

Pilot Gear

Here's my list of pilot equipment and supplies. You can find these items in online pilot's shops: MyPilotStore.com, Sporty's, Marv Golden, Aircraft Spruce, etc. Some are also on Amazon.

VFR Pilot: Minimum Set of Gear

Item	When needed	Suggestion	Price range
Headset	All flights	Do not skimp on this! Manufacturers: David Clark, Lightspeed, or Bose	\$275-\$1095
Sunglasses	Day flights	Must <i>not</i> be polarized. Larger lenses, minimal rims. Small (and maybe straight) temples (used under headset).	varies
Logbook	All flights	All are OK. (My favorite is the Sporty's Pilot's Flight Logbook.)	\$12
Kneeboard	Around flight 3 and onward	Fit in the cockpit is important. No need for fancy.	\$15-\$40
Notepad (5½ × 8 inch) & pens/pencils (2 or more)	Around flight 3 and onward	Notepad fits kneeboard. Pens must <i>not leak</i> despite heat and altitude. (I've had good luck with Zebra F-301.)	\$4
Copy of <i>Pilot's Operating Handbook</i>	Around flight 6 and onward	You can find this as a PDF, but a printed book is handy to study & use.	\$55
VFR Sectional Chart: San Antonio	Before solo	These are revised every 6 months. Subscribe to keep current.	\$9 (\$18/year)
FAA Chart Supplement: South Central	Before solo	These are revised every 56 days. If you aren't going to use a tablet in flight, subscribe to keep current.	\$6 (\$39/year)
Flashlight	Night flight (after solo)	Must be dimmable. Switchable red/white is good. Look for astronomer's flashlights. I like the Rigel Systems Skylite (\$40).	\$20 and up
Flight computer	Cross-country (after solo) and written exam	Manual (wheel) E-6B style or electronic (calculator) style	\$12 or \$30 or \$100

VFR Pilot: Nice to Have

The main decision to make is whether to spend the money on a tablet for an EFB app. The EFB app subscription itself is about the same (or cheaper) than paper subscription, but the tablet and mount can cost a bit. If you get a tablet, erase (factory reset) it, delete all non-aviation apps, and dedicate it to flying uses only.

Item	When nice to have	Suggestion	Price range
Flight bag	As stuff collection grows	Big enough for headset + kneeboard + tablet etc., but not too bulky. Fits and organizes the gear you have.	\$35–\$150 (if new)
Checklist binder	If you print your own	Marv Golden “Flight Crew Checklist Binder - Commercial” PEB1001/FlyBoys “Oversized Checklist Book” FB2205	\$15
Tablet	Cross-country (after solo)	iPad mini (with Cellular hardware, plan optional)	\$520 and up (if new)
EFB Application for tablet	Cross-country (after solo)	Garmin Pilot <i>or</i> ForeFlight Mobile Try both using their free trials.	\$75/year and up
Tablet cockpit mount	Cross-country (after solo)	Many options. I use a bracket from iPadYokeMounts.com	\$88
Backup battery for tablet	Cross-country (after solo)	IEC 62133 (or UL 2054) certified. Sufficient current rating for tablet.	\$45–\$70

IFR Pilot

Item	Suggestion	Price range
IFR Enroute Low Altitude Charts	For paper chart users only. These are revised every 56 days. Subscribe to keep current.	\$5 (\$33/year)
U.S. Terminal Procedures Publication	For paper chart users only. These are revised every 56 days. Subscribe to keep current.	\$9 (\$57/year)
EFB Application upgrade for geo-referenced charts	Upgrade your EFB app subscription instead of paper charts + plates.	\$75–\$100/year
In flight weather receiver	Consider an ADS-B in receiver to use with your EFB app to get weather updates enroute.	\$300–\$750