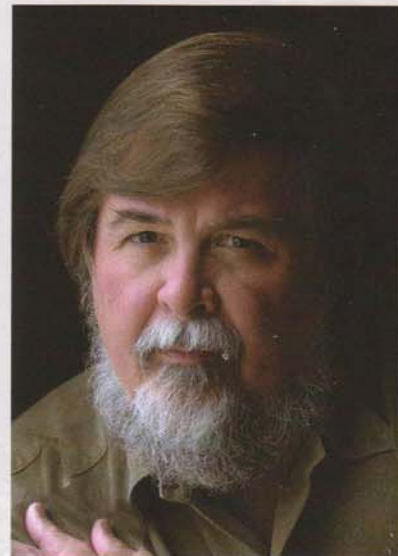




Make Every Flight a Training Flight



Every flight is a great chance to just get up above it all and enjoy the miracle of floating around in the sky. There is certainly nothing wrong with flying for the sheer joy of it, but if you want to be a better pilot, make every flight a chance to sharpen your skills!

Here are my suggestions: Make a list of skills that you want to perfect and keep the list where you can glance at it during flight. On every flight work on some things that you know you could be doing better. To the right is my list, maybe it will ring some bells.

Be proactive about learning all you can about being a better pilot. Even though Part 103 does not require any pilot certificate, go through as much of the educational material as you can in the Sport Pilot or Private Pilot courses. Knowing more about the rules and regulations can only make you a better pilot!

Join a flying club and learn from other pilots. Many clubs hold engine maintenance seminars, bring in guest speakers, and share their own expertise with one another.

This is a great way to learn from other folks that love flying, just like you.

Read some good instructional books or watch some DVD's on flying. I've found dealers like Sporty's Pilot Shop have some great titles that are even good for Part 103 Pilots. After all, landing an airplane is landing an airplane, no matter what size it is! I picked up some great tips from one of their downloadable programs on improving your landings and takeoffs.

When I did my first book *America From 500 Feet*

1. Practice my turns onto final and set up for a good glide angle to the touch down point.
2. Work on my landing approach and practice stretching out the last part of the glide, smoothly setting down.
3. While flying away from the airport follow roads and rivers to make precise turns, trying to stay directly over them.
4. Practice throttle control and observe the climb and descending rate at different throttle settings.
5. Try to make smooth turns in near perfect circles without losing altitude.
6. Listen carefully to the engine to learn how it sounds at critical phases during take off, landing, and at cruise.
7. When traffic permits do low constant altitude flights down the runway, trying to maintain exact position above the runway and hold it steady the length of the runway.
8. Master engine off approaches all the way to touch down.
9. Get more familiar with my GPS and use it effectively while maintaining good VFR navigation techniques as well.
10. Carefully plan and execute cross-country flights, stretching out a little more as you build confidence.