

The Seat Cushion



Saving your tail and preventing injury since aviation's inception!

How Far is Too Far?

By Brent Crow

Flight instructors each have their own philosophy when it comes to the question of how far to let the student go before the intervening. I remember my first flight in the A36 Bonanza, training for my high performance and complex endorsements with my instructor. I was used to cruising in on approach at 90 knots in the Piper Warrior. But in the A36, 120 knot approaches left me cognitively dragging 10nm behind the aircraft. As we came over the airport fence, about 150 feet AGL, Tower called me stating, "Check gear." My instructor next to me began laughing at me in the cockpit as I realized my gear was still up, now in my flare. Of course I immediately initiated a go around

and told myself I'll never do that again. Every approach I now think of my instructor sitting next to me laughing at me and it reminds me to triple check the gear. Then there are those other instructors who as soon as you complete the before landing checklist (and miss the gear) they grab the gear handle and drop the gear for you, stating "you forgot the gear." Is one way of correcting the student better than the other?

As a Flight Instructor, through the years I have come to find that there isn't necessarily a right or wrong way, but we



safety of the flight, nor can we take 2 hours of our students time to teach let him take a poor decision through to conclusion. Through my experiences as an instructor, I have come to abide by the following guidelines when a student has made an error and I need to make a decision for when to intervene:

1. Is there an immediate safety threat? If yes – take controls. When I

must remember that our primary objective is to be a safe and effective instructor for our student. We cannot jeopardize

was a "newbie" instructor it was difficult to make this determination. Don't forget that while the aircraft may be controllable at this point, if it may be in an unsafe condition within a few seconds, corrective action must be taken. You always want to keep the aircraft under your control and never let the aircraft stray towards a region of flight where you cannot make corrective inputs in time, or the aircraft is in a state where it will not respond to your inputs.

2. Is the student just learning about this error? If no – then I tend to let them try and realize the error on their own. Just don't let it take more time than what the lesson will allow. However, if there is not harm or delay in the lesson if the er-

Dates to remember:

- 28-29 October - Copperstate
- 31 October- Halloween
- 24 November – Thanksgiving
School Closed
- 25 December—Christmas Holiday
School Closed
- 1 January—New Year's Day
School Closed



Mayday!

By Theresa Farley

You are cruising along when all of a sudden the engine makes a weird noise. Or was that just your imagination? You look and verify all gauges are in the green.

There it is again, that strange noise. This time it is accompanied by a low oil pressure. You run through the checklist for low oil pressure and take appropriate steps, but this does not solve the oil pressure issue and the engine is still making a funny noise.

You decide to go back to home base. You turn around and contact tower. What do you tell them? Do you tell them nothing and just hope for the best? Do you tell them you have a little concern but are not declaring an emergency? Do you tell them exactly what is going on and declare an emergency?

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tinue, then you can let it play out until an opportune moment (remember the learning principle of effect and intensity).

3. Is the error going to cause an issue for others? If yes, then its best to intervene promptly. For instance, if a student cannot get a read back correct, then make the read back for him. Don't let the student ignore the



Well the better part of valor would be to be honest and do not hesitate to declare an emergency if you think it is necessary. The FAA states

“Pilots do not hesitate to declare a emergency when faced with distress conditions...” (FAA-H-8083-16A, Appendix A Emergency Procedures).

You are having engine indications that are not normal. You are in the air and need to get on the ground as soon as possible.

Many pilots think that if they declare an emergency there will lots of paperwork to fill out. ATC will not be happy.

The truth is ATC needs to know what is going on so they can help you. If you declare an emergency ATC will be able to

“Provide maximum assistance to aircraft in distress. Enlist the services of available radar facilities and DF facilities operated by the FAA, the military services, and the Federal Communications Commission, as well as their emergency services and facilities...” (Air Traffic Controllers Handbook).

As for paperwork, you may be asked to make a simple

written statement, most likely you will just have a conversation with a FAA inspector. If all is good that will be the end of the story.

Above all remember you are the PIC ‘Aviate, Navigate, and Communicate.’ “FAR 91.3 (a) The pilot in command of an aircraft is directly responsible for, and is the final authority as to, the operation of that aircraft.”

For further study, check out AOPA’s IFR Insights a Practical Approach: Declaring an Emergency. →

over again to make a required frequency.

In summary, be very careful during critical phases of flight. A student who is suddenly drifting off of centerline during a crosswind approach and does not go around immediately should be grounds for immediate takeover of controls. You do not want to find out that by the time you get on the

way surface.

You’ll find the rudder is not correcting the issue, and the aircraft does not

want to fly because your airspeed is too slow. Always demonstrate the acceptable action to the student when their reaction time is too



rective actions in a specific situation will be trained to follow the same actions on a solo. I always strive to lead the student to correct their