Student Pilot Gear Checklist, by Training Stage

Very little is required by FAA rules, and items tagged RULE cite the regulation. Once you commit to training, your own well-fitting headset, logbook, E6B, kneeboard and flashlight pay off every flight.

Name _____

RULE required by regulation (14 or 49 CFR) **CHECKRIDE** FAA applicant checklist (FAA-G-ACS-2) **TEST** knowledge test center rules
SCHOOL school often provides **REC** recommended **LATER** optional or later

1 Before the first lesson

- [ ] Proof of U.S. citizenship (such as a U.S. passport), or TSA approval if not a U.S. citizen **RULE** 49 CFR 1552.7
- [ ] Logbook (your own keeps your record with you) **RULE** 61.51(a)
- [ ] Ask the school about a loaner headset for early lessons **SCHOOL**
- [ ] Book your FAA medical exam (needed before solo) **RULE** 61.23(a)(3)
- [ ] Non-polarized sunglasses **REC**

2 Beginning training

- [ ] Your own headset once committed: fit, comfort, hearing protection **REC**
- [ ] Checklist and POH for your exact make, model and year **SCHOOL**
- [ ] Kneeboard **REC**
- [ ] One ground school course or textbook **REC**
- [ ] FAR/AIM, print or online **REC**

3 Preparing for first solo

- [ ] Student pilot certificate (apply early in IACRA) **RULE** 61.3(a)(1)
- [ ] Medical certificate, unless an exception applies **RULE** 61.3(c)
- [ ] Government photo ID **RULE** 61.3(a)(2)
- [ ] Pre-solo and solo endorsements in logbook, within 90 days **RULE** 61.87
- [ ] Flashlight with white and red light **REC**

4 Cross-country

- [ ] Logbook and student certificate aboard every solo cross-country, with endorsements **RULE** 61.51(i)(2), 61.93(c)
- [ ] Current sectional chart, print or electronic **CHECKRIDE**
- [ ] E6B (manual or electronic) and plotter **CHECKRIDE** **TEST**
- [ ] Nav log, flight plan form, Chart Supplement **CHECKRIDE**
- [ ] EFB app: ask your instructor first **LATER**

5 Knowledge test and checkride prep

KNOWLEDGE TEST

- [ ] Instructor endorsement **RULE** 61.35(a)(1)
- [ ] Photo ID with signature and date of birth **RULE** 61.35(a)(3)
- [ ] FAA Tracking Number (IACRA) and PSI registration **TEST**
- [ ] Aviation calculator or E6B (memory erasable) and plotter **TEST**
- [ ] Leave phone, tablet, notes and aid booklets outside **TEST**

CHECKRIDE

- [ ] View-limiting device **RULE** 61.45(d)(2)
- [ ] ID, certificate, medical or BasicMed, IACRA application, knowledge test report, logbook endorsements **RULE** 61.39
- [ ] Charts, E6B and plotter, nav log, Chart Supplement, current AIM **CHECKRIDE**
- [ ] Aircraft documents, maintenance records, POH **SCHOOL**

6 Newly certificated private pilot

- [ ] Temporary certificate (up to 120 days), photo ID, medical or BasicMed **RULE** 61.17, 61.3
- [ ] Log flight reviews and passenger currency **RULE** 61.56, 61.57
- [ ] Passenger headsets **REC**
- [ ] EFB subscription, lowest tier that fits your flying **REC**
- [ ] ADS-B receiver, CO detector, satellite communicator, handheld radio **LATER**

7 Instrument training

- [ ] View-limiting device (required at the checkride) **RULE** 61.45(d)(2)
- [ ] Safety pilot when practicing without an instructor **RULE** 91.109(c)
- [ ] Log 40 hours instrument time, 15 with an instrument instructor **RULE** 61.65(d)
- [ ] Current IFR charts and approach procedures **CHECKRIDE**
- [ ] Timer, IFR kneeboard, EFB with IFR features **REC**

WORTH WAITING FOR

- Headset before you try a few loaners
- Top-tier EFB before your instructor asks
- Tablet kneeboard or mount before you pick a tablet
- A second study kit
- POH or checklist before you know the model year
- Polarized sunglasses, at any stage

Rules checked against the official CFR (GovInfo) and FAA and TSA sources on November 28, 2026. Your school may require more. For training and education only; not a substitute for instruction from a CFI.

StudentPilot.com, a PilotMall.com publication. Full guide: studentpilot.com/learn-to-fly/pilot-gear/what-student-pilots-need/