

So you've decided to fly? Congratulations! You're making a great decision. You're about to discover a pastime that is simply more absorbing and satisfying than anything else you could turn your mind to, and to join a special group of friends who are united by the same kind of enthusiasm for getting airborne that you have. Pilots are special – ask anyone who flies.

You've made another good decision, coming to Cotswold Aero Club. There are plenty of good reasons why we've been thriving for more than 80 years: our flying training sets the highest standard, our aircraft are carefully chosen to be great to fly, our ground schooling is thorough, our social side is busy and fun. And once you've qualified, you can use us as your flying base for years to come. We have many CAC members of 20 years standing and more, who regularly fly the club aeroplanes and join our diverse activities throughout the year, flying and otherwise. Join us today.

GETTING STARTED

It could hardly be easier. Just phone us to arrange a trial lesson or call in to meet our Chief Flying Instructor, Phil Mathews, and discuss it. Our offices are easy to find on Gloucester Airport. We'll get you in the air with a minimum of fuss with a fully qualified instructor – and you'll get a chance to fly the aeroplane straight away. With a decent amount of study and effort, anyone who can drive a car can learn to fly.

At first you'll always fly with an instructor, learning general handling of the aircraft, airfield and radio procedures. Then, when your instructor thinks you're ready, he'll send you solo, on one circuit of the airfield. It will be a wonderful moment. After that you'll mix more solo flying, more and more often away from the airfield, with more flying with your instructor, gaining experience until you can navigate your way safely on a solo journey, your qualifying cross-country. That's another milestone.

At the same time, you'll be studying steadily at the ground-school lectures we provide, learning the law of the air, meteorology, about the aircraft itself, more radio procedures, and about your own physical capabilities and limitations. It's not hard, but it does take some concentration and effort. The result will be worth it.

Then – perhaps after 45 to 55 hours flying in total – you'll do your Skill Test, during which the examiner will expect you to show that you'd be perfectly capable of flying this aircraft off on your own. It may sound like a dream now, but you'll be amazed how attainable it is. Many pilots, just like you, have learned to fly a plane every bit as fluently as they can drive a car.

OUR AIRCRAFT

Cotswold Aero Club is well known for its great-handling aeroplanes. While many others have training aeroplanes whose main virtue is toughness, we specialise in French-made Robin aircraft, renowned for being easy, light and sporty to fly. They're 'stick' rather than 'steering wheel' aeroplanes, and everyone who's tried them says they better suit the keen pilot.

New students learn to fly in either of our two Robin DR400s or Robin R2112 which are so much fun that many qualified pilots stick to those throughout their flying career. For longer journeys we have a single-engine, four-seater Piper Arrow, while aerobatic specialists – yes, we teach that too, are catered for with the Robin R2112.

EXTRA QUALIFICATIONS

Of course, for many pilots qualifying for their Private Pilot's Licence is only the beginning. There are instrument ratings, night ratings, multi-engine ratings to get, and much more. We teach aerobatics. We check pilots on more complex aircraft. And if you've some unusual request we can't meet immediately, we probably know someone who can. The experience we've built up at Cotswold is second to none.

PAYING FOR IT

It's a big decision, of course, learning to fly. And although we'd never call such an amazing passport to exhilaration expensive, we know it's a big outlay for most people. That's why we offer two ways of affording it: pay as you go, or buy a series of lessons in one larger instalment. The second option is a little cheaper; the first may seem less painful. Whatever you decide, you'll find we're willing to help with advice and hints. The one thing pilots know is that it WILL be worth it. To paraphrase a famous old saying: the joy of learning to fly is something you'll remember long after the cost of it is forgotten. Join us today!