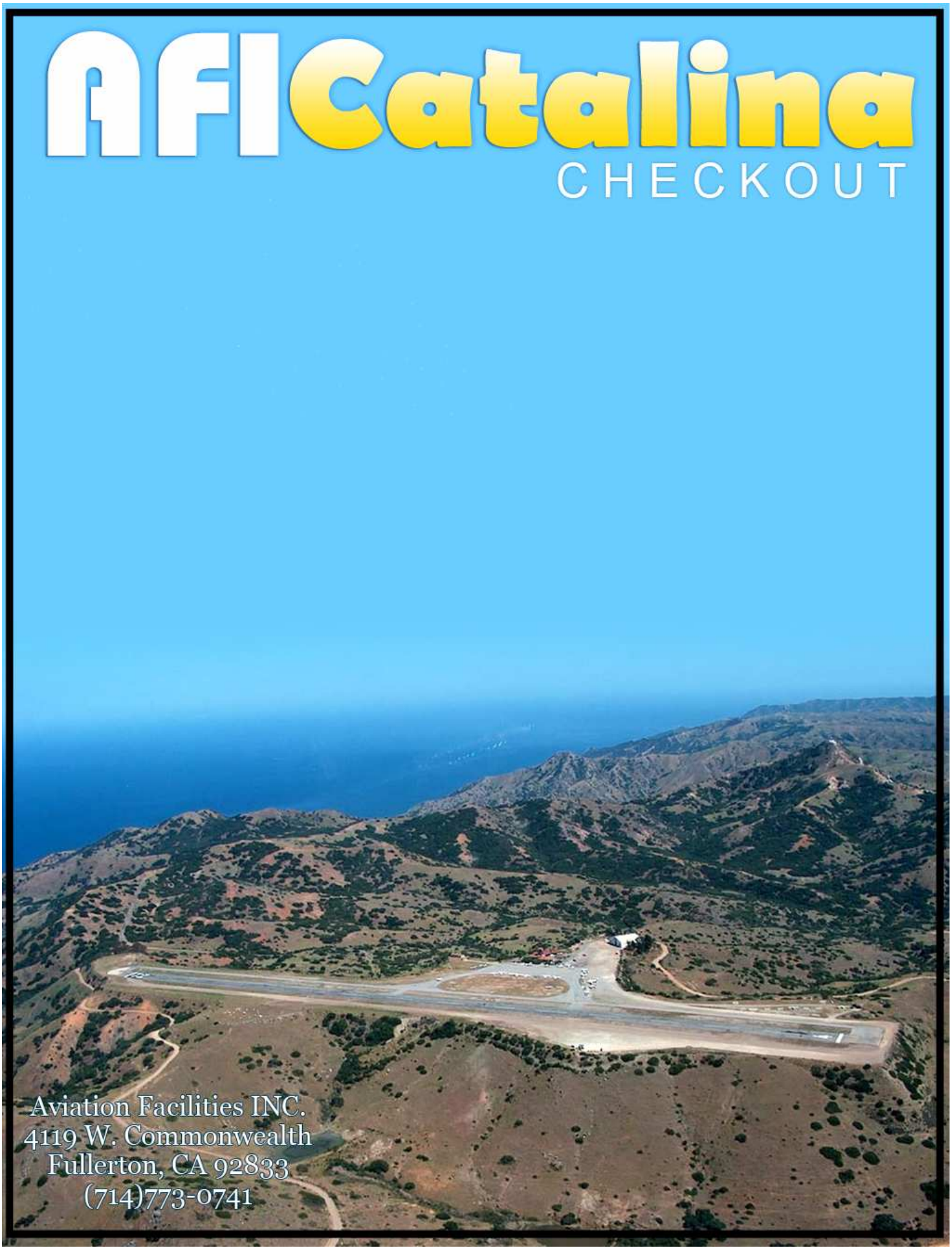
AFI Catalina

CHECKOUT



Aviation Facilities INC.
4119 W. Commonwealth
Fullerton, CA 92833
(714)773-0741

Catalina Checkout Student Training Syllabus

Pickup Catalina Checkout syllabus from AFI
Schedule 1 2hr block of ground instruction with instructor

Session 1-Ground *1.0 on the ground*

Come prepared having read required material and completed checkout worksheet
Be prepared to discuss the following:

Wind Shear
Illusions
Emergency procedures
Catalina airport and environment

Schedule aircraft and instructor for two 2hr blocks.

Session 2-Flight 1 Catalina Checkout *.5-on the ground* *2.5-in the air*

Preflight .2
Flight 3.5
Postflight .3

Totals: *Ground 1.0 Dual 3.5 Instructor .5*

Aviation Facilities, Inc
Catalina Checkout Worksheet

Student Name: _____

CFI Name: _____ Date: _____

Catalina Checkout as per AFI's Operational Agreement

Article 1, Section 2

To qualify as Pilot in Command (PIC) or as solo student pilot in an AFI airplane a Renter pilot must pass a competency check for the conditions listed below, as considered appropriate to the certificates and ratings held, given by an AFI Flight Instructor:

Article 1, Section 2 (e)

For Catalina-Airport Operations.

1. Field Elevation? _____
2. Traffic Pattern Altitude? _____
3. Runway Length? _____
4. What is the CTAF or Unicom Frequency? _____
5. What are the traffic pattern directions for:
   RWY4? _____
   RWY 22? _____
6. Are fuel and maintenance available at the airport? _____
7. What are the hours of operation, Summer? _____
   Winter? _____
8. What is the VOR Frequency? _____
9. What is the Flight Service Frequency for the area? _____
10. Does the airport have any Visual Slope Indicators? _____
11. Is there automated weather available at the airport? _____
    If so, what is the phone number? _____
12. What features of Catalina are unique and what are some possible hazards around the airport? _____
_____
_____
_____

13. What are ditching procedures for the airplane you are flying? _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

14. What is the aircraft make and model that you are flying? _____
15. What is the Aircraft's best glide speed? (Vg)? _____
16. What is the maximum power off glide range @6000 feet with no wind? _____
17. Could you glide to either shore if your engine failed mid channel at this altitude? ___

Student Signature_____ CFI Signature_____

Catalina Island

By Imran Jamali and Gerrit Paulsen
Photos courtesy of Catalina Island Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau

Catalina Island has served as a tranquil oasis of calm for stressed-out Southern Californians for a long time, providing a welcome respite from the high-pressure life of Los Angeles. Located a mere 22 nautical miles from the mainland, it is a world away from the cares of city life.

Catalina offers dramatic open vistas, plentiful wildlife, and varied outdoor recreation – both on land and offshore. There are no freeways, and very few cars. Instead, golf carts traverse narrow lanes leading to small charming hotels and intimate restaurants.

Pilots arriving at Catalina's picturesque airport will also find a different world. Instead of harried controller and a clogged traffic pattern, pilots experience the unique challenges a mountain airport. On the ground, views of the dramatic coastline replace the usual rental car parking lots, and time slows to keep pace with a simpler life.

This sanctuary is the result of over 100 years of careful management. Nearly all of Catalina Island is privately owned, operated, and protected. The Santa Catalina Island Company and The Santa Catalina Island Conservancy share the responsibility to both entertain the island's one million annual visitors, and to protect the island from overdevelopment and overuse.

The Santa Catalina Island Company was incorporated in 1894 by the Banning Brothers – William, Hancock, and Joseph. The Bannings planned to develop the island as a resort, and much of the initial development of island's main town of Avalon took place during their ownership. The Banning brothers' substantial investments in Avalon were paying off until a devastating fire swept through the town in November of 1915. The Bannings immediately began to rebuild, however, World War I brought decreased visitation and the Bannings were never able to recover financially. Consequently, they began to sell shares of the Santa Catalina Island Company in 1919.

William Wrigley Jr., of chewing gum fame, purchased some of the Santa Catalina Island Company stock, and after his

first visit to the island, he bought-out all other investors to become the sole owner of the island. Wrigley immediately launched several new construction and improvement projects, with the ultimate goal of transforming Avalon into a vacation paradise. Various conservation practices were also initiated by the Wrigley-led Santa Catalina Island Company, including much-needed animal controls, protection of watersheds, and reseeding of overgrazed areas. Today, the Santa Catalina Island Company (scico.com) still operates many of the island's resort amenities, including transportation, hotels, restaurants, sightseeing tours, and convention facilities.

Preservation and protection of the magnificent natural heritage of Catalina Island is the responsibility of the Santa Catalina Island Conservancy (catalinaconservancy.org). In addition to protecting and studying the island's unique biological communities, which include numerous rare and endangered species, the Conservancy is responsible for Catalina's treasure trove of historical and archeological sites. They also maintain over 100 miles of roads, and are responsible for the Catalina airport.
The Catalina airport (AVX) sits atop a high mesa near the middle of the island. The single 3000-foot runway 4-22 occupies the entire length of the mesa. The mesa is very steep, dropping from the field elevation of 1602 feet straight down to the ocean, which has inspired the name "Airport-in-the-Sky."

When inbound to Catalina from the mainland, it is common to contact CTAF about mid-channel. Pilots must obtain approval from the Unicom tower (122.7) for takeoff and landing at this privately owned, public use facility. Only full-

stop landings are allowed, and operations are only permitted when the airport is open and attended (8 am - 7 pm, April 15 through October 15, and 8 am - 5 pm the rest of the year). For more information, call the airport manager at 310-510-0143.

The general condition of the airport is poor, reflecting the financial challenges faced by many private airports. Rocks on the runway are not uncommon, and the taxiways and tiedown areas have even more rocks and potholes. Despite the condition, this is a very popular airport, so bring your own chocks and tiedowns in case the limited tiedowns provided are filled. There are no aircraft services – no FBO, no fuel, no maintenance.

Since the airport cannot generate revenue from hangars, fuel, or maintenance, the cost of keeping the airport open is covered by a landing fee. The landing fee is paid on the second floor of the airport building, and has recently been increased to $20 for all aircraft (the increase was necessary to cover the escalating costs of maintaining the airport). The overnight tiedown fee is still $5 per night.

Adjacent to the airport, and with an equally beautiful view, is the Buffalo Springs Station Airport-in-the-Sky Restaurant. As the name implies, buffalo burgers are on the menu, alongside more traditional fare for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The restaurant has the same hours of operation as the airport. Call 310-510-2196 for more information.
The Catalina Island Conservancy's nature center is also located at the airport. It contains many interpretive displays with information about the natural history of Santa Catalina Island, and a pleasant native plant garden.

While the airport environs alone make for an enjoyable visit, much of Catalina's charm and adventure is reserved for those who venture down off the mesa. The island has two towns, Avalon and the much smaller Two Harbors.

Two Harbors is a rustic resort village located on the isthmus. Recreation opportunities here include hiking, mountain biking, snorkeling and scuba diving, ocean kayaking, four wheel drive tours, and just plain relaxing on a sandy secluded beach. All the necessary equipment may be rented in town. Visit scico.com/twoharbors for more information.

Perched on a hilltop overlooking Two Harbors is the Banning House Lodge, with sweeping views of both Isthmus Cove and Catalina Harbor. The Banning House Lodge was built in 1910 as the summer home for the Banning Brothers. It has since been renovated into a charming 11-room lodge, with rates ranging from $91 to $266 depending on room, view, and season (310-510-2800).

The Catalina Safari Shuttle Bus provides transportation from the airport to the village of Two Harbors, stopping along the way at Little Harbor campground. Buses run twice daily in the summer, leaving the airport at 12:15 and 6:15 pm. The fare for the hour-and-a-half ride from the airport to Two Harbors is $11.75 one way and $23.50 round-trip. Call 310-510-7265 for additional information.

To get to Avalon from the airport, most people prefer to take the Airport Shuttle Bus (310-510-0143) for $15 round trip. Taxis are also available, but are extremely expensive. The bus leaves the airport every 2 hours starting at 9:30 am, and runs until 7 pm. The narrow, winding road from the airport to Avalon can be a more harrowing experience than the flight to Catalina.

Activates abound in Avalon. Among the most popular are the

glass bottom boat tours that made Catalina Island famous. Snorkel and scuba diving adventures are also available, as are boat rentals. Shore-based activities include horseback riding, and golf at the island's unusually challenging nine-hole course, which has been newly upgraded with two sets of tees for 18-hole play. Visit catalina.com for a complete list of activities and suppliers.

The hotels in Avalon reflect the character of the island; smaller hotels with intimate rooms are the norm. Typical of these charming hotels is the historic Hotel Catalina. A Catalina landmark built and decorated in the Victorian style, the hotel features large verandas with panoramic harbor views, equipped with rocking chairs to enjoy the refreshing sea air and lovely harbor ($50 - $150, hotelcatalina.com, 800-540-0184).

High above Avalon is the Inn on Mt. Ada. Originally built as the Wrigley's summer vacation home, it is now one of the finest small hotels in California. The Inn has six luxurious rooms, each with commanding views of either the harbor or ocean. The room rate includes all meals and a limited wine and beer selection, as well the use of a golf cart during your stay ($280 - $620, catalina.com/mtada, 800-608-7669). Even if you stay elsewhere in Avalon, consider reserving a table at Mt Ada for lunch to enjoy the amazing views from the Inn's spectacular balcony.

Avalon is busiest from mid-June through Labor Day. Advance hotel reservations are essential during the season, and any time on weekends. Daily hotel availability is posted on the web at visitcatalina.org. Most hotels have strict cancellation policies. If you are unwilling to forfeit the deposit in the event that weather prevents a safe landing at the Airport-in-the-Sky, be prepared to divert to Long Beach or Torrance and take a ferry to the island (800-481-3470, catalinaexpress.com).

Catalina is a rare and unique place to visit, offering an escape from urban sprawl and a return to nature. Whether you fly in for a leisurely lunch, or stay for an entire week, Santa Catalina Island's remote beauty and relaxed pace is the perfect antidote for too much big city stress.

Practical Advice for Flying to Catalina

By Imran Jamali

The following is the advice I give my students when flying into Catalina. This advice is taken from the perspective of flying a single-engine land plane, and takes into consideration the worst-case scenario of losing that single engine over the ocean.

1. Know the Airport - Due to the Catalina airport's unusual topography, it has been the site of numerous accidents over the years. Most accidents can be attributed to inexperience. If you are a casual flyer and have never flown to Catalina, go with an experienced flight instructor, or at least schedule a ground lesson. Call any of the many flight schools around LA, Orange County, or San Diego and ask if they have an experienced Catalina instructor on staff.
Inexperienced pilots flying in to Catalina during windy conditions or poor visibility do not fare well. The steep drop-off at the end of the runway creates significant downdrafts and turbulence, often exceeding a small aircraft's ability to climb. Another common cause of accidents are the illusions caused by the upslope of the first 2000 feet of runway 22. On landing, the upslope creates the illusion of being higher than you really are, tricking inexperienced pilots into flying the approach too low and encountering the aforementioned downdrafts. Overcome the illusion by using the altimeter, focusing only on the first few hundred feet of the runway, and by using the VASI during the approach. On takeoff, this same upslope prevents line-of-sight between the runway ends. Most pilots only see half the runway when aligned with runway 4 or 22 in takeoff position, and some inexperienced pilots have induced a takeoff stall as they panicked by pulling up near the mid-point of runway, thinking it was the end. There are no mid-field or distance remaining signs for the runway.

2. Watch the Weather - Do not go in heavy IMC. Even if you are an experienced instrument pilot, what fun is going to a vacation spot that will be cloudy anyway? The Catalina airport does have an instrument approach, with the VOR located about 1.8 NM to the south. The airport is often closed because of low cloud cover or other inclement weather. Call in advance to check conditions, AWOS is 310-510-9641 and general conditions are available at 800-255-8700 from anywhere in southern California.

3. Respect the Ocean - Choose a route that gives you the shortest distance over the ocean. Consider routing over oil platforms and common boat routes. If you do have an engine failure, ditching near an oil platform or in front of a boat increases your chances of quick help. Even though it is not required under Part 91, you should seriously consider taking a life raft, life preservers, pyrotechnic signaling devices, etc. Make sure all of your passengers know how to swim. I will not take a passenger who can't swim, even with a life preserver. Review your water ditching procedures; a good starting point is the AIM section 6-3-3.

If possible, choose an altitude that allows a power-off glide back to shore in case of an engine failure. For example, let us assume you take the shortest route over water, which is 22 NM. Midway point of that route would be 11 NM. Look at the performance chart for your airplane and see which altitude will give you a power-off gliding distance of 11 NM or greater. Don't forget to factor in the headwind component. After takeoff, ensure that you are at your power-off gliding altitude before reaching the ocean. This may involve a circling climb over land, and coordinating airspace clearance with approach.
It is always a good idea to file a flight plan and request VFR flight following.

4. Beware the Deep - If you are a diver, or are taking passengers that are divers, remember to use the following rule of thumb. If your dive did not require a controlled ascent, wait at least 12 hours if your flight will be above 8000' MSL. If your dive required a controlled ascent, wait at least 24 hours if your flight altitude exceeds 8000' MSL. Some divers have told me, to be on the safe side, they wait 24 hours regardless of the type of dive or airplane cruising altitude.

Imran Jamali is originally from Dallas, TX. He now lives Chandler, AZ, after having spent several years in the Los Angeles basin. He earned his flight instructor's certificates in 1995, and has been teaching part- and full-time since. He holds an ATP in addition to his MEI, CFII, and CFI. Imran has a degree in Mechanical Engineering from Arizona State University, and has done design and testing work for both Boeing and Honeywell