

# Top Five from Top Six

Six winners of the CAA's Flight Instructor Award give their five top tips for safe flying.



## Peter Dixon (2016)

1. Maintain a good lookout, particularly in a glass cockpit.
2. Maintain situational awareness. Listen to the radio, use the radio, build a mental picture of where everyone else is in relation to you, what they are doing, let them know what you are doing.
3. Stay current in procedures, ie, getting in and out of control zones, being up to date with boundaries and airspace requirements.
4. Stay current on aircraft. That may seem obvious but if you haven't been in a particular aircraft for a while, do some circuits to get used to how it operates.
5. Hope for the best, but plan for the worst possible scenario.



## Mark Woodhouse (2007)

1. Listen to the whispers. If you get a feeling that things are not quite right, they probably aren't, and you should take alternative action – early.
2. I believe humility is a critically important component of safe flying. No-one can know it all. Be open to continuously expanding your knowledge and skill.
3. It's okay to give it away and go around, and the earlier you decide the easier it is. Power up, nose up, clean up (and don't be in a hurry to clean up).
4. The investment you make in learning from a quality instructor, be they old and grumpy or young and enthusiastic, will pay you dividends a hundred-fold, and possibly save your life.
5. You can't spend too long practising the basics. Fools learn till they can do it right, wise folk practise until they can't do it wrong.



## Carlton Campbell (2015)

In no particular order, as priority varies according to circumstance:

1. Always have options.
2. Keep eyes always scanning.
3. Anticipate, anticipate, anticipate.
4. What are the specific threats right now?
5. Fly by outside reference, nose relative to real/imaginary horizon.



## Jeremy Anderson (2014)

1. Look out the window. Too often people get tied up looking at instruments. You'll actually fly better if you learn to use attitudes rather than dials.
2. Know where other aircraft are and what they are doing. It can be as simple as looking at what's happening on the aerodrome and in the circuit as you walk out to your aircraft.
3. Always be thinking 'what if?' Be on a constant lookout for possible landing areas should you suddenly need to carry out a forced landing.
4. Know what your limits are, and don't be afraid to stop before you hit them. Over time your limits will widen. This is called experience.
5. Often people try to run before they walk. Don't focus on the next jazzy thing and forget to learn or teach the basics well first. Instead of trying to get your fancy avionics package to do every trick under the sun, just learn how to keep the ball in the middle.



## Paul Kearney (2008)

1. Ask plenty of questions (especially dumb ones).
2. Keep reading and learning from accident reports and flight safety magazines.
3. Constantly review and question decisions, always looking for the best outcome.
4. "What would I do if ..." spend time planning and practising for abnormal situations, especially items not in the syllabus.
5. Stay current with theory and flying. Find a good instructor and practise the stuff you don't do very often.



## Dave Brown (2013)

1. Get your head out of the cockpit, away from the glass screens and GPSs, and improve your lookout.
2. Prepare for every flight by checking weather forecasts, Supps, and NOTAMs, even for local flights. Take time to study the route on your map, trying to visualise the topography and looking for prominent navigation features. That will reduce your workload during the flight, and give you greater capacity to deal with abnormal situations en route.
3. Set targets for yourself. For example, nominate an altitude to fly at and then aim to maintain it. Not accepting inaccuracies or low standards will raise your own standards and improve your flying skills.
4. Don't be afraid to ask an instructor for help. Many pilots feel that once they've got their licence they're expected to know or be able to do everything, but in aviation, you're always learning.
5. In an abnormal situation, don't rush your thought processes or actions. Evaluate the situation and your options, and use all the resources available to you, including air traffic control. Don't be afraid to declare a MAYDAY or PAN PAN as it will give you priority over other traffic, and if the situation ends up not being as critical as you first thought, then you can always downgrade your status. ■