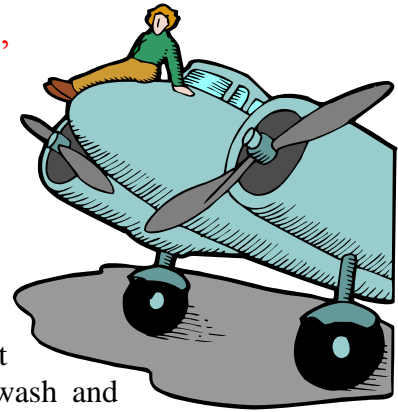


Start-Up Procedure: “CLEAR PROP”

Having completed a “Daily Inspection” and determined the aircraft is airworthy and ready for flight, it is time to start and warm the engine. But before we do there are a few things to consider.



How and where is the aircraft parked? It is one thing to park the aircraft allowing for the prevailing weather conditions but before we start-up we need to think about both the prop wash and where the aircraft is facing. Will the prop wash blow dirt and dust into the hangar, will it be picking up stones and causing prop damage, will it be blasting another aircraft, and are you in an area that could allow other pilots, passengers or general public to walk into the prop? If a problem like brake failure or sticky throttle should occur at start-up is your aircraft facing a clear area giving sufficient room and time to shut down before colliding with other aircraft, hangars, vehicles or people? Think carefully about how and where your aircraft is parked before start-up! Where is it pointing and where is the prop wash blowing?

There are both pull start and electric start microlights available however the majority are electric start allowing us to start in the comfort of the cockpit. The following procedure is for the typical Australian made, electric start microlight as is predominately used in our flight training here at Strathalbyn. If you have a pull start model or an overseas model then check with your instructor for specific advice to suit that particular aircraft.

Having considered the above and happy that you are parked correctly check that the retaining brake is on, check that the cruise throttle (hand throttle) is fully off, depress the foot throttle and make sure it springs back to the fully off position (for a cold engine; full choke, no throttle and for a warm engine; no choke, no throttle). Key on, instruments on, both switches to the on (forward) position, look over both your left and right shoulders making sure the area is clear and then yell, “CLEAR PROP”! With your right hand covering the kill switches press the push start button with your left hand.

Once the engine starts you can feed in a little throttle with your right foot (foot throttle) and slowly back of the choke with your left hand. Whilst warming the engine monitor the engine instruments and keep a good look-out in front, to the sides and behind for any approaching people, vehicles, aircraft or other hazards. The right hand should remain hovering over the kill switches during the warm up allowing for a quick shut down if required. As a personal tip; I prefer to keep my gloves off during this start and warm-up procedure. With my gloves off I can have my fingers touching both kill switches. Once the engine is warm the pre take-off checks (T.W.M.P.F.I.S.C.H.) can be completed. In the event of kill switch failure the engine can be cut by reducing revs to idle and applying full choke and further to this the fuel tap can be turned off.

Never exit the aircraft whilst the engine is running and never leave an aircraft unattended whilst the engine is running!