



## Canadian Balloon Pilot License

If you are interested in ballooning and have not already done so, we recommend you book a flight with us and experience the adventure of "Walking the Winds" first hand.

Sundance Balloons can provide you with everything required to obtain a Canadian Hot Air Balloon Pilot License. As a "Certified Transport Canada Flight Training Unit" we have in-house, numerous instructors as well as Transport Canada Authorized Persons. Our flight training center is located in London, Ontario.

Due to the busy flying schedule during our primary season, most training is done during our off-season, being November to April. These requirements are based on you being a Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident, at least sixteen years of age and do not hold another aviation license. The cost for your training will vary on the time of year and location. Generally you should budget \$350.00 to \$500.00 per hour of flight. This amount would include the balloon system, chase vehicle, fuel, insurance, chase crew and instructor. Therefore the total cost for your training could range between \$6,500.00 and \$10,000.00.

To obtain your Canadian Balloon Pilot License, you will need to complete the following in a series of steps. There may be circumstances where some of these steps may be done in a different order or combined.

### **1. Medical.**

Your Instructor will provide you with the name of a local physician recognized by Transport Canada to complete an "Aviation Medical". Most students will go for their medical exam prior to beginning their flight training. Although you don't have to present evidence of passing the medical until you are actually ready to fly solo, you are strongly advised to complete this aspect as soon as possible. There's no sense in getting that far into your training only to be disqualified for medical reasons.

### **2. You need at least ten hours of ground school training.**

This will cover all the information that Transport feels you must know, as outlined in their study guide. Your Sundance Balloons instructor will provide you with this training.

### **3. Successful completion of PSTAR Examination**

Any time after your ground school training has been completed you must obtain a letter from your instructor stating that you have successfully completed the

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training and that they recommend you be allowed to try your first written exam. This exam (PSTAR) focuses on air law and regulations, but it does not specifically pertain to Hot Air Balloons. You must pass the PSTAR exam before you can fly solo.

#### **4. Practical Flight Training**

Before obtaining your license you will need a minimum of 16 (sixteen) hours of flight training which includes at least 11 (eleven) hours of untethered flight under the direction and supervision of a Certified Flight Instructor (CFI). The untethered flight training must include at least one ascent to over 5000 feet, and 2 (two) solo flights of at least 30 minutes each. It is not uncommon for students to require 20 - 25 hours of flight training until the CFI feels you are ready to fly solo.

#### **5. Solo Flight**

In order to fly solo (with no other people aboard) you must obtain a Student Pilot Permit (SPP). Sundance Balloons has Transport Canada authority to issue an SPP. In order for the SPP to be issued, you must present the following:

- a) Acceptable identification which shows your nationality, age and full name;
  - Nationality and age information show that you are entitled to be licensed in Canada and for how long your medical is valid.
  - Your name is required for the issuing of the license, which is a legal document. If your name has changed you will have to provide evidence of such. (A married woman who has changed her name will be asked to provide a marriage certificate.)
- b) Proof that you have satisfied the medical criteria. This is either your License Validation Certificate or a Medical Assessment Letter;
- c) A copy of your results of the PSTAR exam, showing a passing grade;
- d) A letter of recommendation from your Sundance Balloons CFI stating that you have completed the requirements, have demonstrated sufficient competence in the operation of a Hot Air Balloon and that you should be allowed to fly solo.

You can make the process easier and faster by bringing the original documents and 3 (three) copies of each. The authorized person must see the originals, will keep one copy of each document and send two certified copies to Transport Canada.

#### **6. Successful completion of PIBAL Examination**

At any time after receiving a passing grade on your PSTAR exam and after having completed at least 12 (twelve) hours of your flight training (75% of the flight time requirements), you should obtain a letter from your instructor recommending that you be allowed to write your second Transport Canada exam. This exam (PIBAL) may cover any aspect of ballooning, from regulations to the relevant laws of physics. This examination is written at a Transport Canada office.

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## **7. Certification of Times and Letter of Competency**

Any time after you have satisfied all of the requirements, your instructor will certify in your log book that the flights and times entered therein are accurate. They will also provide you with a letter stating that you are competent to fly a Hot Air Balloon and recommend that you receive your license.

You will then return to the Sundance Balloons Transport Canada Authorized Person and show them:

- a) Your Student Pilot Permit;
- b) A current License Validation Certificate;
- c) Proof of obtaining a passing grade on the PSTAR and PIBAL exams;
- d) Your certified log book showing that you have satisfied the requirements in the Personnel Licensing Handbook;
- e) Your letter of recommendation from your instructor. Once again, it is easier and faster to bring the originals and 3 (three) copies of each document.

## **8. Application for License**

You then fill out an application form for a license, in duplicate, and pay the licensing fee. Once the paperwork has been completed, the Sundance Balloons Transport Authorized Person will complete the back of your Student Pilot Permit which then becomes your temporary Balloon License for a specified period of time, or until Transport Canada issues you the actual license.

And there you are - a Licensed Balloon Pilot!

### **Note:**

There are exceptions to these steps. For instance, if you already hold a valid pilot license for another category of aircraft, with the exception of ultra lights, you only need 5 (five) hours of ground school, and you need not write the PSTAR exam.

For more information on flight training, please contact Sebastian Msuya by e-mail [seb@sundanceballoons.com](mailto:seb@sundanceballoons.com).

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