

# Risk Management Decision Path



**PERCEIVE**  
HAZARDS  
associated with:

- Pilot
- Aircraft
- enVironment
- External Factors

**PROCESS**  
RISK LEVEL  
by assessing:

- Consequences
- Alternatives
- Reality
- External Factors

**PERFORM**  
RISK  
MANAGEMENT  
by deciding whether to:

- Transfer
- Eliminate
- Accept
- Mitigate



Federal Aviation  
Administration

## Practical Risk Management for VFR XC Flying

For additional information go to:  
[faasafety.gov](http://faasafety.gov)



For questions about aviation safety,  
contact:

Your Local  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Flight Standards District Office

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## PURPOSE



For many pilots, using an airplane for personal transportation is one of the biggest benefits of being able to fly. However, since flight training and flight reviews tend to focus on basic skills and maneuvers, pilots do not always get opportunities to train for real-world cross-country flying. This guide offers ideas for teaching pilots to recognize and manage risk in VFR cross-country flying.

## PROFILE

VFR cross-country accidents often involve poor planning, decision-making, and risk management in areas such as:

- Flight planning and monitoring
- Interpretation and application of weather briefing information
- Fuel and performance management
- ATC communication procedures
- Basic airplane control
- Operating rules and procedures
- Preflight inspection

## PRACTICES

Teach cross-country risk management by structuring the flight review or a transition training session as a VFR cross-country trip to an unfamiliar airport.

### Sample Scenarios

1. Use the outbound leg to create the kind of dynamic flight environment that a pilot could encounter in the real world.

- If terrain and route of flight permit, simulate an engine problem (partial power or total failure).

- Simulate the hazard of an inoperative VOR beacon or GPS receiver. "Failing" a GPS receiver or VOR beacon provides a lesson on situational awareness.

2. Have the pilot practice high performance takeoffs and landings (including go-arounds) at an unfamiliar airport.

3. Use the return leg to cover maneuvers normally performed for a flight review (e.g., slow flight, steep turns, stalls):

- Transitioning from slow flight into a power-off stall provides a more realistic demonstration of how unintentional stalls can actually occur.

- Have the pilot fly part of the trip by reference to instruments.

Be alert for the "teachable moments" on identifying hazards and managing risk throughout the flight:

**P**ilot — distraction of unfamiliar place

**A**ircraft — effect of density altitude

en **V**ironment — landing illusions

**E**xternal — requests from ATC

## POSTFLIGHT

Ask the pilot to verbally replay the the flight and reflect on these questions:



- What went well?

- What could have been better?

- What should I do differently if I encounter similar conditions in a future flight?

- What are the three most important things I learned from this flight?

- What is the most critical knowledge gap I need to fill?

- What is the skill that I most need to practice and improve?