

Chapter 2: Test Flight

There's a lot of turbulence on this sunny but windy May morning: later I will learn that there were ferry cancellations. I relaxed my body, as if I were paddling a racing kayak or outrigger canoe on white caps. That's what it feels like in this tiny two-seater aircraft: tippy.

The hundreds of hours I once spent crammed into delicate shell-like racing boats on False creek-Creek are the closest sensations to flying in the C-152 I can relate it to. The air feels like choppy water under us in continuous movement.

"Come on airplane, help me find the calm," I say to myself and feel it flatten out for mere seconds. I do my best to keep the nose down—it bucks up continuously, every thirty or 40 seconds or so, like the head of a stubborn welsh-Welsh pony I had as a child. The the plane, built in 1978, is older than my 26-year-old instructor.

Amy Amy, my instructor, has me do a left roll (turn) to return to Boundary Bay Airport (CZBB). I slow and smoothly turn the control column left—it feels and looks amazing as the landscape and then the horizon tilts away. Again, it feels like doing a graceful curve in a watercraft. All the while, she Amy encourages me and gives positive feedback.

She choose to teach at this particular flying club, because they're so supporting and supportive of developing female pilots. When I had arrived at the club there was a swarm of young men hurrying had hurried in through the door ahead of me. H; however, inside waiting on the comfy leather chairs are had been two other female students, albeit much younger than myself. We'd looked at each other and gave given each other a knowing smile as if to say, "We're sisters."

We But now Amy and I are passing through Vancouver International Airport (YVR) airspace and under their tower's close scrutiny. We have to stay below 2000 ft.feet in altitude, or there will be repercussions. I keep it at 1700 feet.

"I have control," Amy the Ace says, and takes control on her identical instructor's control column, and lands us in as smooth a landing as I've ever felt. She gives me instructions on taxiing: done with your hands relaxed in your lap and feet controlling the rudder pedals.

Commented [JG1]: Did the air feel choppy only under you, or did it feel all around you like how choppy water feels when it's under you? If the latter, please delete.

Commented [JG2]: Please accept deletion or keep "or 40" and remove "or so."

Commented [JG3]: Okay to return to present from flashback?

Commented [JG4]: "Control" used 3 times in sentence. Change to "take charge" or similar?

Commented [JG5]: Okay to clarify what is identical? Or do non-instructor planes also have identical control columns?

It takes me a bit of practice, but again it feels like steering a kayak or [pedaling an](#) out-rigger [pedals](#). By the time we turn the corner it gets easy to follow on the yellow line, or maybe I'm not fighting the easterly wind anymore. [The turbulence flings us around.](#) [And](#) I feel like [I'm](#) doing a terrible job, but [she Amy](#) assures me I'm doing [a great job](#), as I'm being predictable and slow in my movements.

Amy gives me more positive feedback when we stop and asks if I'm interested in pursuing my license and having her as my instructor.

"Can't you tell by my smile?" I tell her I'm interested in getting my recreational pilot's permit (RPP) rather than a [commercial private](#) pilot's license ([PPL](#)). Here are the differences:

Commented [JG6]: Please clarify what's happening here: isn't turbulence in the air and you're on the ground now, and not fighting the wind?

RPP	PPL
Less training hours (20 flight hours min.)	More training hours (45 flight hours minimum .)
Ground school not required	Ground school required (40 hours)
Class 4 Medical-medical Exam-exam by any GP	—Class 3 medical exam by an Aviation Medical Examiner (AME)
Up-Limited to four seats	No seat limits on-seats
No ratings, except Float-Planefloatplane	Additional ratings, like Nightnight , Mountainmountain , Instrumentinstrument , and Twintwin , etc.
In-Canada only	Worldwide (with conversions)
Easy to upgrade or-to PPL	N/A

Commented [JG7]: Should this table have a descriptive left-hand column: "Training Hours," "Ground School," "Medical Exam," etc. for easier reference and to cut length?

Commented [JG8]: LAYOUT: Please verify and use approved design elements (esp. check typefaces, sizes, and fonts for headers vs body) for table formatting.

Limited to flying 50 NM within airport (Canada) or Limited to 25 NM within airport (US)	No distinct limits
Limited to one passenger	No passenger limits

As I discussed this goal with my instructor, I changed my goal to go for the full PPL, ~~as since~~ ~~this was something~~ most pilots with their RPP eventually did. I'll be making the ~~ferry~~ trip from Gibsons ~~on the ferry~~ to Bounding Boundary Bay Airport once or twice a week, ~~and~~ staying at our condo in the city to get in as many flights as possible ~~during the week~~. The ~~more funnyfunniest~~ part is I could've cycled on the gravel dike to CZBB when we lived in Tsawwassen 25 years ago. If I'd taken ~~in~~ an introductory flight then, would I have caught the bug, or ~~have~~ been frightened out of my mind?

Commented [JG9]: Delete expletive?

Commented [JG10]: Okay? "During the week" could be confusing after traveling "once or twice a week."