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### Am I allowed to receive flight instruction in an experimental/amateur built aircraft?

The short answer is yes, you can receive flight training in an amateur-built aircraft. However, there are some issues that may limit this opportunity.

First, the aircraft in question must have already completed its flight test phase (called "phase one operations"). Phase one is usually either the first 25 or 40 hours of operation, depending on what engine/prop combination is installed. During phase one operations, only the pilot can be in the aircraft, so no dual flight instruction could take place in the aircraft during this time. Assuming that the aircraft has completed phase one operations and has been moved into phase two (normal) operations, flight training in the aircraft would be allowed. The next issue is finding a CFI (certified flight instructor) who is willing to provide primary training in the experimental aircraft in question. Not all CFI's are willing to give instruction in experimental aircraft.

Another issue is whether the aircraft in question meets all the requirements of training for the license or rating sought. For private pilot certificates and above, there are requirements for night and instrument training, as well as radio navigation, so the aircraft used for training must be equipped for these operations. If the amateur-built aircraft does not have the appropriate equipment, a second aircraft will have to be used for those portions of the training. Splitting your training between two aircraft will certainly add additional hours to the flight training but will provide the added benefit of experiencing more than one aircraft's flight characteristics.

The next thing to consider is the practical test (check ride). This is governed by 14 CFR 61.45, which states that the applicant must present a standard, limited, or primary category aircraft for the practical test. However, this regulation also allows the Designated Pilot Examiner (DPE) the discretion to administer the test in an

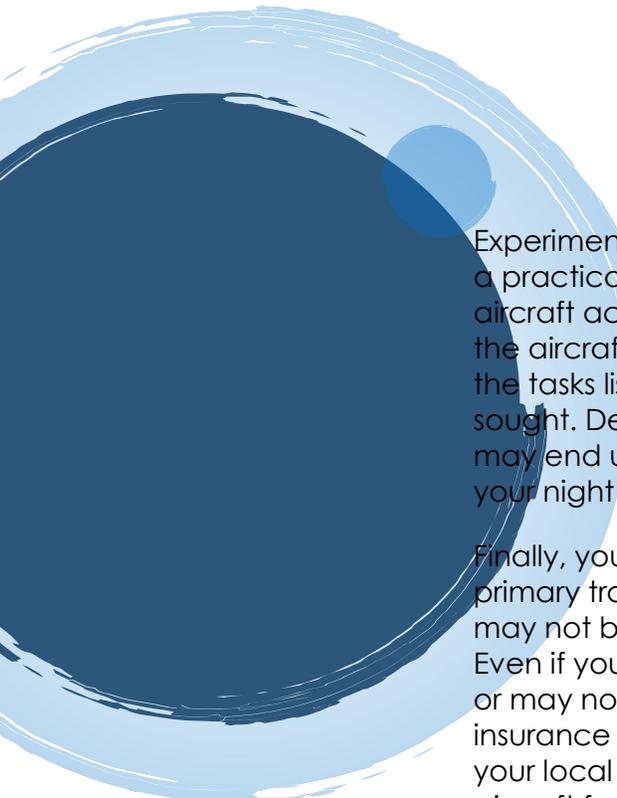
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Experimental-Amateur Built aircraft. Some DPE's are not willing to give a practical test in an experimental aircraft, so you may have to find an aircraft acceptable to the DPE in which to take your check ride. Also, the aircraft used for the check ride must be equipped to perform all the tasks listed in the Practical Test Standards for the license or rating sought. Depending on the level of equipment in your homebuilt, you may end up taking your check ride in the aircraft in which you did your night and instrument training

Finally, you need to make sure you can properly insure the aircraft for primary training (including solo). Depending on the aircraft, insurance may not be available for an owner that is not yet a certificated pilot. Even if you can acquire aircraft insurance as a student pilot, this may or may not be cost-effective. You'll have to balance the cost of this insurance against the cost of renting an available training aircraft from your local FBO (Fixed Base Operator). Note that even if you rent an aircraft from an FBO it is strongly recommend that you carry non-owner insurance (often called "renter's insurance") to protect you in the event of an accident. The insurance premium for your experimental aircraft will probably drop considerably once you get your pilot certificate and a few hours of experience in your logbook.



*Lyndee*

