

Aviation Abbreviations That Every Flight School Student Needs to Know

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The following list is a glossary of important abbreviations for professionals in the aviation business.

These abbreviations are standard "words" that every commercial pilot knows and every flight school student needs to know. They will come in handy in flight school and they will be essential when you become a pilot.

AFM - airplane flight manual.

AGL - above ground level.

ALS - approach light system.

APU - auxiliary power unit.

ASR - airport surveillance radar.

ATC - air traffic control.

ATS - Air Traffic Service.

CAMP - continuous airworthiness maintenance program.

CAS - calibrated airspeed.

CAT II - Category II.

CHDO - an FAA Flight Standards certificate holding district office.

CMP -configuration, maintenance, and procedures.

CONSOL or CONSOLAN - a kind of low or medium frequency long range navigational aid.

DH - decision height.

DME - distance measuring equipment compatible with TACAN.

EAS - equivalent airspeed.

EFVS - enhanced flight vision system.

Equi-Time Point - a point on the route of flight where the flight time, considering wind, to each of two selected airports is equal.

ETOPS - extended operations.

EWIS - electrical wiring interconnection system.

FAA - Federal Aviation Administration.

FFS - full flight simulator.

FM - fan marker.

FSTD - flight simulation training device.

FTD - flight training device.

GS - glide slope.

HIRL - high-intensity runway light system.
IAS - indicated airspeed.
ICAO - International Civil Aviation Organization.
IFR - instrument flight rules.
IFSD - in-flight shutdown.
ILS - instrument landing system.
IM - ILS inner marker.
INT - intersection.
LDA - localizer-type directional aid.
LFR - low-frequency radio range.
LMM - compass locator at middle marker.
LOC - ILS localizer.
LOM - compass locator at outer marker.
M - mach number.
MAA - maximum authorized IFR altitude.
MAL S - medium intensity approach light system.
MALSR - medium intensity approach light system with runway alignment indicator lights.
MCA - minimum crossing altitude.
MDA - minimum descent altitude.
MEA - minimum en route IFR altitude.
MEL - minimum equipment list.
MM - ILS middle marker.
MOCA - minimum obstruction clearance altitude.
MRA - minimum reception altitude.
MSL - mean sea level.
NDB (ADF) - nondirectional beacon (automatic direction finder).
NM - nautical mile.
NOPAC - North Pacific area of operation.
NOPT - no procedure turn required.
OEI - one engine inoperative.
OM - ILS outer marker.
OPSPECS - operations specifications.
PACOTS - Pacific Organized Track System.
PAR - precision approach radar.
PTRS - Performance Tracking and Reporting System.
RAIL - runway alignment indicator light system.
RBN - radio beacon.
RCLM - runway centerline marking.
RCLS - runway centerline light system.
REIL - runway end identification lights.
RFFS - rescue and firefighting services.
RNAV - area navigation.

RR - low or medium frequency radio range station.
RVR - runway visual range as measured in the touchdown zone area.
SALS - short approach light system.
SATCOM - satellite communications.
SSALS - simplified short approach light system.
SSALSR - simplified short approach light system with runway alignment indicator lights.
TACAN - ultra-high frequency tactical air navigational aid.
TAS - true airspeed.
TCAS - a traffic alert and collision avoidance system.
TDZL - touchdown zone lights.
TVOR - very high frequency terminal omnirange station.
V A - design maneuvering speed.
V B - design speed for maximum gust intensity.
V C - design cruising speed.
V D - design diving speed.
V DF/ M DF - demonstrated flight diving speed.
V EF - the speed at which the critical engine is assumed to fail during takeoff.
V F - design flap speed.
V FC/ M FC - maximum speed for stability characteristics.
V FE - maximum flap extended speed.
V FTO - final takeoff speed.
V H - maximum speed in level flight with maximum continuous power.
V LE - maximum landing gear extended speed.
V LO - maximum landing gear operating speed.
V LOF - lift-off speed.
V MC - minimum control speed with the critical engine inoperative.
V MO/ M MO - maximum operating limit speed.
V MU - minimum unstick speed.
V NE - never-exceed speed.
V NO - maximum structural cruising speed.
V R - rotation speed.
V REF - reference landing speed.
V S - the stalling speed or the minimum steady flight speed at which the airplane is controllable.
V S0 - the stalling speed or the minimum steady flight speed in the landing configuration.
V S1 - the stalling speed or the minimum steady flight speed obtained in a specific configuration.
V SR - reference stall speed.
V SRO - reference stall speed in the landing configuration.
V SR1 - reference stall speed in a specific configuration.
V SW - speed at which onset of natural or artificial stall warning occurs.
V TOSS - takeoff safety speed for Category A rotorcraft.
V X - speed for best angle of climb.
V Y - speed for best rate of climb.

V 1 - the maximum speed in the takeoff at which the pilot must take the first action (e.g., apply brakes, reduce thrust, deploy speed brakes) to stop the airplane within the accelerate-stop distance. V1 also means the minimum speed in the takeoff, following a failure of the critical engine at VEF, at which the pilot can continue the takeoff and achieve the required height above the takeoff surface within the takeoff distance.

V 2 - takeoff safety speed.

V 2min - minimum takeoff safety speed.

VFR - visual flight rules.

VHF - very high frequency.

VOR - very high frequency omnirange station.

VORTAC - collocated VOR and TACAN.