

BEFORE EVERY FLIGHT

In private pilot ground school you learned about actions that every pilot must take before commencing a flight, these actions include items listed in [FAR 91.103](#). These actions are not only legally required but also help you to identify, analyze and reduce risks and are a solid foundation for your own flight planning procedures.

These actions are easily summed up in the acronym NWKRAFT. *It is my expectation that students come prepared for every lesson with this information and with an opinion (or questions) of the analysis.* On the next page I've created an enhanced and easy to use NWKRAFT checklist to help you organize and make this a part of your pre-flight planning.

Using this checklist is a good start to every flight and yet it doesn't cover everything. For example, you checked runway lengths but what about the Airport Facilities Directory for obstacles and runway features such as runway slope, power lines, etc. for an airport you've never flown to. Get to know it! Love it/hate it! Make the checklist yours!

§ 91.103 Preflight action.

Each pilot in command shall, before beginning a flight, become familiar with all available information concerning that flight. This information must include—

- (a) For a flight under IFR or a flight not in the vicinity of an airport, weather reports and forecasts, fuel requirements, alternatives available if the planned flight cannot be completed, and any known traffic delays of which the pilot in command has been advised by ATC;
- (b) For any flight, runway lengths at airports of intended use, and the following takeoff and landing distance information:
 - (1) For civil aircraft for which an approved Airplane or Rotorcraft Flight Manual containing takeoff and landing distance data is required, the takeoff and landing distance data contained therein; and
 - (2) For civil aircraft other than those specified in [paragraph \(b\)\(1\)](#) of this section, other reliable information appropriate to the aircraft, relating to aircraft performance under expected values of airport elevation and runway slope, aircraft gross weight, and wind and temperature.

NWKRAFT

☐ **NOTAMS**

I've read and understand the NOTAMS at my departure, route and destination

☐ **WEATHER**

I've checked the weather at my departure, along my route, destination and alternates

☐ **WEIGHT AND BALANCE**

I've calculated the plane's weight and balance and it is within limits

☐ **KNOWN ATC DELAYS**

I've checked the [FAA's Flight Delay Information](#) site for flight impacts

☐ **RUNWAY LENGTHS**

I've checked runway lengths at my departure, alternates and destination

☐ **ALTERNATES**

I've identified alternates for my destination and along my route

☐ **FUEL**

I've calculated my fuel needed to meet my personal minimums (and the FAA's)

☐ **TFR**

I've checked my route of flight for Temporary Flight Restrictions because that would be an embarrassing and life altering mistake I am not going to make

☐ **TAKEOFF AND LANDING DISTANCES**

I've calculated my takeoff and landing distances and can safely takeoff and land at my departure, alternates and destination

GAV1ATES

It is also the Pilot in Command's responsibility to determine that the aircraft is in a condition for safe flight. This duty can be accomplished using the acronym:

G - GPS up to date (required for IFR flight)

A - Annual inspection within 12 calendar months

V - VOR check every 30 days (required for IFR flight)

1 - 100 hour inspection if plane is for hire (yes, training aircraft are for hire)

A - Airworthiness Directives complied with

T - Transponder (check / verified every 24 months)

E - Emergency Locator Transponder (checked / certified every 12 months)

S - Static system (required for IFR flight, checked and verified every 24 months)