

Ultralight and Sport Pilots of America

Pilot Solo and Aircraft Requirements



One of the main benefits of being associated with the Ultralight and Sport Pilots of America organization is that we are a group that enjoys flying the lighter side of aviation with like-minded individuals. As an organization, we also share the responsibility of operating with safety in mind. As part of that mindset, the club has adopted some safety guidelines and practices that will assist in keeping ourselves and our aircraft safe, minimizing the inherent risks that are involved with aviation.

Qualified Club Checkperson for Purposes of Allowing Solo Flights

The club requests that each member be checked out by qualified club checkpersons prior to performing solo flights to ensure they are familiar with flying within the Perris Valley Ultralight Airpark and Perris Valley Airport and that the person requesting a checkout has adequate training and/or authorizations to solo. A qualified club checkperson is defined as an experienced pilot of at least 50 or more hours in an aircraft that is similar in type to the person's aircraft that is to be checked out, who has flown at the airpark for at least one year, and is thoroughly familiar with flight operations and radio communications in the surrounding area. The qualified club checkperson does not replace the function of a flight instructor but serves only as an additional club safety measure to check if the requesting member has some level of flight proficiency and awareness of flying at the airpark before they embark on doing so. The intent of the safety measure is to help insure pilots are ready to take to the air rather than attempting to do so without any requisite training and/or authorizations.

Aircraft & Pilot Categories

There are two broad categories the club caters and supports: Ultralight and Light Sport Aviation. Ultralights are managed through Part 103 of the FAA's Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR). Ultralights are viewed as vehicles and not aircraft and a formal FAA pilot's certificate is not required, although training is highly recommended. Nor is the ultralight vehicle required to be registered through the FAA or have any markings associated with registration.

Ultralight Vehicles

The following defines the basics of what an ultralight vehicle operating under FAR Part 103 is:

1. Single place (single occupant)
2. Weighs less than 254 lbs empty weight, excluding floats or safety devices (ie: parachutes), if powered. If unpowered, then the weight limit is less than 155 lbs.
3. Fuel Capacity does not exceed 5 US gallons.
4. Cannot exceed 55 knots calibrated airspeed in full powered level flight
5. Cannot exceed 24 knots calibrated airspeed in full power-off stall speed

Light Sport Aircraft

On the other hand, Light Sport aviation is regulated by the FAA and does require at least a sport pilot certificate (or student pilot certificate, if in training) and the aircraft does require formal registration. Light sport aviation operates under Part 61, specifically Subpart J where the pilot at a minimum needs to possess a sport pilot certificate.

The following defines the basics of what a light sport aircraft operating under FAR Part 61 is:

1. Requires a minimum of sport pilot certificate to fly (student pilot certificate, if in training).
2. Can fly with a passenger (with MOSIAC, sport pilots can fly a 4 seat aircraft but only with one passenger).
3. Cannot fly higher than 10,000 feet AGL unless terrain is above that, in which case you can fly 2,000 feet AGL above the terrain.
4. Cannot fly at night (with MOSIAC, sport pilots can fly at night after earning an endorsement)
5. Can only operate aircraft with a fixed landing gear.
6. Can only operate aircraft with a fixed ground adjustable propeller.
7. Can only operate aircraft with total empty weight of 1320 lbs
8. Can only operate aircraft with total calibrated speed of 120 knots.

Special extensions by the FAA have been provided by MOSIAC (Modernization of Special Airworthiness Certificate) which is effective October 22, 2025, allows sport pilots to have more flight privileges and operate more complex aircraft, provided they have earned endorsements to cover specific privileges. These are identified as follows:

1. Can fly aircraft with 4 seats however you are still limited to flying with only one passenger.
2. Can fly aircraft at night provided you have earned the endorsement for that.
3. Can fly aircraft with retractable landing gear provided you have earned the endorsement for that.
4. Can fly aircraft with in-flight controllable-pitch propellers provided you have earned the endorsement for that.
5. Can fly aircraft with electric, hybrid, or turbocharged propulsion systems.
6. Maximum empty weight limit of 1320 lbs has been eliminated and replaced with a limitation that aircraft cannot exceed 59 knots flaps fully down (VS0) or 61 knots flaps up (VS1).
7. Can fly aircraft up to 250 calibrated knots.

Club Solo Requirements – Ultralight

The following outlines the pilot requirements the club has in order to instill safety and proper guidance in operating an ultralight vehicle at the Airpark:

Pilot Readiness for Solo

Pilot's training records must be checked out by at least a checkperson from the club.

1. Pilot must show or provide a set of training records or experience in type of aircraft
2. Is pilot capable of performing landings on relatively short runways? (ie: 800 feet or less).
3. Has pilot been inflight with other qualified club checkpersons and have demonstrated adequate landing procedures.
4. Is the pilot aware of and demonstrated the proper radio communication procedures and frequencies for operating within Perris Valley Ultralight Airpark and Perris Valley Airport?
5. Is the pilot aware of the basic standard operating procedures/checklists for the vehicle?
 - a. Preflight Checklist
 - b. Run-up Procedures
 - c. Take-off Checklist
 - d. In-Flight Emergency Checklists
 - e. Before Landing Checklists

Ultralight Vehicle Readiness

The ultralight vehicle must be checked out by a qualified checkperson from the club who are familiar with similar type.

1. Perform a thorough pre-flight, preferably with a written checklist.
2. Check control and wing surfaces for wear and tear and resistance to puncture test.
3. Perform an engine run-up to check for adequate idle RPM speed along with run-up RPM speed. There should be no hesitations or misfires.

Club Solo Requirements – Light Sport

The following outlines the pilot requirements the club has in order to instill safety and proper guidance in operating a light sport category aircraft at the Airpark or Airport:

Pilot Readiness for Solo

Pilot's training records must be checked out by a qualified checkperson of the club.

1. Pilot must show basic understanding of ground school topics (Part 103 Ultralight Vehicles or FAR 91 General Operating and Flight Rules)
2. Pilot must show proof of solo endorsement by a certified flight instructor in logbook for the type of aircraft to be flown.
3. Is pilot capable of performing landings on relatively short runways? (ie: 800 feet or less).
4. Is the pilot aware of and demonstrated the proper radio communication procedures and frequencies for operating within Perris Valley Ultralight Airpark and Perris Valley Airport?
5. Is the pilot aware of the basic standard operating procedures/checklists for the vehicle?
 - a. Preflight Checklist
 - b. Run-up Procedures
 - c. Take-off Checklist
 - d. In-Flight Emergency Checklists
 - e. Before Landing Checklists
 - f. Understands the stall speeds with and without flaps or flaperons, if equipped?

Aircraft Readiness

1. Present the qualified club checkperson with logbook entries showing the last annual condition inspection or other evidence of similar inspection.
2. Any missing or loose bolts and nuts? Does all castlenuts have cotter pins/safety wire?
3. Any visible tears that are a concern?
4. Are there any fabric surfaces that will not pass a punch test?
5. Any apparent corrosion issues or structural weaknesses?
6. How long has the (auto) fuel been sitting in the tanks to determine its freshness?
7. If the engine has been sitting, when was the carburetor and related fuel components been overhauled and/or cleaned?
8. If the engine is new or has been recently been overhauled, has it undergone its break-in procedure?
9. Upon engine run-up, is the engine running smoothly without hesitations and/or misfires, and operating in the proper RPM ranges?