



HeliSat, LLC
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The Experience of Learning to Fly

Learning a New Skill

Flying a helicopter can prove to be the most challenging and rewarding aspect of becoming a pilot, especially the thrill of **learning to hover!** Let's face it, it's the real reason most of us want to become pilots! But learning to fly a helicopter requires much more than just mastering the machine; it requires a dedicated individual willing to learn and challenge themselves in new ways.

A **new helicopter student** has much to conquer. Aviation requires you to learn a wealth of information that you have probably never been exposed to in any of your previous schooling. Like a small child first learning their ABC's, aviation can seem a bit daunting at first. New concepts and ideas topped with exhilarating experiences and first time feelings may seem a bit overwhelming, but rest assured, with help from dedicated and experienced instructors the process will become second nature.

It's Not Just Flying

When you start your helicopter flight training, your studies introduce and focus on various topics that a pilot must ultimately have familiarity with. Throughout the process, your instructor is dedicated to helping you expand your knowledge and demonstrate how each new experience applies to the life of a pilot.

You are going to learn things and do things you probably never thought in your wildest dreams you would experience. Here is a partial list of some of the academic fields of study you will encounter on your journey to becoming a pilot:

- Meteorology
- Aerodynamics
- Physiology
- Psychology
- Environmental and Sociological Studies
- Law
- Mechanical Theory
- Physics
- Math
- History
- Communication Studies
- Etc.

New Sense of Responsibility

Becoming a new helicopter pilot can be exciting and rewarding. While studying, you look forward to the first time you will be able to share your experiences with friends and family, fly to new places, see new scenery and explore the open skies. However, these privileges do come with a great responsibility. Your friends and family will be passengers in an aircraft that is legally under your control. There is an implicit trust expressed between the pilot and



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passengers when boarding an aircraft. You are now that pilot and they trust that you are trained to the highest standards and that your abilities are nothing short of professional while keeping them safe.

Being that it is your responsibility to provide passengers with a safe and enjoyable flight, your training and approach to safety should be taken seriously from your first day as a student. This can prove difficult for a new helicopter pilot that is just learning and comprehending how to control the aircraft. A dedicated student will snatch up the opportunity to strive for performance excellence, guidance and safety.

Your Pilot Certificate Never Expires

Unlike a driver's license, your pilot certificate never expires. To maintain your certificate the FAA specifies a pilot must maintain "currency," meaning a pilot's training does not stop at the issuance of their certificate. This provision encourages pilots to continue learning, studying and to maintain proper proficiency.

One of the best ways to sharpen your abilities and to master new skills is to energize your enthusiasm of flight. Helicopter pilots can do this by seeking additional training or upgrading their ratings. This philosophy allows a constant honing of your abilities while reinforcing safe flying habits.

It Takes Time

In the early days of learning to fly a helicopter, there was a common misconception that the fewer hours it took to "solo," or fly the aircraft without an instructor, was indicative of how "good" that pilot was. Put bluntly, the fewer the hours the better the pilot. Fortunately for today's pilots, the "race to solo" is becoming a paradigm of the past. Some helicopter flight schools would actually promote that idea with promises for training from start to finish virtually 'overnight.' Learning to fly a helicopter is a complex task and each student has a different learning style and pace that must be accounted for. If you happen to need a little more time to master some aspect of helicopter flight then the best thing to do extend the amount of time spent in the learning process.

Sometimes new students can feel discouraged and overwhelmed by all the information and skills they are getting through their helicopter training. Some may feel their training is taking too long while others may feel achieving their goal is out of reach. Weather can sometimes seem like it is working against you. Unfavorable weather conditions can make planning difficult for pilots who can only fly one day during the week. Many pilots in training work full-time jobs, have a family, or have other circumstances that can take the place of study time.

So what should you do if you feel discouraged? Talk to your instructor or other helicopter pilots in the industry. Post pictures of your favorite helicopter randomly through-out your office and home. Ask your instructor to take you to different aviation companies to see how they operate. Most helicopter pilots are dedicated individuals with a huge passion for flying and they went through the same highs and lows as you. Go ahead and ask them how they made it through. Not surprisingly, almost every helicopter pilot has a story to tell!



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Most of all, never give up. You are learning a skill that requires an extensive array of knowledge, time and dedication.

A New Sense of Belonging

The aviation industry is a small community with large culture. Despite any expertise level, number of flight hours logged, aircraft being flown or job description, all helicopter pilots within the aviation community share an immeasurable passion for flying. Pilots, instructors, mechanics, students, even prospective students or just aviation enthusiasts are all part of this kinship.

New helicopter students will find themselves immersed in aviation culture and share in a sense of community and belonging. Numerous organizations such as the Helicopter Association International (HAI), Women in Aviation, Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), The Greater St. Louis Helicopter Association and countless more provide the aviation community with avenues to connect, learn, share experiences and meet new friends.

Learning to fly a helicopter is the thrill of a lifetime and a proud accomplishment.

So welcome! There is a lot to tackle in the near future, but we're here to help!