

Instrument Rating

Earning a Flight Simulator Instrument Rating will make you a more versatile and proficient pilot. You'll enjoy new experiences with Flight Simulator's navigation and weather features. You'll do your instrument training in the same aircraft you used for your private pilot certification, the Cessna 172. While the basic maneuvers are the same, this time you'll learn to perform them solely by reference to the instruments. You'll master the art of the *instrument scan* and learn the intricacies of flying *instrument approaches*.

[Start your instrument training by reading what instrument flying is all about.](#)

There are few thrills in aviation like taking off into the clouds, flying for a few hours, and then breaking out with a runway at another airport in sight directly ahead. By the time you finish your instrument training, you'll be capable of getting from here to there in almost any weather. Here are the steps:

Instrument Pilot

Lesson 1: The VOR approach

Learn how to use the VOR to get you down to the runway at Paine Field. This non-precision approach requires precise flying and timing to find the runway through the clouds.

Lesson 2: The ILS approach

In this lesson on a precision approach, the Instrument Landing System (ILS) helps you fly to lower altitudes without visual contact with the ground, which translates into a better chance of landing in bad weather. The skills you learn in this lesson transfer directly to your instrument training in the Airline Transport Pilot lessons.

Lesson 3: Holding patterns

Learn how to "park the airplane in the sky" in a holding pattern over the Paine VOR. It's not unusual for air traffic control to ask you to delay your flight by holding at a specific place and asking you to fly a "race track" around a radio navigation aid, in this case a VOR.

Instrument rating solo flights

The first solo flight is perhaps the most important. First read about the techniques of instrument scanning, and then practice them in a flight. Without the instrument scan, controlling the airplane in the clouds will be virtually impossible. The navigation is not difficult, but controlling the airplane solely on instruments does take practice. The remaining solo flights help you perfect your instrument flying skills.

Instrument Rating Checkride

Here's where you show the examiner how you control the airplane in the clouds. It'll be a cloudy day for your flight in the Cessna 172. Once you pass, you'll be awarded the Flight Simulator Instrument Rating certificate.

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