

Hand Propping Safely

With the advent of the new Sport Pilot License, many people are enjoying the benefits of flying certain types of aircraft which conform to the new Sport Pilot Rules. Many of these aircraft do not have electrical systems, requiring starting the engine by hand, or being HAND PROPPED!

The dilemma is that many of these new and reclaimed Sport Pilots have not learned proper propping procedures or have had no current hand propping experience. With this in mind, the following was developed as a training system to promote safe hand propping technique:

1. Park the aircraft in a clear, unobstructed area, before beginning the hand propping starting procedures.
2. Never turn the aircraft engine over without someone, preferably an experienced person, in the cockpit.
3. Make sure you have clear communications with the person in the aircraft.
4. Treat the aircraft as though the mags or switches are on at all times. Always remember, even if the switch or mag indicates off, if a wire happens to be broken or disconnected, it will start!
5. The person doing the propping calls, "Throttle closed, mags or switches on." The person in aircraft confirms.
6. Before the propeller is turned, the Propper calls, "Brakes and contact." The person in the aircraft confirms.
7. The blade should be in the 11 and 4 o'clock position.
8. The Propper pulls the blade down turning slightly to the right. This turning right movement allows the Propper to move away from the aircraft as it starts.
9. Never stand flat-footed in front of the aircraft or lean toward the propeller as you pull it through.
10. If you must move the blades to a new position for an easier pull call, "Brakes on, mags or switches OFF."

Hand propping is fun, but never stop thinking! Be safe. Fly safe.

