

Code of Good Practice for all model aircraft pilots

Short form as an aid to memory

Code of Good Practice



Model airplane pilots...	
1.	are correctly insured, know and respect the legal requirements
2.	check their models, transmitters and batteries before they go flying
3.	are mentally fit and in good physical condition when they go flying
4.	greet the other pilots at the flying site and take part in the briefing
5.	familiarise themselves with the flying site and local airspace restrictions as well as the surrounding area before take-off.
6.	do a check before the first flight and are prepared for emergency situations
7.	maintain a safe flying style without endangering others and do not overestimate themselves
8.	communicate together when flying and announce manoeuvres in the vicinity
9.	make pilots and spectators aware of risks and correct behaviour
10.	land safely and in time before concentration is gone, act independently at all times
... follow these tips!	

Model airplane pilots behave respectfully and accept fellow human beings; they are decent and exemplary in their treatment of the animal and plant world.

Explanations/Tips

1. Legal requirements

Model aircraft pilots are correctly insured in every situation and with every model and know the rules and legal requirements

- Members of the SMV/FSAM always carry the Aeroclub Membercard on their person (electronically or on paper).
- Non-members must present of proof of insurance.
- Large models exceeding the Swiss legal weight limit of 30kg must be inspected in accordance with aviation regulations and relevant documents must be carried at all times.
- Flying is only permitted at approved locations in compliance with the legal requirements according to the "Verordnung über Luftfahrzeuge besonderer Kategorien" (VLK), only within line of sight, in active control zones (CTR) only up to a maximum height of 150m, within 5km around airfields only with permission, at a distance of 100m to crowds.
- Protected areas are respected.

2. Condition of model and remote control

Model airplane pilots come to the flying site with fully functioning models as well as good and charged remote control and flight batteries.

- The discharge curve of batteries is very steep as they approach minimum voltage. Therefore, a battery with a doubtful state of charge should always be considered "empty".
- Inflated or mechanically damaged LiPo batteries should no longer be used.
- Ideally, transmitter and receiver batteries should be fully charged before each day of flying. Be aware that batteries self-discharge.
- Technical problems should always be taken seriously and rectified before going to the flying field: Fluttering servos, strange noises from servos, sluggish control surfaces, "strange effects" in the control areas, cracks in important glue joints, etc. should always be checked and repaired at home. Anything else can endanger the model and massively impair safety.
- The heavier and faster the model, the smaller the permissible tolerances are
- Check the propulsion (engine, impeller and turbine suspension, propeller condition, propeller and impeller fastening, etc.). Are all fail-safe settings correct? Does the propulsion stop if the transmitter signal is lost?
- The comprehensive check also includes the other external aids (winch, high-launch rubber, fire extinguisher, catapults, etc.).

3. Condition of the pilot

Model aircraft pilots are mentally fit and in good physical condition when they go flying

- You should not go flying if you have impaired concentration (illness, mental problems).
- A night of partying or an extensive lunch with alcohol impairs your ability to concentrate.
- In summer, hats and sunglasses are a must.
- Those who no longer see so well: get glasses or change hobby!
- Model airplane pilots enjoy beer, wine and the like only after flying at the barbecue or in the bar or restaurant.
- Those who feel unwell or ill do not fly.

4. Behaviour on the flying site

Model airplane pilots greet the other pilots at the flying site and take part in the briefing

- Model airplane pilots greet those present at the model airplane site.
- As a guest on an unfamiliar site, they introduce themselves.
- On larger sites (especially slope flying), active contacting of all pilots is essential. It is always the duty of the last pilot to arrive.
- If more than one pilot is flying, discuss flight behaviour or hold a briefing, including announcing take-offs and landings, flybys/figures, where pilots are standing.

5. Conditions in the flight area

Model aircraft pilots familiarise themselves with each flying site and the surroundings before take-off

- Where is the permitted flight area?
- Which areas do I need to avoid?
- Which "magical" obstacles should be specifically considered?
- Where do the pilots stand?
- Where can spectators or passers-by be expected?
- Which points on the horizon mark the landing approach axis?
- Where can I land without endangering others if the engine stops during flight or I have to make an emergency landing with the glider and the landing site can no longer be reached safely?
- What are the wind and visibility conditions like?

6. Checks before the start

Model pilots think ahead, check the model before the first flight of the day and are prepared for any emergency situations.

- Before reassembly, check all installations: especially the linkages and electrical plug connections, no loose parts, no loosened glued joints, etc.
- After assembly, check all fixings and the correct alignment of surfaces, rudders, etc.
- Are the correct model memory and flight mode active on the transmitter?
- Are the transmitter and receiver batteries still sufficiently charged?
- Is the tank capacity or the battery charge level of the flight batteries safe enough for another flight?
- Control and switching functions: does the control input at the transmitter lead to the correct command in the correct direction at the model? With cursory checks, incorrectly running rudders are often overlooked.
- Check the function of all control surfaces as well as the launch hook, tow release, undercarriage, flaps, etc. Overloaded, noisy servos are likely to malfunction.
- Switch on the engine in such a way and at such a place that a possible malfunction cannot harm persons or objects.
- Before take-off: where do I land without endangering others if the engine stops shortly after take-off, the tow line breaks, etc.?
- What obstacles must be considered during the approach?
- Where/how can I safely avoid if people enter the runway during final approach?
- If a model becomes difficult to control, the rule of thumb is: safety first - a model crashed in an emergency can be replaced.

7. Safety in flight

Model aircraft pilots maintain a safe flying style without endangering third parties or themselves

- Obstacles such as trees, buildings, hills etc. are always flown over in case of doubt. Flying "in the foreground" is only safe if there is a clear difference in distance!
- When in doubt about height and size of models, never allow models to cross - a collision is quite likely.
- If several models are in the air: Pilots stand together and communicate their intentions. Whenever possible, divide the flight space among the models. Even better: an "airspace supervisor" to help with coordination.
- Approaches should always be made on the extended runway axis. This is the only way to keep the model on the landing field after touchdown without endangering bystanders. With large gliders or particularly fast models, it is often too late to correct the approach axis in the last few metres.
- No models or persons should stand in the direction of take-off. A model breaking away can be very dangerous. Pay attention in case of wind/gusts or a change of take-off direction.

8. Safety through communication

Model airplane pilots communicate while flying and report manoeuvres and other figures to colleagues

- Own intention is communicated loud and clear to the surrounding pilots and spectators.
- The following standard messages form the minimum:
 - **Attention: Start!**
 - **Attention: Coming in to land!** (as soon as the model initiates landing approach)
 - **Attention: I am on approach!** (as soon as the model is in the final approach)
 - **Attention: Emergency landing! Clear the landing area!** (e.g. after engine failure)
- Third party behaviour: in general, the landing area must be kept clear for landing models.
- Models standing around at the edge of the take-off/landing area cause stress, especially for less experienced pilots.
- The responsibility for a model on the ground is always borne by the person who placed it there.

9. Exemplary behaviour

Model airplane pilots make other pilots and spectators aware of risks and correct behaviour

- Pilots foster a culture of constructive criticism, where mistakes or wrong behaviour are discussed collegially with those involved with the aim of improving behaviour and avoiding future incidents. Accidents or incidents affect us all.

- Always welcome spectators in a nice and friendly manner and point them to a safe location from where they can observe the flying.
- Spectators who put themselves in danger despite friendly admonishment, admonish again in a friendly but firm manner and draw attention to the dangers.

10. Acting on one's own responsibility

Model airplane pilots do not overestimate themselves and their flying skills; they land before their concentration wanes, they act responsibly at all times.

- Practice new aerobatic manoeuvres only at a safe distance from the take-off/landing area, pilots and spectators.
- Think about landing in good time and allow enough time for the landing approach. Expect that it may not work the first time.
- If in doubt, it is better to ask an experienced colleague for help and support early on. Don't be too proud to ask for help.

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21.3.2022	Adaptation of the version valid since 2011
1.1.2023	Alignment with the new VLK