

Accident Prevention Program

Descent to the MDA and Beyond

HELPFUL HINTS FOR INSTRUMENT APPROACHES

DO:

1. Review the instrument approach procedures during preflight planning. Check the departure, destination, and alternate airports for at least the following considerations,
 1. approaches available and their compatibility with the aircraft equipment,
 2. limitations on use of approaches,
 3. NOTAMs affecting the approaches,
 4. straight-in-landing DH or MDA and visibility minimums,
 5. circle-to-land MDA and visibility minimums,
 6. sources of weather updating service,
 7. effects of remote altimeter settings, and
 8. missed approach procedures and limitations.
2. Check the required aircraft approach aids before takeoff.
3. Know the minimums for the approach category of the aircraft being flown.
4. Establish your own personal approach minimums based on recent instrument flight experience and familiarity with the aircraft and equipment to be used. Your personal minimums may be higher than published approach minimums, but cannot be less.
5. Fly the instrument approach procedure as published.
6. Plan an orderly descent to reach the Minimum Descent Altitude prior to the Missed Approach Point.
7. Maintain the Minimum Descent Altitude for the approach being flown until the runway environment is in sight and until descent is necessary to make a safe landing.
8. Immediately execute a missed approach if the runway environment is not clearly visible at the Missed Approach Point if it is lost at any time thereafter.
9. Make the initial missed approach turn toward the runway if visual contact is lost during the circle-to-land maneuver.
10. Fly any required missed approach procedure with the same precision used for an instrument approach.
11. Cancel your IFR flight plan with ATC if VFR conditions are met and you elect to proceed VFR.

DON'T

1. Fly an instrument approach procedure unless all required approach aids are available, operating, and used.

2. Descend below the Decision Height or Minimum Descent Altitude without the runway environment in sight.
3. Attempt a circle-to-land maneuver at the straight-in landing Minimum Descent Altitude.
4. Commence or continue descent for landing without the runway environment in sight.
5. Deviate from the published instrument approach procedures unless you are in VFR conditions and you have cancelled IFR with ATC.

(END OF DOCUMENT FAA-P-8740-9 AFS-800-0978)