



United States Hang Gliding & Paragliding Association

Pilot Proficiency Program Official Examination

Paragliding Intermediate (P3) Exam

(Last Revised August 2024)

*This test is for pilots who are qualifying for their intermediate paragliding rating (P3). Some questions may seem to have more than one answer but **there is always one answer that is most correct and should be chosen**. Passing score is 80%.*

PILOT PROFICIENCY

1. An intermediate-rated paragliding pilot:
 - a. Has the knowledge and skills to fly any but the most technically demanding sites in mild to moderate conditions.
 - b. Is required by the rating system to demonstrate full stalls and spins.
 - c. Should be able to judge when a site and conditions are within their skill level.
 - d. Must have logged 20 hours of solo airtime.
 - e. b and d
 - f. a, c and d
2. An intermediate-rated pilot should limit turns to:
 - a. No more than three (3) consecutive 360s.
 - b. Bank angles recommended by the manufacturer.
 - c. No more than 75 degrees of bank.
 - d. No turns less than 500 feet above the ground.
3. When lacking recent flight experience, what steps should an intermediate-rated pilot take:
 - a. Apply more conservative operating limitations to fly in less demanding conditions.
 - b. Seek an instructor's assistance for a tailored guidance plan.
 - c. Practice ground handling (kiting) and then return to flying at easy sites under mild conditions.
 - d. Just go fly.
 - e. None of the above.
 - f. a, b and c
4. In regard to flying in thermals, an intermediate-rated paragliding pilot:
 - a. Should not fly in thermals.
 - b. Should not fly in thermals where significant vertical cloud development exists.
 - c. Should practice spins and stalls prior to flying in stronger thermals.
 - d. Should not fly in thermals where peak climb rates exceed 500 feet per minute.
 - e. a and d
 - f. a and c



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5. Which of the following is the best way for an intermediate-rated pilot to progress?
- a. Set lofty goals, train hard.
 - b. Set reasonable goals, repeat success, reflect on progress, craft your development appropriately.
 - c. Let your peers be your reference, if they can do it, you can too.
 - d. Without testing your personal limits, you never know what you can achieve.

AIRSPACE

6. When flying cross country:
- a. You should avoid flying in Class E airspace.
 - b. You should prefer flying at altitudes below 2,000 feet AGL to minimize interactions with controlled airspace and ensure visibility to other aircraft.
 - c. Pilots should know whether they are in G or E airspace as the cloud clearance requirements are different.
 - d. You can fly in any airspace you want.
7. When checking your route on a sectional, you see a series of solid magenta lines outlining an area around an airport. These lines mark the boundary of:
- a. Class C airspace and you must stay out of it unless you have permission from air traffic control.
 - b. A military operations area and you may legally enter it with caution.
 - c. Class B airspace and it is illegal to fly without permission from air traffic control.
 - d. Class D airspace and you may enter it with caution.
8. When checking your route on a sectional you see an area with a solid magenta line and short hash marks on the inside of the boundary line:
- a. This marks the border of a Military Operations Area, or an Alert Area and you may legally enter it.
 - b. This marks the border of a restricted area, and you may not legally enter it without permission.
 - c. This marks the border of a prohibited area.
 - d. This marks the border of controlled airspace.
9. The numbers shown below written in blue inside an area bordered by a broad blue line on a sectional chart indicate:

12₅

40

- a. Altitudes in the area between 4,000 feet AGL and 12,500 feet AGL are reserved for commercial airliners.
- b. Altitudes in the area between 4,000 feet MSL and 12,500 feet MSL are reserved for IFR traffic.
- c. Altitudes in the area between 4,000 feet MSL and 12,500 feet MSL are within Class B airspace.
- d. The control zone defined by the broad blue line is active between the hours of 0400 and 1250 GMT



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PILOTING SKILLS

10. A paraglider pilot who wants to fly as far as possible in calm air should:
- Fly the glider with 20%-30% brake to fly at minimum sink.
 - Fly as fast as possible using as much of the speed system the glider allows.
 - Fly the glider hands up at trim speed, or slightly accelerated 10% of speed system.
 - Fly the glider with 50% brake.
11. What are the indications of a parachutal or deep stall?
- There may be no sensation of wind in your face, little pressure on the brakes, and a high sink rate.
 - The glider enters a spiral dive.
 - The glider has a high sink rate and pressure on the brakes is very high.
 - There is wind in your face, with no speed over the ground and the glider is sinking.
12. Recovery from a parachutal or deep stall:
- May be difficult on certain old, damaged, porous, or poorly trimmed gliders.
 - Should recover automatically on any modern certified glider in good working order once brakes are released.
 - Requires lowering the glider's angle of attack by raising your hands fully until full airspeed is regained.
 - Is impossible on any glider.
 - None of the above.
 - a, b and c.
13. What consequences can arise when a paraglider deflates 50% on one side?
- The wing may enter a spiral dive.
 - The airflow breaks on top of the paraglider and goes into deep stall.
 - The glider will enter a spin.
 - The other side of the glider will also deflate.
 - The open flying side will be easier to stall.
 - All of the above.
 - a and e.
14. While flying, the paraglider has a deflation on one side. What might be the pilot's appropriate action?
- Stabilize the direction of travel using weight shift and if necessary, apply brake on the open side such that any turn toward the deflation does not compromise the pilot's overall navigation away from terrain. Then, if necessary, pull then release the brake to feel pressure to open the collapsed side.
 - Immediately and fully apply the brake on the open side to prevent a spiral.
 - Apply both brakes fully.
 - If the glider is certified no pilot action is needed.



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15. A pilot is flying through an area of turbulence and the paraglider begins to pitch and roll. What is the appropriate response?
- a. Initially maintain a slight brake pressure to stabilize the glider. If active piloting exacerbates pitch and roll, hold this position to prevent Pilot Induced Oscillations (PIO).
 - b. Use brake input and weight shift in response to the glider's movements, ensuring to act in sync with the glider to maintain it stable above you. Correct timing is crucial to avoid amplifying the turbulence effects.
 - c. A certified glider needs no input.
 - d. Push the speed bar to get away from the turbulence.
 - e. a and b
 - f. c and d.
16. Recovery to normal flight from a spin **may** require:
- a. Raising hands to full trim speed.
 - b. Pulling both brakes down to full stall the paraglider. but only if extremely proficient and well-practiced in stall technique on their glider.
 - c. Losing more than 500 feet of altitude.
 - d. A very brief brake check as the glider approaches 90 degrees out in front of the pilot, ensuring to release fully before swinging down again.
 - e. Throwing your reserve at the first indication that efforts to recover are not working.
 - f. All of the above.
17. How can a pilot recognize and prevent an impending spin during flight?
- a. Monitor the glider's behavior closely for asymmetrical brake pressure where one side feels heavier or requires more effort than the other and adjust inputs accordingly to maintain balanced flight.
 - b. Keep turns coordinated by applying weight shift in the direction of the turn while managing brake inputs to avoid over-banking. Avoid excessive brake application on one side, especially during low-speed maneuvers like thermaling.
 - c. Utilize gentle brake pulses on both sides simultaneously to encourage symmetrical airflow and stabilize the wing during all phases of flight.
 - d. Practice active flying techniques, adjusting brake inputs proactively in response to the glider's feedback to prevent entering a spin.
 - e. None of the above.
 - f. a, b and d.



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18. Which of the following are true regarding spin?
- a. The strongest indication that a paraglider is about to spin will be that the pilot has been holding excessive brake for too long without weight shift.
 - b. A pilot who flies with flexible and responsive arms will feel the wall of pressure that develops as they start to pull too far, potentially leading to a spin. A pilot who flies with a stiff-arm won't feel this pressure build-up.
 - c. A pilot who actively weight shifts won't need to pull excessive brake and probably won't spin it.
 - d. Many pilots that have started to spin the glider realize their error and release the brake in that moment thereby avoiding a fully developed spin.
 - e. Most certified gliders won't spin and they recover on their own if they do.
 - f. None of the above.
 - g. a, b, c and d
19. You are thermaling out in front of launch on a light wind marginal lift day, deep in the brakes, with very shallow turns. You want the best possible sink rate. Suddenly your variometer indicates extreme sink. What has most likely happened?
- a. You have flown into strongly descending air.
 - b. You have entered a deep stall or parachutage.
 - c. You have flown into a rotor.
 - d. You have entered a wind gradient due to horizontal wind shear.
20. You are thermaling on a mountain launch site. Winds on launch were 12-15 mph, and your paraglider's trim speed is 20 mph. You are climbing in a thermal and drifting downwind:
- a. There is no problem if you drift behind the mountain since you can always land behind it.
 - b. The decision to drift behind a mountain top should be thoughtfully considered. Some of the factors to consider include the angle of the mountain, wind intensity/character, thermal intensity/frequency, and glider performance/ the pilots' ability to exploit the performance of the glider.
 - c. You will not encounter rotor as long as you stay above the mountain.
 - d. Never drift behind a mountain.
 - e. Maintain no more than a 2:1 glide to the front of mountain. Even better, 1:1 glide.
 - f. b and e
 - g. a, c, d.
21. A pilot is ridge soaring and the wind is beginning to increase. They are 500 feet above the crest of the ridge flying backwards. Pulling big ears, the pilot isn't climbing anymore, but is still going backwards even faster. What's the best way to manage this situation?
- a. Pull into a deep spiral to land on the ridge crest.
 - b. Turn 180 degrees and land as far as possible in the leeward side of the mountain.
 - c. Release big ears, accelerate the glider and accept the climb, the glider will eventually stop climbing and ground speed will improve once well in front of hill.
 - d. Pull a B-line stall.



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22. You are thermaling deep in the brakes in gusty conditions when you suddenly go weightless and start falling.
- a. You have deep stalled it.
 - b. You should let off all the way.
 - c. You should strongly consider using your reserve parachute.
 - d. If you have received stall training, you may be able to wait until you are stabilized under the glider and then release methodically.
 - e. None of the above.
 - f. All of the above.
23. You are thermaling and you have the strong feeling that you may have held too much brake for too long. You should:
- a. Apply brakes to full on position, even with the hips.
 - b. Let up brakes immediately, it may be easy to get back into normal flight if you let off quickly enough.
 - c. Prepare to apply brakes if paraglider surges forward.
 - d. If you have practiced stalls, hold the brakes stable and wait for paraglider to dampen out before recovering by letting the brakes up.
 - e. All of the above.
 - f. b, c and d.
24. You have measured the wind on launch as a steady 15 mph with gusts to 21 mph. Your paraglider has a maximum speed of 26 mph. How may this affect our glider?
- a. You will have no problem flying forward once in the air.
 - b. You will be able to make 5 mph ground speed once in the air.
 - c. Your normal speed over the ground will be 11 mph.
 - d. There is more than a slight chance you will not be able to penetrate forward once in the air.
25. What is the danger of flying with the speed bar fully engaged?
- a. You may exceed the safe speed of the paraglider and it will have structural failure.
 - b. There is a likelihood of a spin.
 - c. There is greater potential to encounter a frontal or asymmetric deflation.
 - d. The glider may full stall.
26. You are soaring a ridge close behind another paraglider in heavy traffic with the ridge on your left. You are approaching the end of the ridge, and they start a turn to reverse direction. What should you do?
- a. Follow the paraglider's flight path so they will pass you on the right, so you can both stay in the lift band.
 - b. Alter your course to the right so they will pass on the left.
 - c. Choice (a) is the wrong thing to do because it violates Right of Way rules.
 - d. You should turn first no matter what the traffic situation is.



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27. Directly after launching a pilot realizes that the left brake does not function and discovers there is a knot in the brake line near the pulley or brake line guide on the rear riser. What should they do?
- Fly the glider a safe distance from the hill using both rear risers instead of the brakes and then try to undo the knot.
 - Pull both brakes hard to force the knot through the brake line guide, and then fly normally.
 - Fly the glider with the left rear riser and right brake.
 - Be prepared to land using the rear risers on both sides of the glider to flare symmetrically.
 - None of the above.
 - a and d.
28. What is the correct sequence for launching a paraglider?
- Control, decide, inflate, accelerate.
 - Inflate, control, decide, accelerate.
 - Inflate, accelerate.
 - Inflate, control, accelerate.
29. What are the 4 phases of a launch and what's the last safe opportunity for aborting?
- Preparation, Stabilization, Lift-off. Aborting is safest during the Preparation phase, but adjustments can be made during Stabilization.
 - Assessment, Inflation, Take-off. The last opportunity for a safe abort is typically during the Assessment phase, just before Inflation.
 - Inflation, Control, Decide, Acceleration. It's most convenient and safest to abort during the decision phase, but if necessary, launch should be aborted any time before leaving the ground.
 - Inspection, Elevation, Departure. The Inspection phase offers the last practical chance for aborting, as it precedes Elevation and Departure phases.
30. After launching a pilot cannot seat themselves correctly in the harness. What should they do?
- Release the brakes and use hands to slide yourself back into the harness, then re-grab the brakes.
 - Keep the brakes in your hand and reach down under seat board to slide into harness.
 - Fly away from the hill on a safe heading, put both brakes in one hand ensuring straight flight, and use the free hand opposite the side of the reserve handle to slide into the harness.
 - Turn and land back at launch, because it's dangerous to fly out of the seat.
31. Flying over landing field before you lose height and begin your approach is:
- Not allowed due to obstructing other landing gliders.
 - To be avoided due to the potential of collisions.
 - Mandatory of all pilots.
 - Recommended to gain information about wind direction, wind strength, and obstacles.



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32. What are the legs of a DBF or aircraft landing approach?
- Downward, Back, Forward.
 - Downwind Before Fast approach.
 - Downwind, Base, Final.
 - Doing Best Final.
33. A pilot is on the base leg of their landing approach and find that they are still too high to turn and land. What should they do?
- Pull big ears to increase descent.
 - Initiate another base leg, extend the present base leg, or do a figure eight to lose altitude.
 - Do a 360.
 - Find a thermal to get out of there.
34. What best describes the piloting that a paraglider demands as an aircraft?
- Let it fly
 - Brakes are your buddy, pull as much as you can justify.
 - The demands change moment to moment, you have to brake and release on time.
 - Arbitrary pumping is the trick.
35. What are the reasons to use the reserve parachute?
- There's a specific list of reasons why a pilot should throw a reserve, if the situation does not match any of those reasons, don't throw the reserve.
 - If the pilot has lost directional control, does not recognize the configuration of the glider, is not sure they can regain control quickly, is at low altitude, or may feel they may blackout.
 - Be less eager to throw your reserve because there is a problem with people throwing unnecessarily.
 - There is a history of pilots not using their reserve when they should.
 - None of the above.
 - b and d.
 - a and c.
36. What are the problems regarding 360's close to terrain or at smaller hills:
- As pilots gain experience, they are at less risk of making a 360 into terrain.
 - The risk of making a 360 that causes a pilot to crash is ever-present and rating and experience level don't change this risk.
 - Only people who turn too gently end up making 360 into terrain-oriented mistakes.
 - Turning too sharply in an effort to avoid terrain can result in a spin which is also a common cause of accidents.
 - b and d.
 - a and c.



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AERODYNAMICS

37. The average chord of a paraglider is defined as:
- The average distance between the leading edge and trailing edge of the paraglider.
 - The distance between the wing tips.
 - The variation of angle of attack for different parts of the wing.
 - The average weight range of the paraglider
38. The term wing loading on a paraglider is defined as:
- The pilot's total flying weight (pilot, wing, harness, all equipment) divided by the surface area of the glider.
 - The weight of the paraglider.
 - The weight of the paraglider and harness.
 - The weight of the pilot.
39. The aspect ratio (AR) of the wing is 5 or 5:1. This indicates:
- The average chord is 5 times larger than the span.
 - The span is 5 times larger than the average chord.
 - Average chord (wing surface area).
 - No such thing. The glide ratio will be 5:1 in still air.
40. What are ways that paragliders malfunction?
- They deflate asymmetrically and frontal due to inadequate brake.
 - They stall due to too low of an angle of attack.
 - They deflate due to too low of an angle of attack.
 - They stall/spin due to too much brake input being held for too long.
 - a, c and d
 - All of the above.
41. Regarding line trimming of paraglider lines:
- This is only for comp pilots
 - All pilots can benefit from having the lines match to factory specs.
 - Line lengths are one of several variables that influence paraglider safety and performance.
 - All lines need to be stretched.
 - All of the above.
 - b and c.
 - a and d.



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WEATHER

42. An increase in humidity:
- a. Increases density altitude.
 - b. Decreases density altitude.
 - c. Has no effect on density altitude.
 - d. Is dangerous to fly in.
43. An increase in air temperature:
- a. Increases density altitude.
 - b. Decreases density altitude.
 - c. Has no effect on density altitude.
 - d. Makes dangerous thermals.
44. Clouds which appear smooth surfaced, well defined, and oval or lens shape indicate:
- a. Strong winds at altitude with potential for them to mix down to the surface.
 - b. Very unstable and turbulent air.
 - c. The boundary layer between two air masses of different temperatures.
 - d. The boundary layer between two air masses of different temperatures and humidity levels.
45. Puffy cotton ball shaped clouds with a significant degree of vertical development indicate:
- a. Probable strong local lift and turbulence.
 - b. Un-soarable conditions due to reduced solar heating.
 - c. Very stable conditions.
 - d. Wind shear.
46. When planning a paragliding flight, why is it important to consider the dew point in relation to the ambient temperature?
- a. To determine the best time of day for stable flying conditions.
 - b. To predict the likelihood of fog/cloud formation, which can drastically reduce visibility.
 - c. To assess the formation of lenticular clouds, which indicate strong winds aloft.
 - d. To ensure the electronic equipment operates within safe humidity ranges.
 - e. To estimate the wind speed at various altitudes.
47. As soon as precipitation is visible under a cumulus congestus or cumulonimbus cloud:
- a. The flying conditions are safe, and the clouds are dissipating.
 - b. The air will be cooled due to strong evaporation, and strong gusty downdrafts may develop.
 - c. The thermals are shutting down, and there are no more updrafts.
 - d. Lightning from cloud to ground will occur.



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RISK MANAGEMENT AND SAFETY

48. What are the consequences if the leg straps are too loose on launch?
- The pilot could slip out of the harness and have a fatal fall.
 - The pilot may have problems getting into the seat harness.
 - The glider will turn to one side.
 - The glider may not be able to be steered by weight shift.
49. Does the waist harness setting have an effect on the passive safety of the paraglider?
- No. There is no adjustment on the waist setting.
 - Yes. The paraglider is tested with a certain distance between hook-in points. Changing this setting can affect the behavior of the wing.
 - Yes. You should tighten the waist strap as much as possible for harness stability.
 - Yes. You should set the harness at its furthest setting for best weight shift.
50. What are the consequences of aging paraglider cloth?
- The glider will be slow to inflate and rise overhead.
 - The cloth will tear easier.
 - The paraglider may have tendency of going parachutal or deep stall when entering a thermal.
 - The cloth of a paraglider lasts forever.
 - a, b and c.
 - All of the above.
51. On launch a pilot notices that an A-line is severed. What course of action should the pilot take?
- Tie the ends together with a water knot.
 - Tie the ends together with tape.
 - Reconnect the ends with a short piece of extra line making sure the repaired line has the same length than the A-line on the other side.
 - Cancel the flight.
52. The first step in an emergency reserve deployment is:
- To collapse the paraglider.
 - To look for the deployment handle.
 - Cutaway from the paraglider.
 - Look for clear air and throw the reserve.



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53. Having your reserve repacked helps:
- Preserve the porosity of the cloth.
 - Safeguard the strength of the individual parts of the parachute.
 - Maintain the opening speed.
 - Increase pilot familiarity with the system and the likelihood that the reserve is appropriately sized, connected, and in good condition.
 - None of the above.
 - c and d.
54. Which of the following techniques should a pilot consider to disable the paraglider after deploying the reserve parachute?
- The pilot needs to do nothing as they will be descending under two canopies.
 - The pilot can pull on the rear risers, or any symmetrical set of risers except the As, to disable the paraglider.
 - The pilot can pull in as much of the brake lines as possible to disable the airfoil.
 - The pilot can pull the B-risers to stall the paraglider.
 - None of the above.
 - b, c and d.
55. A pilot wants to buy a new reserve and is close to the top limit of the small size, and on the low end of the medium size. Which is the better option?
- The small reserve because it opens faster.
 - The small reserve because it will pass through the lines of the paraglider for an easier opening.
 - The medium because it will have a lower sink rate in a real deployment situation.
 - The small because it fits in the harness better.
56. If the pilot is in a stall and decides to deploy the reserve parachute. Which is the best sequence of actions?
- look, reach, pull and throw the reserve across my back.
 - look, reach, pull and drop the reserve straight down.
 - look, reach, pull, and throw as strong as possible toward the horizon, but the pilot will have to make a personal choice about what is best direction based on the circumstances while maintaining control of the brakes with one hand if possible.
 - The reserve will deploy on its own.
57. When a pilot has consumed substances like drugs or alcohol, what are the effects on their flying ability?
- The pilot has improved reaction times as a result of reduced stress.
 - The pilot is relaxed therefore they fly better.
 - The pilot will sink out because their skills are diminished.
 - The pilot's judgement is reduced.



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58. Risk is:

- a. The probability that an accident may happen.
- b. Necessary to progress.
- c. The probability of accident occurring combined with the severity of its consequences.
- d. Paragliding isn't risky.

59. What are three positive ways to manage stress?

- a. Consume some alcohol, shoot guns, retreat from society.
- b. Social support, meditation, yoga.
- c. Deep breathing, talk to someone, avoid the stressor.
- d. Eat healthy, exercise, sleep.
- e. Quit paragliding.
- f. b, c and d.
- g. a and e.

REGULATIONS

60. Solo paraglider pilots in the United States are subject to which regulations?

- a. 14 CFR Part 61, Certification: Pilots, Flight Instructors, and Ground Instructors
- b. 14 CFR Parts 91.137, 91.138, 91.141, 91.143, and 91.145 which relate to Flight Restrictions
- c. 14 CFR Part 103, Ultralight Vehicles
- d. 14 CFR Part 105, Parachute Operations.
- e. None of the above.
- f. b and c.

61. In the United States, a paraglider complying with regulations:

- a. Can be used for commercial purposes such as displaying advertising.
- b. Must be used or intended to be used for recreation or sport purposes only.
- c. Must be used or intended to be used for manned operation in the air by a single occupant.
- d. Can carry a second occupant for a recreational ride as long as no money is accepted.
- e. b and c.
- f. a and d.