

## **Finding and Instructor Checklist**

Okay, remember the goal of finding a flight school or instructor is ultimately to find an *instructor*. You will want to weigh everything together and then find the best solution. Start planning ahead; don't just find the school with the coolest airplane and then decide to fly with them. You are looking for the person who is going to be in the cockpit with you for all your flight training. Remember that you don't want to switch instructors, so take a little time to look at all your options. I have outlined all the steps you should take. Plan at least a month or two before you start up. You can probably get this done more quickly, but plan. Like I said before, if you plan this out, you will end up getting your private pilot certificate much faster and in the most cost-effective way.

### **The Things You Want To Avoid During Your Training**

The main reasons people end up spending a lot more money and time than they should are listed below:

1. Not planning and saving the actual amount you are going to spend on your training. Go through my cost estimate and plug your own numbers into it. Then you may want to add \$1,000 to \$1,500, just in case. I have some extra fields in my spreadsheet with five hours dual instruction and five hours solo flying.
2. Starting and stopping: This will kill you. Don't plan any vacations, long weekends, or anything else that can get in the way of your training. When you start, you want to commit and then get it done as quickly as possible.
3. Switching schools or instructors: This will kill you also if you don't do it early. Plan ahead and make sure you have the right school or instructor, and this won't happen.
4. Starting without your medical: This could cost you more than \$2,000 if there's something wrong with you. Make sure you have this all taken care of before you start flying.
5. Getting stuck during your training: This usually happens during your landing lessons. If you find yourself doing touch-and-go after touch-and-go lesson, tell your instructor you want to move forward. I have had many students who didn't solo until the cross-country phase of training. I constantly try and keep the student moving forward. I know you are going to get it; it is just a matter of time.

## Steps to Finding the Right Flight Instructor

1. Go to all the flight schools that you are interested in, get a feel for the school, and talk to at least two instructors there.
2. Look for flying clubs on your airport. Find the instructors who work with them.
3. If you are interested in purchasing your own aircraft, start looking around.
4. Go to local AOPA, EAA, and Civil Air Patrol meetings and ask who the best instructors are. You will also want to find pilots who recently got their certificate to talk to them.
5. Start interviewing instructors you are interested in. Ask questions:
  - a. How long have you been instructing?
  - b. How much instructing experience do you have?
  - c. Why are you instructing?
  - d. What are your goals in the next 3-6 months (during your flight training period—make sure they are not going to leave you hanging halfway through your training.)
6. Go for an intro flight or two with the instructors and schools that are on your list.
7. Decide on your top two instructors, and then meet up with them again.
8. When your budget and schedule allow you to complete your training in the quickest time possible, pick your top instructor, and then start your training.

Remember that if you plan correctly, you will be able to use that extra money you planned on spending for fun flights after you have your certificate.

You may want to look on eBay for deals on books and headsets.