



# How to Become a Glider Pilot

If you have just had your first flight in a glider, and want to do more, this leaflet explains how to go on to become a glider pilot.

You have a 3 month temporary membership included with your flight. During this period you can come to the club and learn to fly at normal club rates.

Members pay a monthly fee, currently £28, which covers all use of aircraft and instructor time for that month. On top of that you pay £10 for each winch launch. You only need to pay for the months you fly, but obviously the more you fly in that month the cheaper each flight is.



Gliding is a team activity, and we rely on members taking part in the ground operation to launch the gliders as well as flying. Most people turn up to unpack the hangar, and then fly and help out at the launchpoint until the end of the day, and then pack the hangar. We realise this isn't always possible, but ask that you either help unpack the hangar at the beginning of the day, or help pack it again at the end of the day.



There is a team of volunteers on duty each weekend day which consist of two or three instructors, a winch driver and a Launch Marshall. There is a course each weekend day of 3 pre solo pilots who have an aircraft and an instructor for the day. As a new pilot you should book on to the course by phoning the office. The slots available and who is on duty can be seen on the Duty Rota which is on a link from the Club website [www.Longmynd.com](http://www.Longmynd.com). If you just turn up you will most likely be able to get a flight, but the pilots booked on the course will get priority if there is restricted flying available due to poor weather.

The Launch Marshall is stationed at the launch point and organises the jobs that need to be done such as fetching cables, retrieving gliders, hooking cables on to gliders, driving the retrieve winch etc. You should make yourself known to the Launch Marshal who will be able to direct you to learn these skills under supervision of an experienced member.

The day usually starts at about 9am with unpacking the hangar. Once all the aircraft are out of the hangar and parked safely they are fitted with batteries and parachutes, and a Daily Inspection (DI) is carried out on each aircraft. This is a sort of daily MOT test to check that all systems on the glider are functioning normally and it is safe to fly.

Once all DIs are completed there is a briefing which covers the weather, where the equipment will be stationed on the airfield, NOTAMs (Notice to Airmen that give

details of possible hazards and no fly areas, for instance airshows and parachute drop zones) and how to deal safely with any other issues pertinent to that day such as wet airfields or strong winds. Pilots who intend to fly are expected to attend the briefing, but if you miss it you should approach one of the instructors for a briefing.

All pre solo pilots have a blue Progress book, in which you record your flights, and the instructor is able to make comments on your progress. There are also a series of exercises that you need to go through. Make sure your instructor fills in your logbook at the end of each day so that the next time you come your instructor will be able to carry on where the last one left off, and that he signs off any exercises that you have completed. Once all the pre- solo exercises have been completed and signed off, and the instructor is satisfied that you are able to fly safely, you will be able to fly solo.



As well as the flying exercises you will also have ground briefings on each exercise, as well as on theory of flight and meteorology. You will soon realise that gliding is largely about being able to predict the weather very accurately, and that glider pilots spend a lot of time looking at the sky.

Initially once you have flown solo you will have to have a check flight with an instructor on each day you wish to fly solo, but as you progress and complete further exercises you will be able to go onto weekly currency check, and then monthly.

The next step from flying solo is to complete your Bronze flying test and a cross country endorsement, after which, if you wish to, you will be able to fly cross country, leaving the airfield behind you to depend on your wits and skill to fly out of gliding range of the airfield to another airfield or around a triangular course. After that you can aim for Silver, Gold and Diamond badges. For a Diamond, you have to complete a height gain of 5000 metres and a distance flight of over 500 km. Only a few glider pilots achieve this ultimate goal.

Many pilots are content to fly locally and stay within easy reach of the airfield, others learn to fly away from the airfield, and on good days you will see pilots setting out on tasks of hundreds of kilometres across the country, sometimes having to land in a field or at another airfield, and you will see trailers setting off to retrieve them. Many pilots take part in competitions, and several pilots from Long Mynd have competed in the World Gliding Championships.

The club is open 7 days a week from March to October and 4 days a week in the Winter. Weekday flying is run by professional instructors and winch drivers operating a course, and if you wish to fly in the week you need to ring the office to book a place, and they will advise you of availability and cost.



If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact the office on 01588 650206 or email [office@longmynd.com](mailto:office@longmynd.com)