



# Pipistrel Aircraft Doing a Demonstration Flight for Customers

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This document provides information on how do a proper demonstration flight for a customer.

# Pipistrel Aircraft - Doing a demonstration flight for customers

This document has been prepared to assist dealers with providing an adequate test flight experience for customers who are evaluating Pipistrel aircraft.

This document by no means covers everything but it does show a suggested format which we would like you to follow so a customer's experience can be complete. Whilst many of these suggestions will be really obvious it is worthwhile at least refreshing your memory to maintain a good customer experience.

The demonstration of a Pipistrel aircraft has been broken up into four separate areas listed below.

1. Greeting the customer when he arrives at the airport
2. Walkaround and familiarisation of the aircraft
3. The actual flight experience
4. Ground debrief, answering questions and farewelling customers

I imagine many of you are going to yawn about now but it is really important that you read through this document and implement these suggestions to give the customer the best overview and experience of Pipistrel aircraft.

## Greeting the customer when he arrives at the airport

It is important to note that the "average" Pipistrel customer is between 60 years and 85 years old. Many of these people will be travelling to the airfield by car and many of these over great distances. The last thing we want is to take customers up when they are still feeling like they are still on the road. For this reason I would suggest delaying the flight experience for at least one hour after arrival to give the customer time to settle down and to start thinking about flying aircraft rather than getting through traffic to get to the airfield on time.

It is really important that the customer has access to toilet facilities, coffee/tea and anything else they require to become comfortable at the airfield; this also includes climate control for really hot or really cold areas where possible.

Give the customer your business card first thing. This will remind them of your name and they will have access to it throughout the following hours to refer to if they forget your name. Always make sure to know the customer's name even if you have to write it on the back of your hand before they arrive. Always address the customer by his preferred name, this makes the visit more personalised and much more professional.

At this time it would be good to talk about the following items....

- What experience has the customer had in different aircraft, this will influence the flight experience and the information that you provide, if he is a brand-new student then you will want to tailor your discussions to his level of experience. If he is an advanced fighter pilot then you would do likewise

- What does he want to do with his aircraft, the required "mission role" with this information you can give the best advice on which model you believe will best suit his requirements if he has not already made up his mind
- Does he want to have an experimental aircraft or an LSA aircraft?
- Does he want to register the aircraft as an aeroplane or as a glider?

Try to use this time to find out the exact needs and requirements of the customer. Then go over some of the following items.

- The history of Pipistrel, where they have come from, where they are going, how many aircraft they have produced, extreme flights around the world etc
- The durability and low maintenance of Pipistrel aircraft including your experiences at the frugal operating costs and how far you can go on so little fuel
- The local layout of your airfield, the area you will be flying to and the actual test flight experience you expect to be able to offer

#### Walkaround and familiarisation of the aircraft

This is basically a glorified pre-flight check, walk around the aircraft with the customer explaining how you do your daily inspections, what to look for and at the same time pointing out the unique features of Pipistrel aircraft including most importantly the build quality. Look for areas like the underneath of the wing so they can see the reflection of the cockpit in the wing, this is a very good feature to show the build quality of the aircraft.

- Show the customer the luggage area and access through the side door or through the back of the seats
- Show the customer the external exit points for the ballistic parachute, the ballistic parachute slings and explain how the aircraft descends under the slings after parachute deployment
- Explain to the customer about the undercarriage of the aircraft, its resilience on bumpy landings and rough airstrips
- Explain to the customer the unique features of having a directly steerable nose wheel on Pipistrel aircraft
- Explain to the customer the rear tail skid and how it protects the tail of the aircraft
- Explain to the customer why there is gap- seal tape on the ailerons, elevator and rudder
- Explain to the customer the airbrake operation and how these work to control the aircraft in flight
- Explain to the customer the full-length flaperons on Pipistrel aircraft
- Explain to the customer how they can fuel the aircraft either through the wings or through the special pump available from Pipistrel, mention the benefits of double filtering the fuel
- Show the customer the fuel drain and gascolator locations

## The actual flight experience

The flight experience will vary depending on the day, conditions and weather. To give the customer the very best flight experience I would recommend looking at a program similar to what is listed below.

- Entry into the aircraft, how to get into the aircraft and make yourself comfortable including adjusting the seats, the head rest and the rudder pedals. If the customer does not feel comfortable and if he does feel like he couldn't fall asleep in the aircraft then you need to get him out and make additional adjustments so he does become comfortable.  
Important to note when aircraft first delivered the strap behind the head rest is really tight this gives most tall pilots a very bad seating position by pushing the head forward a long way, obviously not comfortable. If the customer is not comfortable then he will not enjoy his demonstration flight
- Once the customer is in the aircraft and secure, leave the doors open and explain the instrumentation fitted to this aircraft, explain why you like this configuration or what you would change all do differently in his aircraft based on what he is told you before about his experience.
- Demonstrate the following features of the cockpit.....
  - How to open and close the doors correctly
  - How to adjust the rudder pedals
  - How to adjust the seating and a headrest
  - The instrument layout and controls necessary for the flight like the propeller knob if fitted, autopilot etc
  - Explain the use of airbrakes if fitted
  - Explain the use of the flaperons and the different positions for different stages of flight
  - Explain the cabin ventilation including the door events and the cabin heater
  - Explain the battery disconnect
  - Explain the ballistic chute and its operation
  - Show the customer how to check the fuel quantity remaining inside the cockpit
  - Show the customer where they can store maps and drink bottles in the aircraft
  - Explain the throttle and choke operation and how the Rotax engine operates, starts and runs because quite often they are not familiar with Rotax engines
  - Explain the engine start-up and shut down operations including feathering the propeller if fitted
  - Show how to unlatch and properly lock the doors so they will not open in-flight
  - Answer any questions that the customer may have
- When the customer is comfortable with the seating position and the cockpit operations it is now time to go flying. The demonstration flight is not a race it is an opportunity for the customer to become familiar with the aircraft and most importantly comfortable with the aircraft. Do not taxi fast, do not race out to get in front of somebody on downwind, do not take a short cut across the airfield. It is really important to show off Pipistrel aircraft to their best and this means you showing your professional piloting abilities, slow down and enjoy the flight.
- Taxi to the runway showing how the aircraft tracks straight down the centreline, it goes where you steer it!

- Complete a final cabin/instrumentation/airfield traffic check as you would normally before take-off
- Remind the customer that they are to sit and watch your flying until away from the circuit area. No matter how good they tell you they are do not let them do the first takeoff and do not let them follow you on the controls until the aircraft is off the ground and away from circuit area
- Line-up and introduce throttle making sure to maintain the runway centreline during takeoff. There are no awards for steep climb outs so make sure the aircraft rotates normally and settles into a normal balanced climb
- Depart from the airport circuit area into a training area where you can properly demonstrate the aircraft, during this time it is best to demonstrate the cruising speed of the aircraft and its stability because for the rest of the demonstration you will probably be flying slowly, doing turns etc it is important to make sure the customer is left with complete knowledge that the published Pipistrel performance figures are accurate in every respect
- In the training area demonstrate the stability of the aircraft flying straight and level
- Do some turns in the aircraft to 30 degree angle of bank and show the stability and how the aircraft will continue in the turn indefinitely, increase this to 60 degrees and show again and then reverse going the opposite direction
- It is important to clearly communicate with the customer during these activities to make sure they are not uncomfortable or getting slightly air sick, if they are slow down and resume normal flight
- Perhaps add stalls or anything else of interest to the customer

#### Ground debrief, answering questions and farewelling customer

After completing your test flight it is a good opportunity to find somewhere peaceful to grab a drink and go over the aircraft demonstration flight asking the final questions. If at all possible it is always good to have the aircraft visible during this time so it will refresh them immediately when they look out the window or across the hanger about their flight experience. They can also go over to the aircraft and point out different features during the conversation if needed.

Ask the customer some very obvious questions

- Did they enjoy the flight?
- Did it come up to or exceed their expectations?
- What did they particularly like about flying the Pipistrel aircraft?
- Which model are now considering after the demonstration flight?
- Are they ready to purchase an aircraft now, are they going to purchase a new aircraft or a second hand aircraft?

Make sure the customer has whatever brochures are required, price lists and any other information you have available including another one of your business cards.

Make sure to have the customers details preferably by business card or get them to write it down in a book or similar. Do not write their details down on a scrap piece of paper pulled out of the printer or photocopier, this is not professional. Make sure you have some sort of book that you can write down their name, the date, what you did during the test flight, the duration etc etc. When they are gone you can write down some notes about the questions that they asked and their preferences for follow-up. Wish them 'safe travels' on the way back home and make sure you call them the following day to answer further questions, check if they are ready to order etc.

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