

Circuit Introduction — In-flight Notes

CASA Recreational Pilot License (Aeroplane) — Lesson 6

Language choices

"I have control" / "You have control" — three calls, every time.

"Looking out" — say it aloud when scanning, especially on downwind / base.

"Aiming point" — name where you're aiming on every approach.

"Stabilised" or "going around" — explicit call by ~500 ft AGL on every approach.

Session arc

| Task | C1 | C2-C3 | C4-C5 | C6+ |
|-------------------|----|-------|-------|-----|
| Take-off | I | S | S | S |
| Upwind climb | I | S | S | S |
| Crosswind leg | I | S | S | S |
| Downwind tracking | I | S | S | S |
| BUMFISH check | I | I | S | S |
| Base turn + leg | I | I | I | S |
| Approach | I | I | I | I† |
| Landing | I | I | I | I† |
| Radio | I | I | I | I |

_I = instructor · S = student · † = leave for a later session unless student demonstrates readiness _

Use this as a debrief checklist too — tick off tasks the student has consolidated.

Before starting the plane

- Confirm runway in use, circuit direction, circuit height.
- Confirm approximate number of circuits planned and break-off plan if conditions deteriorate.
- Brief the session arc above — student knows they start hands-off and tasks will grow each lap.
- Brief hand-over technique; practise the three calls on the ground before engine start.
- Brief the go-around: **normalise it before the first circuit** so it's never a surprise.

Circuit 1 — Full instructor demonstration

Instructor flies the whole circuit. Student observes; hands-on feel only if calm and comfortable.

Narrate every action as you do it:

- "Lining up — I'm placing the nose on the far end of the centreline."
- "Full power — feet alive on the rudder to keep straight."
- "Crosswind turn at 500 ft — tracking 90° to the runway."
- "Levelling at circuit height — runway around 2/3 along the left wing."
- "Pre-lading check now" - and after BUMFISH - "Pre-landing check completed"
- "Abeam the numbers — power back, first stage of flap."
- "Final — aiming point isn't moving, we're on profile."

After landing: brief what comes next circuit before lining up again.

Circuits 2-3 — Student takes to end of downwind

Hand over at the holding point: *"Your circuit from lined up. I'll take back at the BUMFISH point on downwind."*

Student owns: take-off, upwind climb, crosswind turn and leg, downwind turn and tracking.

Instructor takes back: from the BUMFISH check through to touchdown.

Watch for:

- Centreline discipline on take-off
- Prompt crosswind turn and tracking
- Runway position on downwind — inside wingtip reference
- Student should be settling by circuit 3; if not, extend this stage

After each circuit: 30-second verbal debrief before the next take-off.

Circuits 4-5 — Student adds BUMFISH check

Hand over: *"Your circuit — this time you'll run the BUMFISH check too. I'll take from the base turn."*

Student owns: everything above + BUMFISH downwind check.

Instructor takes back: base turn, approach, landing.

Watch for:

- Check completed before abeam the numbers (not rushed into the base turn)
- All items covered, not just the speed items
- Lookout maintained during the check — not head-down

Circuits 6+ — Student adds base turn and leg

Hand over: *"Your circuit — take the base turn as well. I'll take from 500 ft on final."*

Student owns: everything above + base turn initiation and tracking.

Instructor: manages approach and landing; initiates go-around if required.

Watch for:

- Base turn timing — not too early (undershooting final) or too late (overshooting)
- Speed and flap selection stable by the time instructor takes back
- Go-around decision made early if anything is off

Downwind leg — technique reference

Hand over: C2-3 (tracking); C4-5 (BUMFISH check added)

Sequence

- Level off at circuit height; trim
- Track parallel to the runway — runway off the inside wingtip
- Pre-landing BUMFISH check
- Lookout for traffic ahead and on base; build a mental picture
- Radio call at the downwind reporting point (*instructor handles — not handed over this session*)

Base leg — technique reference

Hand over: C6+

Sequence

- Abeam the numbers: reduce power; select first stage of flap (per type)
- At 45° behind the threshold: turn base
- Maintain target descent speed
- Adjust base turn timing if downwind was extended
- Plan the final turn to roll out aligned with the runway

Final approach — technique reference

Hand over: later session

Sequence

- Turn final; align with the runway centreline
- Select landing flap by 500 ft AGL
- Stabilised by 500 ft: glide path, track, speed all correct
- Aiming point staying still in the windscreen
- If anything is not stabilised — call "**going around**" and execute
- Maintain target approach speed
- Cross the threshold at round-out height

Landing — technique reference

Hand over: later session

Sequence

- At round-out height: reduce power smoothly to idle
- Raise the nose smoothly; hold off just above the runway
- Eyes down the runway — not at the nose
- Touchdown on main wheels, on centreline, at minimum flying speed
- Maintain centreline with rudder; lower the nose-wheel gently
- Brake as required; vacate at the nominated taxiway

Touch and go (if briefed)

Sequence

- After touchdown, without stopping:
 - Flaps to take-off setting
 - carb heat cold (if applicable)
 - Trim to neutral
- Apply full power smoothly
- Continue as a normal take-off

TODO: confirm whether touch-and-go is approved for this student at this stage / aircraft / aerodrome.

Go-around

Sequence

- **Decision** by ~500 ft AGL if not stabilised
- Apply **full power** smoothly
- Pitch for climb attitude
- carb heat cold (if applicable)
- Flaps to go-around setting (per type)
- Climb on the extended centreline
- Re-enter circuit on crosswind

*A go-around is **not a failure**. Brief this before C1 so it never surprises the student.*

Return to aerodrome / final circuit

- Brief which circuit is the final landing before lining up.
- Plan after-landing taxi route.
- Complete after-landing checklist when clear of the runway.
- Shutdown and post-flight inspection per aircraft checklist.