

Vacating and Joining at Aerodromes

CIRCUIT TRAINING

Objectives

- To vacate and join the circuit in accordance with applicable procedures.
- To join an uncontrolled circuit in accordance with the standard overhead join procedure.

1. Considerations

Uncontrolled Aerodromes

Vacating

- Climb straight ahead to 1500 ft
- Via crosswind or downwind
- Climb overhead
- All can be done from controlled aerodrome – with clearance

Standard Overhead Join

- Used
 - To keep clear of the circuit until safe to join
 - To observe other traffic, including NORDO
 - To identify circuit direction
 - To determine conditions on the aerodrome – wind, surface, etc
 - When unfamiliar with the aerodrome
- Check Aerodrome Chart in Vol 4 in preparation
- Terminate flight plan once on the ground

Controlled Aerodromes

Vacating

- Same as uncontrolled, but clearance is needed
- Could turn opposite to circuit direction – good lookout

Joining

- Can request overhead join
- Normally join downwind, base, or final
- Could also “Cross overhead and join downwind”
- Can request joining or may be given joining instructions
- Must still give way to those already in circuit

2. Airmanship

- Vol 4, VNC, joining checklists
- Right-of-way rules
- LOOKOUT, don't rely on listenout

3. Aeroplane Management

- Speed below 120 kts
- landing light on

5. Air Exercise

Vacating

- From home base
- From (un)controlled aerodrome

Uncontrolled Aerodrome Joining – Standard Join Standard Overhead Join

- Radio call to circuit traffic 5–10 NM from aerodrome
 - position
 - altitude
 - intentions

Approach

- Cross overhead at 1500 ft aal (if no other restrictions)
- Position aeroplane so aerodrome can be seen out of student's window
- Look for other traffic, windsocks, and ground signals/markings

Runway in Use

- Look at windsocks, and other traffic established to establish circuit direction
- If can't tell circuit direction orbit left until can tell
- Watch out for helicopter or glider circuits going in opposite directions
- When circuit direction established,
 - all turns in that direction
 - Identify traffic and non-traffic sides
- Position on non-traffic side, make radio call
- Others already in circuit have right of way

Descend to Circuit Height

- Low rate of descent
- Cross upwind end of runway **at** circuit height
- Track crosswind – give way to aircraft already on downwind leg
- Prelanding checks before downwind
- Downwind call on downwind leg
- Rest of circuit as normal

Controlled Aerodrome Joining

- IAW ATC clearance or instructions

4. Human Factors

- Orientate using windsocks and aerodrome chart
- Relative movement of small objects
- Systematic approach best

