



Career of the Week

Pilot

What does a pilot do?

- Pilots fly aircraft in turn with their co-pilot, often employing a combination of manual operation and monitoring computer-controlled flying systems. In an emergency, such as extreme weather conditions, the pilot will fly the plane manually.
- Pilots don't just start the engine and set off. The pilot creates a flight plan that covers the route, altitudes and fuel requirements for the journey. They also keep a record of the flight, recording any technical problems or incidents such as bird strikes, drones or abusive passengers – even pilots can't get away from a bit of admin and paperwork.
- Pilots check that they have the appropriate information required on passengers, weather, route and technological systems, and ensure that fuel, safety systems and navigation systems are performing well before, during and after the flight.
- They'll also communicate with the co-pilot, cabin crew, air traffic control and passengers throughout.

What qualifications are required to become a pilot?

- To get your ATPL, you'll need to train with an aviation academy or flight school. The qualifications required to begin your pilot training may depend on the academy or school you train with. Go directly to the flight school or the employer to see what they say.

Average pilot starting salaries

- The average current rate of basic starting pay for pilots, without allowances, could be:
- Flying instructor – £1,100 per month and usually £15-£25 per flying hour
- Turboprop – £17,000-£35,000 per annum
- Small Business Jet – £17,000-£35,000 per annum
- Short-haul A320/B737 – £35,000-£40,000 per annum
- Long-haul A330/B747 – £49,000-£55,000 per annum



Common skills required to become a pilot

To start on your journey, here are some of the requirements to begin training as a pilot:

- **Personal qualities:** a passion for flight, motivation and ambition, self-discipline, technical aptitude, tolerance of pressure, maturity for your age, and spatial awareness.
- **Completed secondary education:** budding pilots are required to have completed secondary education (high school), ideally achieving a pass in English, mathematics and physics at GCSE.
- **Medical certification:** you'll need an examination to test your hearing, eyesight, coordination, and overall health. Upon successful completion, you will receive a valid Class 1 Medical Certificate. All pilots are required to have this certificate throughout their flying careers.
- **Age, nationality eligibility and entry requirements:** you may apply from the age of 17 but can only begin training as of 18. Depending on your programme of interest, you must be eligible to live in the country your training programme takes place in.
- **Assessment:** assessment involving computer-based aptitude testing, personality questionnaires, teamwork exercises, and competency-based interviews identifies individuals who are most likely to succeed in pilot training and who are suitable for a career as an airline pilot.