

Comparison Of Pilot Certificates

	Private Pilot	Sport Pilot
Minimum training time	40 hours	20 hours
Language requirement	Be able to speak, read, write and understand English	Be able to speak, read, write and understand English
Fly at night	Yes	No
Maximum passengers (in addition to pilot)	No limit (Limited by aircraft capacity)	1
Requires FAA medical certificate?	Yes—3 rd class	No —a U.S. driver's license is enough
Maximum aircraft weight	12,500 pounds	1320 pounds and maximum of 2 seats
Maximum speed	No limit	138 mph
Complex Airspace limitations	Can fly in Class B, C, D airspace	Cannot fly in class B, C or D without a written endorsement and additional training
Altitude restriction	None (automatically excluded from Class A airspace)	10,000 feet (or 2500 feet AGL in mountainous terrain higher than 10,000 feet)
Minimum age to earn certificate	17	17
Minimum age to solo	16	16
Written test required	Yes	Yes
Flight (practical) test required	Yes	Yes
Eligible for advanced ratings	Yes (such as instrument)	No
Type of aircraft	Any	Aircraft must meet LSA requirements
Can fly outside the continental U.S.?	Yes	No, except for The Bahamas