

Airline Transport Pilot (CFI) – Questions and Answers

How can I build the 1500 hours? There are various methods to add up the 1500 flight hours. For more information read the section “Hour Builder Tips”.

What’s the technical difference between a CPL and ATP rating? In many respects they are similar or even redundant. But the ATP is done with a much higher experience level, flying has to be done more precisely and professionally and the knowledge base is way beyond the commercial level. For more information compare the CPL with the ATP PTS.

For the vast majority of ATP pilots, including those taking a short "ATP finish up" course at a local or national facility, the ATP check-ride will be quite similar to their multi-engine commercial check-ride, plus a few very basic questions about Part 121 versus 135 (such as "what's the difference between the two?"). Don't think it will be easy, though! Where an "ok" knowledge of some material for your multi-engine check-ride may have sufficed, you will need to have an EXCELLENT knowledge for your ATP.

Do I need a high school diploma or college degree to do the ATP? No, but that doesn't mean the airline that will hire you is not asking for additional academic credentials.

How about the ATP check-ride? First, there's the question of what the ATP check-ride is NOT. The ATP check-ride is NOT an airline test. You are not expected to be a master of turbine operations (if you have been doing your flying in piston-driven aircraft up to this point). The oral exam will likely touch only lightly (if at all) on part 121 and 135 topics. You may recall that you had a choice of Part 121 or Part 135 ATP written tests to take. There is no such distinction in the check-ride. For the most part, your written test is the last time that you will see questions about how many flight attendants are required or how to compute mach numbers, at least as far as your ATP check-ride goes.

How likely will I be hired by an airline after I passed the ATP? Even though you are an airline-ready pilot with an ATP the entry level requirements vary from airline to airline. But in contrast to the stories frequently heard on popular news media today, the airline industry is growing rapidly, and opportunities for young pilots are very strong. The 911 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centers impacted commercial air travel in different ways. While some tourism declined, business travel merely shifted to different kinds of aircraft. Every major airliner that lost 40 business travelers, for example, created a simultaneous need for up to five small business size aircraft, all needing pilots. In addition, the tremendous growth in internet shopping over the past five years has created a booming industry in overnight airfreight hauling. This has dramatically increased the need for pilots to fly increased numbers of large air freighters. Those and many other factors created a much higher demand for pilots and increase the chance that you can get an airline job after you have you ATP.