

# Pilot Proficiency Training



A pilot can maintain and improve performance by gaining familiarity with and obtaining proficiency training in each of the precursors, or contributing factors, to loss of control accidents.

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- There are five principle reasons why loss of control accidents occur in general aviation:
- 1. **Disorientation** can occur when continuing a VFR flight (intentionally or inadvertently) into IMC.
  - ◇ More than 90% of GA accidents that occur in this phase of flight are **FATAL!!**
- 2. Sometimes accidents occur when there is a **distraction** by something on the ground or in the airplane. The term “moose stall” is familiar to Alaskan pilots, and more than a few aviators have lost control while maneuvering for a better view of the moose on the ground (or other interesting stuff).

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- 3. An **inappropriate response to an emergency** event or “startle response” can delay or inhibit the pilot’s reaction to hazards that occur suddenly. Poor execution of the “improbable turn” has caused many loss of control accidents.
- 4. Rusty or the **lack of aircraft handling skills** has contributed to loss of control, particularly in crosswind operations.
- 5. **Inadequate risk management** has led many pilots into situations where they lacked the skill to cope with the hazard.

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- So what do we do about it? How do we prevent “Them” from becoming “Us”?
- Manage Your Training Environment
  - ◇ That trip you make for your favorite \$100 hamburger is familiar and we’ve done it a 1000 times. – This is not the ideal proficiency flight
  - ◇ Better – practice maneuvers you don’t perform all the time:
    - ❖ Stalls, Slow Flight, Ground Reference Maneuvers, Instrument Flying.
    - ❖ Solo flight is useful – you may want to take a coach along to critique and sharpen your skills. (CFIs can make good coaches, pick one that will push you, but not make you uncomfortable or one that aggravates you – you won’t progress much with someone that you don’t gel with.)

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- Build a Pilot Performance Baseline – think personal minimums
  - ◇ This is your personal, documented, demonstration of performance
  - ◇ Document your performance at least once a year with an instructor
  - ◇ Pick a day when you can experience actual crosswinds, and/or pick a destination you don't go to all the time – maybe a shorter or narrower field.



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## ➤ Expand Your Horizons

- ◇ Try something new – twin engines, turbines, instrument training, seaplane, tailwheel, LSA, or a different airframe than you usually fly.
- ◇ Train in a different operational environment – if you're used to small non-towered airports, venture into those Class D and C airports or vice versa. Don't talk to ATC much, (shame on you) get some flight following and work on your communication skills.

➤ And remember, “Practice does not make Perfect” only  
“Perfect practice makes Perfect”

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## ➤ Get your WINGS!

- ◇ FAA's pilot proficiency program is an excellent way to document training – knowledge and flight experience
- ◇ Earn a WINGS basic, advanced, or master level and receive credit for a flight review



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➤ Questions?

➤ Comments?

