting skills
> ➢ Good at balanced praise and criticism

This list is not all inclusive, but it is a start.

Remember, the best pilot can be the worst instructor if he/she doesn't have good people skills! But good people skills will not do any good if the instructor is not qualified and experienced enough in flying.

To assist you in establishing your Introductory Pilot Instructor has a good level of flight proficiency, we have created a list you can use as a recommended outline. We strongly encourage that any individual who is assigned as an instructor be able to successfully perform the following flight proficiency demonstration.

For more information on the Introductor Pilot Program visit http://www.modelaircraft.org/PDF-files/917.pdf or contact AMA at (765) 287-1256, ext. 299 or email intropilot@modelaircraft.org

**FLIGHT PROFICIENCY DEMONSTRATION
FOR INTRODUCTORY PILOTS**

1. **Preflight**
   - Demonstrate knowledge of aircraft systems and perform preventive maintenance inspection on aircraft. ☐

2. **Engine Start**
   - Demonstrate knowledge of ground support equipment and perform a safe engine start. ☐

3. **Take-off**
   - Perform take-off while maintaining heading (no more than two wingspans from runway centerline) ☐
   - Perform a smooth rotation ☐
   - Perform a controlled transition to level flight at predetermined altitude and heading ☐

4. **Rectangular Pattern (at altitude)**
   - Perform rectangular pattern while:
     - Maintaining constant altitude ☐
     - Compensating for drift ☐

5. **Climbing and Descending Turns**
   - Perform climbing and descending turns while:
     - Maintaining smoothness of control ☐
     - Compensating for drift ☐
     - Controlling airspeed ☐

6. **Horizontal Figure 8 (from both directions)**
   - Perform horizontal Figure 8 while:
     - Maintaining constant altitude ☐
     - Compensating for drift ☐
     - Maintaining symmetrical circles ☐

7. **Stall Recovery (at altitude)**
   - Perform power-on stall & recovery (at safe altitude) ☐
   - Perform power-off stall & recovery (at safe altitude) ☐

8. **Steep Turns (bank angle greater than 50 degrees)**
   - Perform (3 each direction) high G-turns while:
     - Maintaining constant altitude ☐
     - Compensating for drift ☐

9. **Loops**
    - Perform 3 consecutive loops while:
      - Maintaining heading ☐
      - Compensating for drift ☐
      - Maintaining symmetrical circles ☐

10. **Missed Approaches**
    - Perform (3 missed) approaches while:
      - Maintaining directional control of aircraft at low airspeed ☐
      - Transitioning to flight configuration ☐

11. **Touch & Goes**
    - Perform 3 touch & goes in both left and right hand pattern (6 total) while:
      - Maintaining heading (no more than two wingspans from centerline) ☐
      - Landing within a 10-meter long predetermined touch down zone ☐
      - Transitioning smoothly to take-off configuration ☐

12. **Full Stop Landing**
    - Perform full stop landing while:
      - Maintaining airspeed control ☐
      - Maintaining heading (no more than two wingspans from centerline) ☐
      - Landing within a 10-meter long predetermined touch down zone ☐
      - Maintaining centerline heading during roll-out ☐

13. **Simulated Deadstick Landing**
    - Perform simulated deadstick landing—when called for by Contest Director (power stays at idle during maneuver)
      - Maintaining airspeed control ☐
      - Maintaining heading (no more than two wingspans from centerline) ☐
      - Maintaining centerline heading during roll-out ☐