



WINGS – The FAA’s Pilot Proficiency Program  
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Last month we introduced you to the FAA’s Safety.gov web site and the resources you can find on that site to aid in making soaring a life-long learning activity. In July we discussed how the FAA’s WINGS program provides an alternate means of compliance for completing a Flight Review. This month we’ll put these pieces together and discuss exactly how you can obtain a WINGS Phase, thus satisfying your Flight Review requirements.

The FAA guidance on using the WINGS program consists of 1) Advisory Circular 61.91J WINGS – Pilot Proficiency Program<sup>1</sup> (published on February 16, 2011) which provides the basic information on the program. 2) The WINGS Pilot Proficiency Program User’s Guide<sup>2</sup> (published November 1, 2011) which provides more instructions and details on how to participate in the program.

Both documents state that All pilots, including student pilots, may participate in the WINGS program. They go on to state that the program is built on an analysis of accident causal factors with knowledge (ground) and flight activities designed to help pilots identify and mitigate those causal factors.

The WINGS program is built around a series of Phases. To complete a phase a pilot must complete 3 knowledge and 3 flight activities within a 12-month period. Knowledge activities may include on-line courses, seminars, or webinars. Click on the “Activities, Courses, Seminars, & Webinars” tab and then use the search function to find courses or activities of interest. Many clubs hold annual safety seminars that can be turned into a WINGS seminar. Talk to your local FAA’s Team representative to find out how to make that happen!

Flight activities extract tasks from the appropriate Practical Test Standard (PTS) or Airman Certification Standards (ACS) document. Each activity consists of several specific PTS/ACS tasks in which you demonstrate that you meet those tasks proficiency standards. There is no minimum flight time associated a Flight activity, just a demonstration of your proficiency. You can complete all 3 Flight activities with a single instructor or with multiple different instructors. You can also spread these flights out over several months or complete multiple activities on a single flight. Note that all glider Flight activity names are prefaced with the “G-” code, making it easier to search for glider specific ones.

There are 3 levels of WINGS (Basic, Advanced, and Master). You can earn a phase in any level, but you must have earned a basic level within the previous 12 months to earn one or more phases at the Advanced or Master level.

In addition to these 3 levels, each level contains 2 or 3 topic areas for both the knowledge and flight activities. You MUST complete 1 knowledge and 1 flight activity in each of the 3 topic areas at the Basic level (i.e., 1@Topic 1, 1@Topic 2, and 1@Topic 3). For phases at the Advanced or Master level you MUST complete 1 knowledge and 1 flight activity in the topic 1 area and 2 knowledge and 2 flight activities in the topic 2 area. Failure to complete knowledge or flight activities in each of the required topic areas is the main reason for not completing a WINGS Phase. (i.e. completing 1@Topic 1 knowledge activity and 2@Topic 3 knowledge activities will not satisfy the knowledge requirements for a Basic level WINGS phase).

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1 [https://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Advisory\\_Circular/AC%2061-91J.pdf](https://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Advisory_Circular/AC%2061-91J.pdf)

2 [https://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Advisory\\_Circular/AC%2061-91J.pdf](https://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Advisory_Circular/AC%2061-91J.pdf)

Topics<sup>3</sup> are general areas of knowledge or pilot skills that map back to accident causal factors. Topic areas at the Basic level cover the following primary accident causal factors.

- Knowledge Topic 1 – Aeronautical Decision Making, including Runway Safety issues
- Knowledge Topic 2 – Performance and Limitations, including Loss of Control issues
- Knowledge Topic 3 – Pre-flight Planning, Risk Management, Fuel Management
- Flight Topic 1 – Takeoffs and Landings
- Flight Topic 2 – Positive Aircraft Control, including Loss of Control issues
- Flight Topic 3 – Basic Flying Skills

Click on the Additional WINGS Information button on your “My WINGS” page to get a complete list of topic areas that may be covered when working on an Advanced or Master WINGS phase. The following table shows the current list of Flight activities that can be accomplished in a glider.

<b>Student, Recreational, Private, Commercial, ATP</b>				
<b>Activity Name</b>	<b>Activity Number</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Advanced</b>	<b>Master</b>
G-Takeoffs, Launches, Landings, Slips	A070405-134	1	1	
G-Takeoffs, Launches, Landings, Downwind Landings	A070405-135	1		1
G-Takeoffs, Launches, Landings, Slips	A070405-25	1		
G-Slow Flight, Stall, Soaring, Steep Turns	A070405-26	2		
G-Steep Turns, Steep Spiral, Chandelles, Lazy Eights	FWI-ADV/MSTR Perf. Man. 1	3		1
G-Air Work	A100125-32	3		
G-Ground and Takeoff Tasks	A100125-31	3		
G-Air Work, Steep Turns, Stall Recognition	A070405-136		2	
G-Assembly, Towing, Securing	A100126-05		2	
G-Engine Operation, Taxing, Downwind Landing, Speed-to-Fly	A100126-03		2	
G-Soaring, Glides, Headings, Off-Airport Landing	A100126-07		2	
G-Starting, Taxiing, Engine Shutdown in Flight, Speed-to Fly	A100126-06		2	
G-Air and Ground Tasks, Thermal Soaring	A100126-90			2
G-Air Work, Ridge and Slope Soaring, Steep Turns	A070405-137			2
G-Assembly, Air/Ground Tasks, Slack Line, Boxing, Release	A100126-89			2
G-Wave Soaring, Headings, Landing and Securing	A100126-91			2

As you can see, to accomplish a Basic WINGS phase using just a glider, all pilots must complete activity “A070405-26” (Basic Topic 2) while then choosing from any of the 3 topic 1 and 3 topic 3

<sup>3</sup> AC 61.91J is silent on the issue of Topic areas, the User Guide also fails to mention Topic areas instead calling the Knowledge/Flight 1, Knowledge/Flight 2, Knowledge/Flight 3 activities.

Flight activities. To complete a glider specific Master level phase Flight activity “A070405-134” is required with pilot selection of 2 of the remaining 5 Master Topic 2 activities.

While there is no limit on the number of WINGS phases you can complete on an annual basis, there are some caveats. Once a Flight or Knowledge activity is used, it cannot be used again for credit until 12 months have passed. This may limit your ability to earn more than 1 WINGS phase at a specific level in each 12-month period. That said, new Knowledge and Flight activities may be submitted by local clubs, the SSA, SSF, other industry partners or the FAA itself. If approved, this may give you more options within each topic area, allowing you to complete more phases at each level on an annual basis.

Sport pilots can choose Flight activities from this list.

<b>Sport Pilot Specific</b>				
<b>Activity Name</b>	<b>Activity Number</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Advanced</b>	<b>Master</b>
G-Takeoffs, Launches, Landings, Slips	A070405-28	1		
G-Slow Flight, Stall, Soaring, Steep Turns	A070405-29	2		
G-Additional Endorsement	A100125-33	3		
G-Ground and Takeoff Tasks	A100125-34	3		
G-Air Work	A100125-35	3		
G-Takeoffs, Launches, Tow Positions, Landings, Slips	A070405-113		1	
G-Thermal & Wave Soaring, Glides, Off-Airport Landing	A100126-04		2	
G-Assembly, Air and Ground Tasks, Tow Release	A100126-02		2	
G-Air Work, Minimum Sink Airspeed, Stall Recognition	A070405-114		2	
G-Air Work, Ridge and Slope Soaring, Steep Turns	A070405-137			2
G-Assembly, Air/Ground Tasks, Slack Line, Boxing, Release	A100126-89			2
G-Wave Soaring, Headings, Landing and Securing	A100126-91			2

Finally adding an initial Private or Commercial rating also satisfies the requirement for a WINGS phase. Ask your Pilot Examiner for credit through the Instructor Portal at the completion of your practical test. You can also contact your local WINGSPro, a FAASTeam rep who has in-depth knowledge of the WINGS program if you have specific questions.

<b>Activity Name</b>	<b>Activity Number</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Advanced</b>	<b>Master</b>
Initial Certification - Private Pilot	A071102-02	1, 2, 3		
Initial Certification - Commercial Pilot	A071102-01	1, 2, 3	1, 2 (2)	
Category or Class Rating – Additional Aircraft	A1004125-1	1, 2, 3		
G-Additional Endorsement – Sport Pilot	A100125-33	3		



Flying requires a pilot to continuously update both their knowledge proficiency and flying skills. The classical Flight Review is one method for accomplishing this task. A better method is to use the WINGS program to have a more structured and organized set of specific activities, that have been shown to map to accident causal factors. Start soon with a Flight activity and spread things out over several months. You might be very glad you did!