

# Personal Minimums Checklist (Pilot Risk Management)

Checklist · 45 items · 9 sections

Personal minimums are the self-imposed limits a pilot sets above the legal regulatory minimums, the buffer between what is legal and what is wise for your specific experience, aircraft, and conditions. The FAA Risk Management Handbook (FAA-H-8083-2) and the Personal Minimums Checklist worksheet (FAA-P-8740-67) provide the template. Build your own, review it before every flight, and never lower it in the cockpit.

Open the editable, AI-powered version online:

<https://genechecklist.com/checklist/personal-minimums-checklist>

## PAVE - PILOT

- Pilot: am I medically and emotionally fit to fly today (run IMSAFE)  
**HIGH**
- Hours flown in the last 30, 60, and 90 days meet my personal currency floor  
**HIGH**
- Last takeoff and landing in this aircraft type within personal recency limit  
**HIGH**
- Instrument currency: six approaches, holding, and intercepting in the last six months (if filing IFR)  
**HIGH**
- Night currency: three full-stop landings within 90 days for passengers at night  
**HIGH**
- Sleep last night met my personal minimum (7+ hours)  
**HIGH**
- No new medication, illness, or stressor since last successful flight  
**HIGH**

## PAVE - AIRCRAFT

- Aircraft: airworthy, all required inspections current (annual, 100-hour, transponder, pitot-static, ELT)  
**HIGH**
- AD compliance and discrepancy log reviewed  
**HIGH**

- Fuel on board exceeds destination plus alternate plus my personal reserve (30 min day VFR, 45 min night/IFR, 60 min cross-country)

HIGH

- Weight and balance computed for actual fuel, passengers, and baggage

HIGH

- Performance numbers calculated for density altitude, runway length, and wind

HIGH

- Aircraft type I am proficient in, not just legal to fly

## PAVE - ENVIRONMENT

- EnVironment: weather at departure, en route, and destination meets my VFR minimums

HIGH

- Ceiling personal minimum: VFR day 2000 ft AGL, VFR night 3000, low time pilot add 1000

HIGH

- Visibility personal minimum: VFR day 5 SM, VFR night 7 SM, low time add 2 SM

HIGH

- Surface wind: total below my crosswind component for this aircraft

HIGH

- Gust factor below personal limit (typically 10 to 15 knots)

HIGH

- Turbulence forecast at or below moderate

- No convective activity (thunderstorms) within 20 NM of route

HIGH

- Freezing levels and icing PIREPs reviewed; no flight into known icing in unequipped aircraft

HIGH

- IFR minimums: ceiling at destination 200 to 400 ft above approach minima, visibility 1/2 to 1 SM above

HIGH

- Alternate airport with better weather selected and within fuel range

HIGH

- Runway: length exceeds 150% of book takeoff and landing distance at today's density altitude

HIGH

- Runway surface, slope, and condition acceptable

- Terrain en route: minimum en route altitude provides safe glide or off-airport option

- Daylight available at destination plus margin for missed approach and divert

## PAVE - EXTERNAL PRESSURES

- External pressures: am I rushing because of a meeting, family, or 'get-there-itis'

HIGH

- Passengers can be told no without consequence I cannot accept

HIGH

- Charter, rental, or business deadline does not influence the go/no-go

HIGH

- Sunset, weather window, or fuel pricing not pushing the decision

HIGH

- Plan B set in writing: where you divert, where you wait, where you stay overnight

HIGH

- Family or employer briefed: I may not arrive on time and that is acceptable

HIGH

## DISCIPLINE

- Personal minimums written down on paper, not just in your head

HIGH

- Reviewed and updated quarterly, or after any change in currency, aircraft, or health

HIGH

- Lowered only on the ground, never in the cockpit, and only with documented justification (training flight, instructor onboard, longer runway)

HIGH

- Two consecutive flights at the minimum without surprise required before tightening further

- Briefed to any safety pilot or copilot before the flight

## PRE-FLIGHT DECISION

- Compare planned conditions against the written minimums one last time before engine start

HIGH

- If any item is at or below your minimum, the answer is no-go or change the plan

HIGH

## IN-FLIGHT DECISION

- Re-evaluate in flight after weather updates, PIREPs, or aircraft anomalies

HIGH

- Use the 1-2-3 rule: turn back, hold, or divert before continuing into worsening conditions

HIGH

## **POST-FLIGHT REVIEW**

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- Track 'should I have' moments in a flight journal and adjust minimums after each one

## **REFERENCES**

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- FAA Personal Minimums Worksheet (FAA-P-8740-67) and Risk Management Handbook (FAA-H-8083-2) are free downloads from FAA.gov
- Annual flight review and IPC are the right time to reset minimums with your CFI