

Checklist Use on the Practical Test

The Practical Test Standards calls for the use of checklists for several tasks. Checklists may either be used during the task (i.e. a “do list”) or after the task to check that each critical item was accomplished.

Here are the areas specifically mentioned that expect a checklist be used.

- Assembly
- Preflight Inspection
- Cockpit Management (including briefing passengers on the use of safety belts, shoulder harnesses, and emergency procedures & might include set up of navigation and recording equipment, etc.)
- Traffic Patterns (if applicable.)
- Before Takeoff check
- Engine starting & shutdown (if applicable)
- Normal and crosswind landing (i.e., before landing checklist)
- After landing and securing

You may have a mnemonic for some checklists (ABCCDDE, FUSTALL, GFWATTS, etc), while others are better prepared as written checklists.

Prepare checklists that are practical and written to help you check if you missed something. You’re not writing out directions, but a concise user-friendly list you can check your work with. For example the post-flight checklist could be one of several on an index card and say:

Tie downs – all on
Control locks
Rudder lock
Pitot & static covers
Personal equipment removed
Post flight conditions that need reporting (tire pressures, etc)

The checklist should be also tailored to the applicable operation. For example: some gliders would include oxygen, batteries, electronics, landout kit, removable TE probes, etc.

Most importantly, **respect your checklist!** Don’t rush through it. Pay attention to each step. It’s easy to gloss over items by saying the words and not deliberately thinking about the step. Checklist complacency has killed many. Even Santa checks his list twice.