

Noise Awareness Steps

Following are some general guidelines and techniques to minimize the noise impact produced by aircraft operating near the ground:

1. If practical, avoid noise-sensitive areas such as residential areas, open-air assemblies (e.g., sporting events and concerts), and national park areas. Make every effort to fly at or above 2,000 feet over the surface of such areas when overflight cannot be avoided.
2. Consider using a reduced power setting if flight must be low because of cloud cover or overlying controlled airspace or when approaching the airport of destination. Propellers generate more noise than engines; flying with the lowest practical rpm setting will reduce the aircraft's noise level substantially.
3. Perform stalls, spins, and other practice maneuvers over uninhabited terrain.
4. Many airports have established specific noise abatement procedures. Familiarize yourself and comply with these procedures. (Noise abatement procedures are included in the airport listings contained in the airport database on this CD-ROM).
5. Work with airport managers and fixed-base operators to develop procedures to reduce the impact on noise-sensitive areas.
6. To contain aircraft noise within airport boundaries, avoid performing engine runups at the ends of runways near housing developments. Instead, select a location for engine runup closer to the center of the field.
7. On takeoff, gain altitude as quickly as possible without compromising safety. Begin takeoffs at the start of a runway, not at an intersection.
8. Retract the landing gear either as soon as a landing straight ahead on the runway can no longer be accomplished or as soon as the aircraft achieves a positive rate of climb. If practical, maintain best-angle-of-climb airspeed until reaching 50 feet or an altitude that provides clearance from terrain or obstacles. Then accelerate to best-rate-of-climb airspeed. If consistent with safety, make the first power reduction at 500 feet.
9. Fly a tight landing pattern to keep noise as close to the airport as possible. Practice descent to the runway at low power settings and with as few power changes as possible.
10. If a VASI or other visual approach guidance system is available, use it. These devices will indicate a safe glidepath and allow a smooth, quiet descent to the runway.
11. If possible, do not adjust the propeller control for flat pitch on the downwind leg; instead, wait until short final. This practice not only provides a quieter approach, but also reduces stress on the engine and propeller governor.
12. Avoid low-level, high-power approaches, which not only create high noise impacts, but also limit options in the event of engine failure.
13. Flying between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. should be avoided whenever possible. (Most aircraft noise complaints are registered by residents whose sleep has been disturbed by noisy, low-flying aircraft.)

Note: These recommendations are general in nature; some may not be advisable for every aircraft in every situation. No noise reduction procedure should be allowed to compromise flight safety.

Excerpt from AOPA's Handbook for Pilots
Section 5
Airport Operations