

Q1. How old do I have to be to start the pilot training?

At the time of the completion of the private pilot training, you have to be at least 17 years old. At the time of the completion of the professional pilot training at least 18 years old. However, you can start the training already earlier. The first solo flight without flight instructor though requires you to be 16 years old.

Q2. Up to which age may I fly?

For private flights, there is no age limit. As long as you fit feel and pass the regular medical checks, you can keep on flying. Depending on the area of responsibility, professional pilots may fly until the age of 60 or 65.

Q3. How long does the training take?

This depends mainly on how often you take flying lessons. We recommend at least one to two lessons per week. Thus private pilot training lasts approx. 9 – 12 months, the professional pilot training approx. 6 – 10 months.

Q4. Do I have to go back to school for the pilot training?

The training as a private and professional pilot includes a theoretical and a practical part. You complete the theory training by attending classes or in an distance learning course. You can find details to the relevant training courses on information sheets in our training dossier.

Q5. Can I complete the training part-time while I am working?

With the exception of the integrated professional pilot training, you can complete all training courses on a part-time basis.

Q6. How do I register for the training?

Call us or email us directly at one of our bases. We are happy to assist you with any operational processes of your training.

Q7. When is the optimal time to start the training?

You can start training at any time. We fly throughout the year and can discuss the individual start of the course. However, it is advisable to coordinate the start of the practical training with the theoretical training.

Q8. In which intervals should I take flying lessons?

1 – 2 lessons per week would be ideal. This can also be intensified in arrangement with the flight instructor.

Q9. Due to an absence, I would like to interrupt the training. Is that possible?

In principle, this is no problem. However, from the time you complete the theoretical training you need to take the practical exam at the latest after 24 months. Otherwise, the theory exam has to be repeated. Specific deadlines also apply to the retraining or the night training.

Q10. How expensive is the pilot training?

You will find the expected costs in a separate listing of our training dossier.

Q11. Can I change the type of helicopter during the training?

You need to fly at least 35 hours with the type of helicopter you will fly on the private pilot exam. A change of the helicopter models without great expenses is only possible at the beginning of the training. However, we recommend completing a test flight on potential helicopters before the training start before committing to one model. These flying hours can be already counted towards the training.

Q12. I fly already aeroplanes, does that help me during the training as a helicopter pilot?

You will definitely have an advantage because your aviation experience will be helpful when flying helicopters. Depending on the license, you do not have to complete the entire theory training. 10% (with a maximum of 6 hours) of your past flying time as a responsible pilot may also get taken into account for the PPL(H) training.

Q13. I fly already model helicopters, does that help me during the training as a helicopter pilot?

Since a model helicopter is developed in principle the same way, you can use your technical knowledge for the relevant theory lessons. Your sensitive control skills may also help you with the first hovering exercises.

Q14. Can I rent the helicopter after the training?

Of course, you can also charter our helicopters after the training. However, you need a valid type rating (see also Q17) for the helicopter, as well as a charter contract. With pilots, who did not train with Swiss Helicopter, a check flight is required.

Q15. How long is my license valid?

The license will last a lifetime and does not expire. However, you need to have a valid type rating permission for the helicopter model, as well as a valid medical certificate (see Q17).

Q16. How many hours per year do I need to fly in order to keep the license and/or type ratings?

In order to continue flying a helicopter model, you need to fly at least 2 hours per year and complete an annual check flight with an expert (proficiency check). However, depending on the helicopter model, further flying hours per year are needed in the charter contract to rent the helicopter.

Q17. What is a type rating?

Each helicopter model you intend to fly must be specified in your license. In order to receive this entry, you need to have the relevant training with an exam (also called type rating) for this model. This entry is then valid for one year and has to be renewed every year with a check flight (see also Q16).

Q18. What is the medical certificate for?

All pilots need to undergo a regular medical examination with an aero medical doctor. He will issue the pilot with a certificate (also called «medical»). There are several classes: Private pilots need a class 2 certificate, which is valid for up to five years. Professional pilots need a class 1 certificate, which is valid for maximum one year.

Q19. May I land with the helicopter outside of airfields?

In principle, you may land the helicopter in Switzerland anywhere below 1100 m above sea level and outside of inhabited areas. However, all property rights of land owners remain reserved. The exact wording and the existing exceptions, such as nature reserves, accident scenes, restaurants, etc., are described in the landing regulations of BAZL. In higher regions with more than 1100 m above sea level, one may land only in published mountain landing sites and with the appropriate mountain training extension.

Q20. Do you need any language skills?

English is essential for aviation, since all communication via radio is in English, and important messages are often published in English. For the acquisition of the professional pilot license, you have to pass an English test. This test must be repeated at least every 4 years. The private pilot license can be issued without tested proficiency of the English language.