WIND CHASERS

WHERE DREAMS TAKE FLIGHT!

YOUR COMPLETE PILOT TRAINING JOURNEY

2025 ROADMAP

Step 1: Check Eligibility and Make a Plan

Academic Requirements

Ensure you meet the basic eligibility. In India, you **must have passed 10+2 (higher secondary)** with Physics and Mathematics to pursue a CPL. If you didn't have these subjects, you'll need to qualify in them through an approved exam (such as NIOS) before moving forward.

Age Requirement

You can begin pilot training at 17 years of age, but **a CPL will only be issued once you are 18**. Many start soon after 12th grade; just keep in mind the age criteria for licensing.

Financial Planning

Typical **CPL training costs in India range from around ₹40–60 lakh** (sometimes even more including extras), though prices can vary. Create a budget early and secure funds for the entire journey.

- Tuition/Training Fees
- Exam/License Fees
- Living Expenses
- Miscellaneous costs

Career Planning

Decide whether you want to pursue an **integrated cadet program** or a **self-paced route**. Research the job market and have a backup plan.

The **total journey from 12th grade to CPL typically takes about 18–24 months** on average.

⚠ **Critical Tip:** Have funds in place for the entire journey. Many students run out of money mid-training due to poor planning. Avoid this common mistake by securing your finances upfront.

Step 2: Obtain Your DGCA Medical Certificates

Before you spend a lot of time or money on training, **ensure you are medically fit to be a pilot**. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) mandates two levels of medical clearance:

01

Class II Medical

This is the initial medical check-up by a DGCA-approved doctor. It's a basic health screening (vision, blood tests, etc.). **Within a few weeks (typically 2–4 weeks) DGCA will issue your Class II Medical Assessment**, which includes a File Number.

02

Class I Medical

This is the comprehensive aviation medical evaluation. **You can only schedule a Class I exam after obtaining your Class II assessment and File Number.** Initial Class I exams are conducted at authorized Indian Air Force Centers or designated hospitals.

Timeline Recommendation

- **Month 1:** Schedule your Class II exam
- **Month 2**: Apply for NOC and book Class I appointment
- Attend Class I tests and wait for certificate

Medical Tips

- Avoid alcohol, stay well-rested before medicals
- Glasses/contacts are usually okay if correctable
- Keep copies of all medical results

⊗ **Do this early:** Some students make the mistake of starting ground classes or paying a flying school before confirming they can pass Class I. Complete Class I first before committing to expensive courses.

Step 3: Apply for a DGCA Computer Number

Your **Computer Number** is a unique ID issued by DGCA's Central Examination Organization that you will use to register for all pilot exams. **Without a Computer Number, you cannot appear for the DGCA written exams.**

1

Gather Required Documents

- 10th & 12th Marksheet and Passing Certificates
- Board Verification Certificates for 10th and 12th
- Photo ID and proof of address
- Passport-sized photograph and signature

2

Register on Pariksha Portal

Create an account on **pariksha.dgca.gov.in**. Fill out the Computer Number application form with your personal details and upload all documents. Double-check that every detail is correct.

3

Submit Hard Copies

Print the completed application and send it along with *attested* photocopies of all documents to DGCA in Delhi. Get a tracking number for your package.

4

Wait for Allotment

DGCA will verify your documents and then email your Computer Number. This can take anywhere from **3 to 6 weeks** on average. There is no fee for the computer number application.

ⓘ **Plan Ahead:** Apply for the computer number as soon as you have your Class 12 verification and medical done. Any mistakes can result in rejection and reapplication, costing more time.

Step 4: Prepare for and Clear the DGCA Written Exams

With your computer number in hand, you can now tackle the **DGCA theory examinations**. There are **five main theory subjects** you must pass for a CPL in India:

Air Navigation

Charts, plotting routes, flight computer calculations, wind correction angles

Aviation Meteorology

Weather theory, pressure systems, clouds, METAR/TAF decoding

Air Regulations

Aircraft Act/Rules, DGCA CARs, operating rules and procedures

Technical General

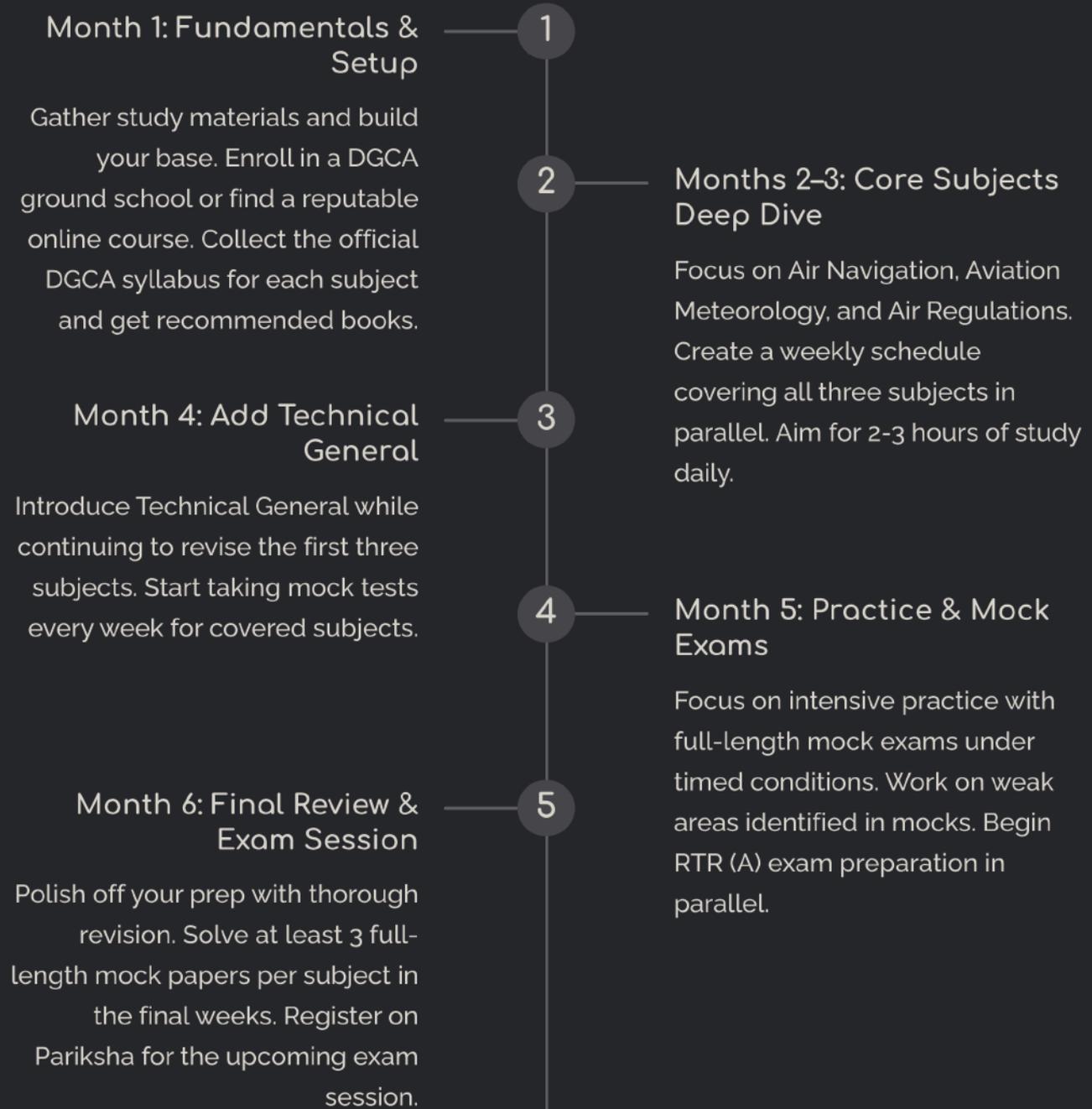Aircraft and engine systems, propulsion, structures, controls

Technical Specific

Specific to your training aircraft type (often taken during flying)

Exam Calendar: DGCA conducts CPL theory exams in **four sessions each year: typically January, May, September, and December**. Each exam is in multiple-choice format with ~100 questions to be completed in 2 hours. The passing score is 70%.

Study Timeline and Strategy (Month-by-Month)

Here's an **example 6-month preparation timeline** to clear all DGCA papers in your first attempt:

Month 1: Fundamentals & Setup

(1)

Gather study materials and build your base. Enroll in a DGCA ground school or find a reputable online course. Collect the official DGCA syllabus for each subject and get recommended books.

Months 2–3: Core Subjects Deep Dive

(2)

Focus on Air Navigation, Aviation Meteorology, and Air Regulations. Create a weekly schedule covering all three subjects in parallel. Aim for 2-3 hours of study daily.

Month 4: Add Technical General

(3)

Introduce Technical General while continuing to revise the first three subjects. Start taking mock tests every week for covered subjects.

Month 5: Practice & Mock Exams

(4)

Focus on intensive practice with full-length mock exams under timed conditions. Work on weak areas identified in mocks. Begin RTR (A) exam preparation in parallel.

Month 6: Final Review & Exam Session

(5)

Polish off your prep with thorough revision. Solve at least 3 full-length mock papers per subject in the final weeks. Register on Pariksha for the upcoming exam session.

Study Resources

- **Books:** Oxford CBT books, Jeppesen guides
- **Apps:** DGCA CPL Exam Prep, Aviationexam
- **Online:** YouTube channels, practice question banks

Success Tips

- Make flashcards for regulations and important figures
- Join study groups for peer learning
- Practice manual calculations until you're quick

Step 5: Choose Your Flight School – India vs. Abroad

This is a critical choice that affects your timeline, cost, and experience. You have two main paths:

Training in India

Advantages:

- No license conversion needed later
- Train in Indian airspace and procedures
- No visa or international travel hassles
- Can often do part-time with college

Drawbacks:

- Can take longer due to infrastructure challenges
- Weather disruptions (monsoons)
- High student-to-instructor ratios

Training Abroad

Advantages:

- Faster training pace (8-12 months full-time)
- High quality infrastructure and instruction
- Exposure to busy controlled airspace
- Life experience in new country

Drawbacks:

- License conversion required (₹3–5 lakhs, 1-3 months)
- Living expenses and logistics
- Visa paperwork and cultural adjustment

Flight School Selection Criteria

Approval & Reputation

Verify DGCA approval (India) or equivalent authority approval abroad. Check track record with Indian students.

Fleet & Facilities

Assess aircraft-to-student ratio, maintenance quality, and simulator availability.

Instructor Quality

Check instructor-to-student ratio (ideally 1:4 or 1:5) and instructor experience levels.

⚠ **Due Diligence:** Always speak to current or former students. Many aspiring pilots have regretted not checking the FTO's background and ending up in sub-par schools.

Step 6: Flight Training – Earning Your Wings

This is the most thrilling phase – **actually learning to fly aircraft!** You will log a minimum of **200 hours of flight time** which includes dual instruction, solo flying, day and night operations, and instrument flying.

Student Pilot License (SPL)

Initial permit to begin flight training and fly solo under supervision when ready.

Private Pilot License Stage

Initial 40-60 hours covering basic aircraft handling, traffic patterns, emergency procedures, and your **first solo flight** – typically after ~15-20 hours of dual instruction.

Cross-Country Navigation

Learn to plan and fly cross-country flights to other airports. Complete solo cross-country flights (e.g., 150 NM trip with landings at two airports).

Instrument Flying

Around 20 hours of instrument time learning to fly solely by reference to instruments – critical for bad weather and future Instrument Rating.

Night Flying

At least 5 hours solo night flying per DGCA rules. Night flying teaches reliance on instruments and city lights for navigation.

CPL Flight Test

Final skill test with a DGCA Examiner demonstrating various maneuvers, emergencies, navigation, and instrument flying to meet CPL competency standards.

Training Duration

Full-time flying training can be finished in **8-12 months abroad**, and **10-18 months in India**, depending on weather and scheduling factors.

Consistency is key: Avoid long gaps in flying. If you take a break, you may need refresher flights to get back to previous proficiency, costing extra time and money.

Step 7: Clear the WPC RTR(A) Exam and English Proficiency Test

While you're training, you'll need to obtain **additional certifications** required for a CPL:

Radio Telephony Restricted (Aeronautical) – RTR(A) License

The **RTR(A)** authorizes you to operate aircraft radios and communicate with Air Traffic Control. It tests your ability to follow standard radio call procedures in aviation.

Exam Format: Two parts conducted together:

- **Part 1:** Practical test of radio procedures and situational exercises
- **Part 2:** Oral technical interview on equipment and regulations
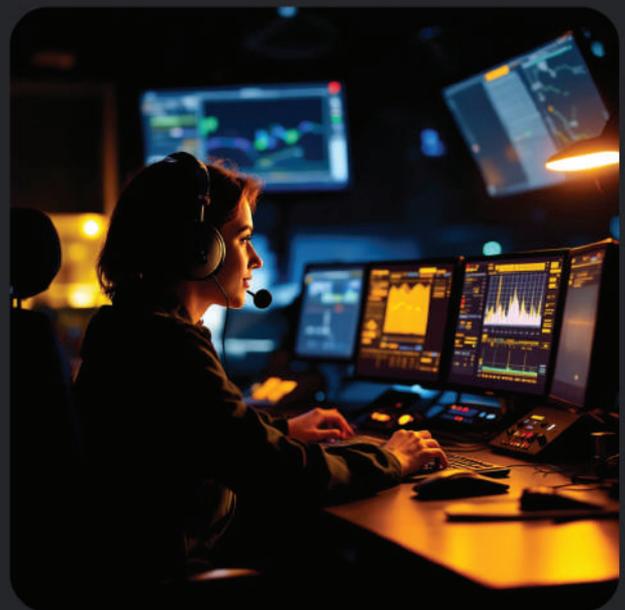
English Language Proficiency (ELP)

English proficiency is required by ICAO for all pilots. You must demonstrate a minimum of **Level 4 (Operational) English** to get your CPL.

It's a conversational test where you describe scenarios to a certified examiner, including listening to ATC-like recordings and responding appropriately.

RTR(A) Preparation Strategy

- **Master standard phraseology** for all flight phases
- **Listen to live ATC** using apps or online streams
- **Practice mock drills** with scenarios
- **Study regulatory knowledge** (frequencies, emergency calls)

ⓘ **Timing:** Plan to attempt the RTR after you have some flying experience and have practiced R/T calls, typically towards the end of your flight training. Once you pass, the RTR(A) is valid for life.

Step 8: Apply for Your CPL & Common Mistakes to Avoid

This is the final stretch! Once you have completed your flying training, passed all DGCA theory exams, and obtained your Medical Class I, RTR(A), and ELP, you can apply to DGCA for your **Commercial Pilot Licence**.

Required Documents Checklist

- Proof of Age and Education (10th & 12th certificates)

- Computer Number letter and DGCA exam results

- Flying Logbook and Course Completion Certificate

- Skill Test Report from CPL flight test

- RTR(A) License and Medical Certificate

- Police Verification Certificate (PVC)

- Passport photos, ID documents, and application fees

Processing Timeline

Once you apply, DGCA will scrutinize everything. If all is in order, they will issue your **Commercial Pilot License booklet**. This process can take a few weeks to a couple of months. With eGCA digital workflows, expect at least 3-4 weeks.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

1

Delaying Medical Clearance

Investing in training without ensuring medical fitness is risky. Do your Class 2 and Class 1 medicals upfront before spending on flying.

2

Poor School Research

Choosing based on cost alone without checking quality can cost more long-term. Always verify reputation, aircraft condition, and student feedback.

3

Neglecting Ground Theory

DGCA exams are as important as flight training. Take ground classes seriously, practice question banks, and pass exams early.

4

Inadequate Financial Planning

Running out of money mid-course is common. Always budget extra beyond quoted costs and have a financial plan for the entire duration.

Congratulations – You're Now a Commercial Pilot!

This means you are authorized to be hired and paid to fly aircraft. Your license will have ratings like Single-Engine Land, Multi-Engine Land, and Instrument Rating listed on it.

The sky is not the limit; it's home for those who dare to chase their dreams. You've armed yourself with knowledge; now it's time for action.

⊘ **Ready for Takeoff?** Your cockpit awaits. The sooner you take action, the sooner you'll be soaring above the clouds. Your aviation dreams are ready for departure!

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