



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT EAA AND SPORT AVIATION

What is EAA?

EAA is the Experimental Aircraft Association, an international organization with more than 160,000 members. It is probably best known for its annual Fly-In Convention in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, which attracts more than 500,000 people and 10,000 airplanes each year. EAA membership is open to all who are interested in airplanes and the people who fly them. EAA has programs for anyone interested in sport aviation.

What is sport aviation?

Simply put, sport aviation is flying for fun or recreation. Thousands of people fly aircraft for a living, but they and hundreds of thousands of others enjoy flying simply because it is an interesting and challenging pursuit.

What airplanes are involved in sport aviation?

Just about any private aircraft is part of sport aviation. Sport Aviation also includes those who build and restore airplanes, or those who enjoy Warbird (former military) aircraft, aerobatics, ultralights and antique or classic aircraft.

People build their own airplanes?

Yes, they do. There are currently more than 30,000 amateur-built airplanes on the FAA register, with that number increasing at about 1,000 per year.

What are amateur-built airplanes?

Those are airplanes that are registered under FAA's Experimental category. At least 51 percent of each aircraft must be built by the owner/pilot. Those airplanes are built from either a set of plans, where the builder buys his own supplies, or from aircraft kits in which major components are manufactured by a company and assembled by a builder.

Are these airplanes safe?

All Experimental category aircraft must be inspected by FAA inspectors or designated inspectors before they are allowed to fly. All facets of the construction must be logged and verified before approval is given, usually with photos and technical explanations of all work done. Pilots go through the same flight training and licensing process as any pilot who flies manufactured aircraft, such as Cessnas, Pipers or Beechcrafts that are probably familiar to most people. Amateur-built aircraft must also go through a flight test period of 25-40 hours before passengers may be flown. Aircraft insurance companies charge approximately the same rates for amateur-built aircraft as manufactured aircraft, implying equal risk factors.



Why do people build their own airplanes?

There are a variety of reasons for building an airplane. Many people enjoy the challenge and the personal pride of constructing such a project (most aircraft take from 1,000-3,000 hours to build). Others find that the new materials such as composites allow an airplane to be lighter, go faster or be more fuel efficient than manufactured aircraft. Building an aircraft also cuts the cost of flying considerably. A new single-engine Cessna 172 — a popular manufactured four-passenger aircraft — costs more than \$200,000. For \$30,000 and up, a person can build a very good airplane. As with anything, the more powerful and detailed a person wishes to make an airplane, the more it can cost. Some people have built airplanes valued a more than \$200,000.

How does EAA help those who build airplanes?

EAA is open to all aviation enthusiasts and has programs for all ages. The organization's roots, however, were in those who built and restored their own airplanes. EAA offers programs for those who are building airplanes (Technical Counselors) and for those who are planning their first flights (Flight Advisors). EAA also offers its members extensive information services on hundreds of airplane types, so builders and restorers can learn from those who have already worked on similar projects.

How does EAA reach all these aviation enthusiasts?

EAA is fortunate because local aviation enthusiasts around the world have established 1,000 local EAA Chapters. These Chapters, mostly based in North America but found in 20 countries, allow local aviation enthusiasts to meet and share information or work on joint projects. The Chapter network is the backbone of EAA and is responsible for more than 14,000 aviation activities each year. Many of EAA's programs are possible because of the dedicated efforts of local Chapters.

What kinds of programs?

Along with monthly meetings, EAA Chapters are involved in many other aviation-based activities. For instance, EAA Chapters sponsor local fly-ins or airport open houses. Chapters also host Young Eagles rallies, which introduce young people to the possibilities in aviation through free demonstration flights. Nearly 1.6 million young people have enjoyed a flight experience since the Young Eagles Program was founded in 1992. EAA's newest program, Flying Start, allows local Chapters to host free programs for local residents who are interested in learning to fly. Through these programs, EAA is not only serving its current membership, but building interest in aviation for the future. These events also preserve the social and "fun" factors within aviation that make it such a popular recreational pursuit.

What's this big air show in Oshkosh I've heard about?

The annual EAA Fly-In Convention in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, is the biggest sport aviation gathering and the largest annual convention of any type in the world. More than 500,000 people and 10,000 airplanes annually come to celebrate the world of flight during the event. Thousands of people fly to the event and camp under the wings of their airplanes. Thousands more attend to enjoy the more than 500 aviation forums and workshops or the daily afternoon air shows. Participants can see everything from ultralights and antique aircraft to today's homebuilt and military aircraft. Although the event is foremost an EAA member convention, the general public is welcome and encouraged to participate. EAA members receive substantial discounts on admission and parking rates.

How old is EAA?



EAA was founded by Paul Poberezny and 35 friends in January 1953. After being run out of Paul's basement for 10 years, EAA's first headquarters was in the Milwaukee area. The offices and Museum moved to Oshkosh in 1983, to consolidate EAA offices and the Convention site. The Convention has been held at Oshkosh since 1970, after having earlier homes in Milwaukee (until 1959) and Rockford, Ill. (1960-69).

Isn't EAA just for airplane builders?

Not at all. Although EAA was founded by those interested in building and restoring aircraft, it has always been open to anyone interested in the world of flight. Pilots, non-pilots, builders and enthusiasts are all welcome to join EAA and participate in its many activities.

How much does it cost to join EAA?

Membership is \$40 per year, which includes 12 issues of the full-color *Sport Aviation* magazine. There are also family, junior and gift memberships available. EAA members may also join various divisions that have specific interests within sport aviation.

What are EAA's Divisions?

There are three independent Divisions within EAA, open to EAA members who have a specific interest in a particular facet of aviation. The Vintage Aircraft Association is dedicated to those who are interested in the history and preservation of airplanes built prior to 1960. The International Aerobatic Club (IAC) supports aerobatic flight training and competition. The Warbirds of America have a particular interest in military aircraft, especially the operation and preservation of former military aircraft now owned by civilians. Each of those divisions publishes its own monthly magazine. In addition, another monthly magazine, *The Experimenter*, is available for members who are interested in airplanes building or ultralight flying.

How do I find out more about EAA?

One of the best places to learn about EAA and what's happening locally in aviation is by contacting a local EAA Chapter. Call 920-426-4876 to find where the nearest Chapter is located. You may also contact EAA's membership department at 800-843-3612 or check out the EAA website (www.eaa.org).