



# WHEN I GROW UP - PILOT

## WHAT IS A PILOT?

A pilot is a person who is qualified to fly an aircraft or spacecraft. Many things fall into this category — balloons, gliders, zeppelins are all considered to be aircraft.



A pilot must have a license in order to fly an airplane. There are two kinds of pilot licences: an airline transport pilot certificate and a commercial pilot licence. Airline pilots fly for airlines that transport cargo and people on a fixed schedule. Commercial pilots fly aircraft for other reasons, such as firefighting and rescue operations.

A person can also learn to be a pilot in the military. A soldier who wants to be a pilot must first gain enough experience to become an officer. Military pilots fly fighter jets, transport aircraft and helicopters.

## WHAT IS THE WORKPLACE OF A PILOT LIKE?

Pilots are employed by airline companies (commercial airlines), corporations or governments. In some cases, they are self-employed or work for private individuals to provide transportation in small aircrafts or private jets.

Pilots rarely do the usual 40-hour work week. Due to constant changes in airline itinerary and frequent shifts in schedules from weather and equipment malfunctions, pilots may work late at night, on weekends, and even on holidays.

In the case of commercial airline pilots, rules state that pilots must have an eight-hour break between shifts which may result in overnight stays in cities or countries which are far away. Most pilots will fly between 75 and 80 hours per month. They are limited to a total of 100 hours per month, or 1000 hours in one year.



## HOW DO I BECOME A PILOT?

It takes a lot of work and time to be a pilot. Pilots must be in great shape physically and mentally to do their jobs. Pilots cannot be colour-blind and must have good vision. A university degree is not required but it is highly recommended. Many universities offer degrees in aviation, aircraft operations, and aeronautical engineering. However, some pilots have earned their licences before they finish high school. In 2020, a British teenager named



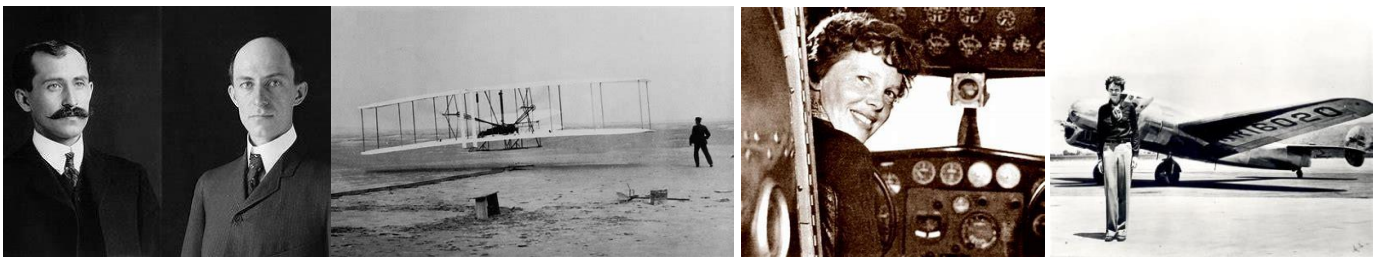
Mack Rutherford became the youngest pilot in the world; he earned his license at the age of 15. Two years later he became the youngest person to fly around the world.

### WHO ARE FAMOUS PILOTS IN HISTORY?

Wilbur and Orville Wright are arguably the most famous pilots in the history of flight. They became part of the aviation world on December 17, 1903, when they flew the world's first successful motorized aircraft. The Wright Flyer lasted all of 12 seconds in the air, making history as the first heavier-than-air machine to achieve flight. For the rest of their lives, the Wright brothers devoted themselves to the study of human-powered flight, carefully and thoroughly documenting their designs and findings. They gave the aviation industry its wings.

No list of famous pilots would be complete without Amelia Earhart. Earhart took her first airplane ride in December of 1920 alongside World War I pilot Frank Hawks and was instantly hooked.

Earhart became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic in 1928. She also holds the record for being the first person to fly over both the Atlantic and Pacific. She earned several records throughout her short career before disappearing somewhere over the Pacific in July 1937 during a flight to circumnavigate the globe.



***The Wright Brothers and their Airplane***

***Emelia Earhart***

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#### FIND OUT MORE...

[PSHE KS1 / KS2: Proud to be a pilot - BBC Teach](#)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/ks2-amelia-earhart/zv6k382>

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/wright-brothers>

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#### PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What must a pilot have in order to fly an aircraft?
2. How many hours maximum can commercial pilots fly per year?
3. What was Mack Rutherford famous for?
4. Who flew the first plane?
5. When did Emelia Earhart take her solo trip around the world?

