

PRE-FLIGHT INSPECTIONS

INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS



It is the pilot's responsibility to ensure that the airplane to be flown is airworthy. This is done with the pre-flight inspection. The key to a good pre-flight inspection is understanding what is being checked and why it is being checked. Pilots must know what is normal and what is unusual.

Inadequate pre-flight inspections are due to either inadequate training or complacency. After a while, some pilots fall into the trap of considering the pre-flight inspection as a waste of time. This view would most likely change if they experienced problems in flight that could have been detected on the ground. That's exactly the purpose of the pre-flight inspections - to leave potential problems on the ground.

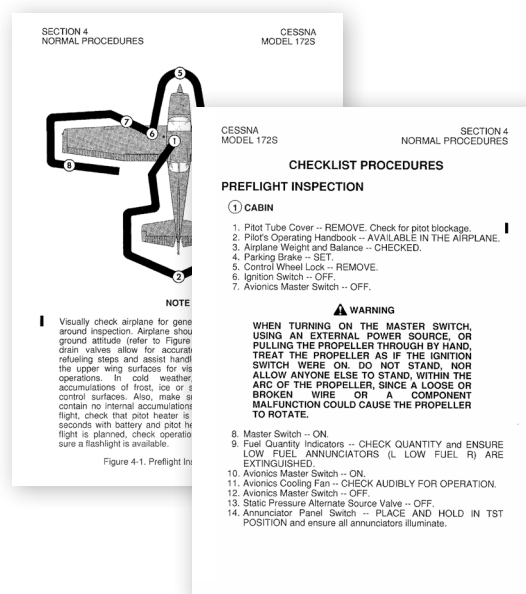
Regularly there are accidents that could have been prevented with a careful pre-flight inspection. Therefore, the Icelandic Transport Authority would like to provide the following recommendations and information to pilots.

FOLLOW CHECKLISTS

Aircraft manuals provide a checklist that is necessary to follow. When doing a pre-flight inspection it is good practice to have the checklist on hand, or to read over it after the pre-flight to make sure nothing is missed.

SLOW IT DOWN

It is important to take your time performing a pre-flight inspection. Being in a hurry can make important things go unnoticed. The same goes for any kind of disruption. As with many other things in flying, it is always best to do things in the same order to reduce the chances of something being forgotten. If a pilot is disturbed in the middle of a pre-flight inspection, it is likely that the pre-flight will not be resumed at the same item or even not completed.



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GUST LOCKS

Gust locks are used on airplanes to prevent damage to the control surfaces or control linkages when the aircraft is parked in windy weather. The gust locks can be either internal, a device which is attached to the yoke of an aircraft and prevents the control surfaces from moving; or external, a device which is attached to the control surface itself. It is not recommended to use seat belts as gust locks, but if this is unavoidable it is important that it is done appropriately and that pilots are aware of the procedure.



Whether the gust lock is on the inside or outside the aircraft, there shall in all cases be a prominent colored flag or a sign indicating that the lock is present and must be removed before flight. In most checklists, removing the gust locks is one of the first steps of a pre-flight inspection.

Last but not least, it is important to do a flight control check before each take-off. The flight controls must be fully moved to their stops and it must be visually checked that the controls surfaces move correctly in relation to the flight controls before take-off.

