The Drone and Model Aircraft Code

- **For flying drones, model aeroplanes, model gliders, model helicopters, and other unmanned aircraft outdoors in the Open Over People (A1) and Far from People (A3) sub-categories.**
- **Follow this Code to make sure you always fly safely and legally. Many of the rules in the Drone and Model Aircraft Code are legal requirements, and if you disobey these rules, you are committing a criminal offence.**
- **The Code covers everything you need to know to pass the test to get a Flyer ID. This is the starting point for anyone wanting to fly a drone or model aircraft in the Over People (A1) and Far from People (A3) sub-categories in the UK.**
- **Always check online for the latest version.**

It is against the law to fly a drone or model aircraft without having the required IDs. You can also be fined for breaking the law when flying. In the most serious case, you could be sent to prison.

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You can use 'Find' if you want to search this document for a specific word or phrase. And you can find out more and register to take the test at the CAA's drone and model aircraft service

Getting what you need to fly legally

How to make sure you have what you need to get started flying legally.

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ID and registration requirements

There are two IDs you may need before flying drones or model aircraft outdoors in the UK:

- Flyer ID, which shows you've passed the basic competence test
- Operator ID, which must be labelled on your drone or model aircraft

You may need to have both.

Responsible for flying safely and legally	Responsible for the drone or model aircraft and who they allow to fly it

Type of ID needed

The IDs you need depend on the weight of your drone or model aircraft and whether it has a camera.

You must get a Flyer ID if you want to fly a drone or model aircraft that weighs 100g or above.

You must get an Operator ID if you own or are responsible for a drone or model aircraft that:

- weighs 250g or above
- weighs 100g or above and has a camera

You don't need a Flyer ID or Operator ID to fly a drone or model aircraft that weighs less than 100g.

Remember, even if you do not need to register, you must still follow the applicable rules summarised in this Drone and Model Aircraft Code when you fly.

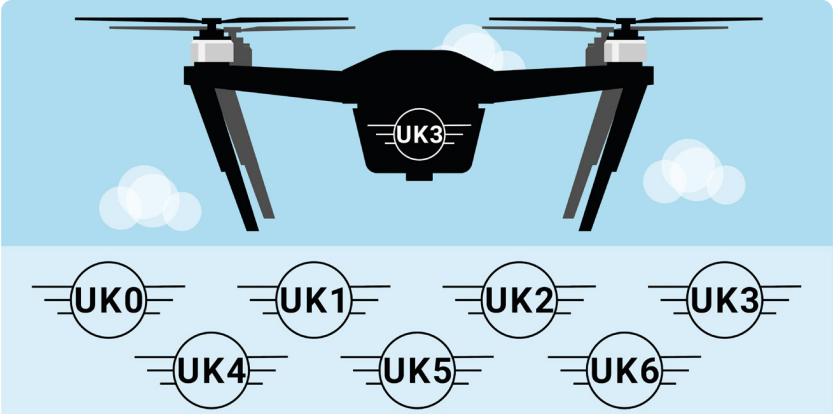
Registration requirements

Weight of drone or model aircraft	Class	Flyer ID	Operator ID
250g to less than 25kg	UK1, UK2, UK3, UK4	Required	Required
100g to less than 250g; with a camera	UK0 with a camera	Required	Required
100g to less than 250g; without a camera	UK0 without a camera	Required	Optional
Less than 100g	Not applicable	Recommended	Optional

Class marks

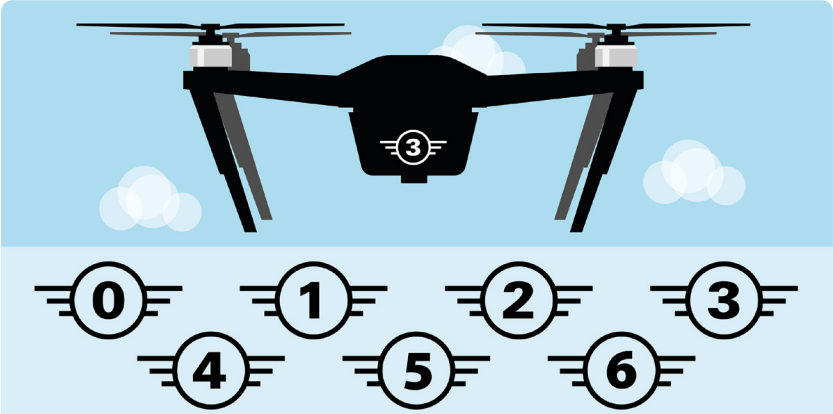
While legacy drone or model aircraft models can continue to be sold, any new models placed on the market from 1 January 2026 must have a UK class mark, from UK0 class to UK6 class.

If you bought your drone or model aircraft before 1 January 2026, it's unlikely to have a UK class mark. You can still fly your drone or model aircraft by following the rules in this Drone Code that apply to you based on the weight of your aircraft.



Look for one of these UK class marks to identify the class of your drone or model aircraft.

If your drone or model aircraft has a C class mark on it, the manufacturer has declared that it meets the European class standards. You can fly a C class drone as if it is the corresponding UK class drone until 31 December 2027. For example, you can fly a C1 class drone as if it is a UK1 class drone.



C class marks do not say UK on them. They show that a drone or model aircraft meets European class standards.

This Drone Code does not cover flying C5/UK5 or C6/UK6 class drones. You must get authorisation from the CAA if you want to do more advanced flying.

Flyer ID

You must pass the CAA's official theory test to get a Flyer ID before flying a drone or model aircraft covered by the regulations. We recommend carrying a copy of your Flyer ID whenever you fly.

You're responsible for flying safely and legally whenever you fly.

Operator ID

The operator is the person responsible for managing a drone or model aircraft. This means they're responsible for things like maintaining it and ensuring any remote pilot who flies it holds the necessary level of competence.

You must be 18 or over to get an Operator ID.

The operator is usually the person or organisation that owns the drone or model aircraft, but not always. For example, if you're younger than 18 and you own a drone or model aircraft, you must ask your parent or guardian to register for an Operator ID. You'll still be able to fly as long as you have a Flyer ID.

Categories of drone and model aircraft operations

The types of flying you do with your drone or model aircraft are known as operations.

There are different categories of operations. The categories affect things like where you can fly, and how close to people and crowds you can fly.

Category	Type of flying
Open Category	Low-risk, simple flying
Specific Category	Moderate-risk, complex flying
Certified Category	High-risk, complex flying

Flying in the Open category

The Open Category has three sub-categories.

Each sub-category sets out the weight or class of drone or model aircraft you can fly and the distance you must keep from people.

Open sub-category requirements and distances

Sub-category	Weight or class of drone or model aircraft you can fly	Distance from people and places
Over People (A1)	Less than 250g or C0 or UK0 or UK1 class. From 1 January 2026 until 31 December 2027, you can also fly a C1 class drone or model aircraft.	You can fly closer to people than 50m, including people who are not involved in what you're doing. You can fly over people, including people who are not involved in what you're doing.
Near People (A2)	UK2 class. Until 31 December 2027, you can also fly a C2 class drone or model aircraft. Less than 2kg and not UK2 or C2 class.	You must not fly within 30m of people unless they're in-volved in what you are doing, or you fly in low speed mode. If you fly in low speed mode, you can reduce this distance to 5m from people. You must not fly over people who are not involved in what you're doing. You must not fly within 50m of uninvolved people. You must not fly over people who are not involved in what you're doing.
Far from People (A3)	UK2, UK3 or UK4 class. UAS that is privately built and less than 25kg. UAS that was placed on the market before 1 January 2026 and less than 25kg. Until 31 December 2027, you can also fly a C2, C3 or C4 class drone or model aircraft.	You must not fly within 50m of uninvolved people. You must not fly over people who are not involved in what you're doing. You must not fly within 150m of residential, recreational, commercial or industrial areas.

What's in this Code

This Code tells you everything you need to know to pass the test to get a Flyer ID.

A Flyer ID allows you to fly in the Over People (A1) and Far from People (A3) sub-categories, which is the starting point for anyone wanting to fly a drone or model aircraft in the UK.

If you want to fly in the Near People (A2) sub-category, you must get the A2 Certificate of Competence.

You must get authorisation from the CAA if you want to do more advanced flying, or if you want to fly a drone or model aircraft that weighs 25kg or more.

Flying safely and responsibly

General responsibilities

1 You're responsible for flying safely whenever you fly › Page 11

2 Always keep your drone or model aircraft in direct sight and make sure you have a full view of the surrounding airspace › Page 11

1 You're responsible for flying safely whenever you fly

Follow this Code to make sure you never put people in danger. Always be ready in case something should go wrong with your drone or model aircraft.

You could be fined for breaking the law when flying your drone or model aircraft. In the most serious cases, you could be sent to prison.

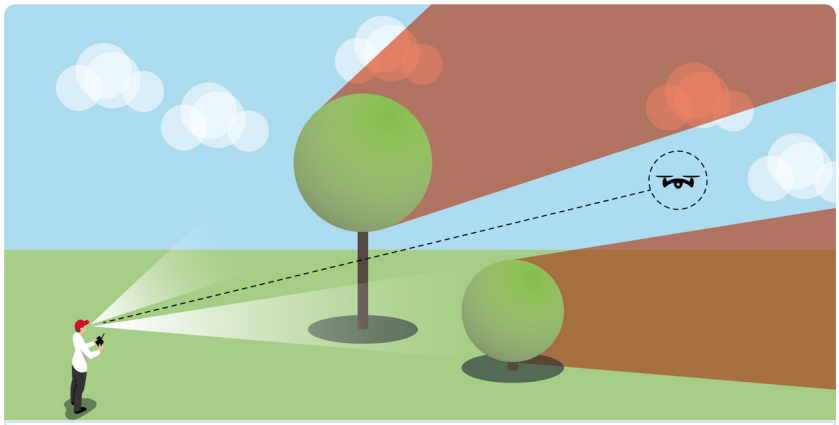
2 Always keep your drone or model aircraft in direct sight and make sure you have a full view of the surrounding airspace

You must be sure that you'll be able to spot any nearby hazards, in the air or on the ground, and avoid any collisions.

You must be able to see your drone or model aircraft clearly enough that you can tell which way it's facing. This is so that you can steer and control it safely, even if something happens unexpectedly. You must be able to see it without using:

- binoculars
- a telephoto lens
- electronic viewing equipment, such as a smart phone, tablet or video goggles

Using normal glasses and contact lenses is fine.



Always keep your drone or model aircraft in sight

Point 2 continues on next page ›

Point 2 continued

Flying with the help of an observer

You can ask someone to be your observer when you fly.

They must stand next to you and you must be able to talk to each other at all times.

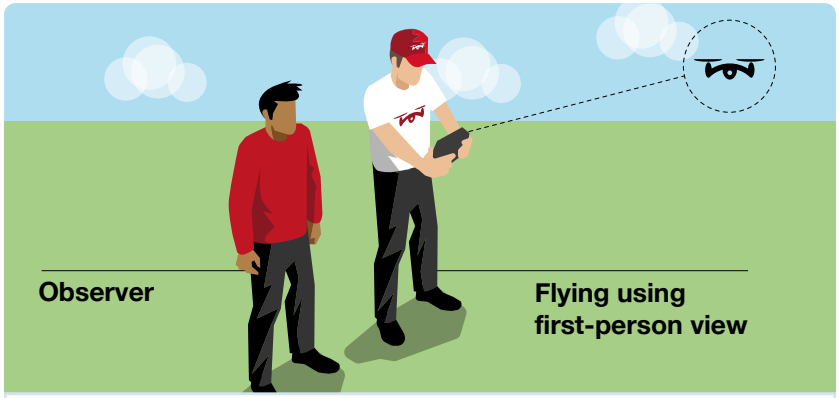
One of you must be able to keep your drone or model aircraft in direct sight and have a full view of the surrounding airspace at all times.

The observer does not need to have a Flyer ID, but you must tell them what to look out for. Remember, you're still responsible for keeping the flight safe.

Flying using first-person view (FPV)

Some drones and model aircraft are fitted with cameras that provide live video to devices such as smart phones, tablets and video goggles. Flying by watching this video is known as first-person view (FPV).

If you want to fly using first-person view, you must have an observer with you and follow the rules above for flying with the help of an observer.



If you want to fly using first-person view, you must have an observer with you

Where you can fly

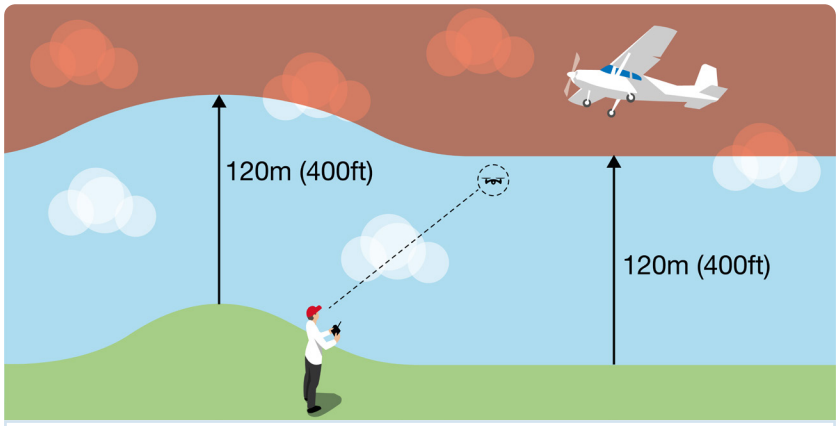
Legal height limits, distances from people, and areas where you must not fly. Restrictions on flying near to airports and spaceports.

3	Fly below 120m (400ft)	› Page 14
4	Do not fly closer to people than 50m	› Page 15
5	Never fly over people who are crowded together	› Page 17
6	Keep at least 150m away from residential, recreational, commercial and industrial areas	› Page 18
7	Stay well away from airports, airfields, spaceports and aircraft	› Page 20
8	Follow any flying restrictions and check for hazards	› Page 22
9	Get the right authorisation before flying outside this code	› Page 24

3 Fly below 120m (400ft)

Flying below the legal height limit of 120m (400ft) will reduce the risk of coming across other aircraft, which normally fly higher than this.

> Always look and listen out for other aircraft that may be flying below 120m (400ft), such as air ambulances, police helicopters, and low-flying military aircraft.



Never fly more than 120m (400ft) above the earth's surface

Flying where there are hills, mountains or cliffs

Your drone or model aircraft must never be more than 120m (400ft) from the closest point of the earth's surface.

If you fly where the ground falls or rises, such as over hills, mountains or cliffs, you may need to adjust your flight path so that your drone or model aircraft is never more than 120m (400ft) from the closest point of the earth's surface.

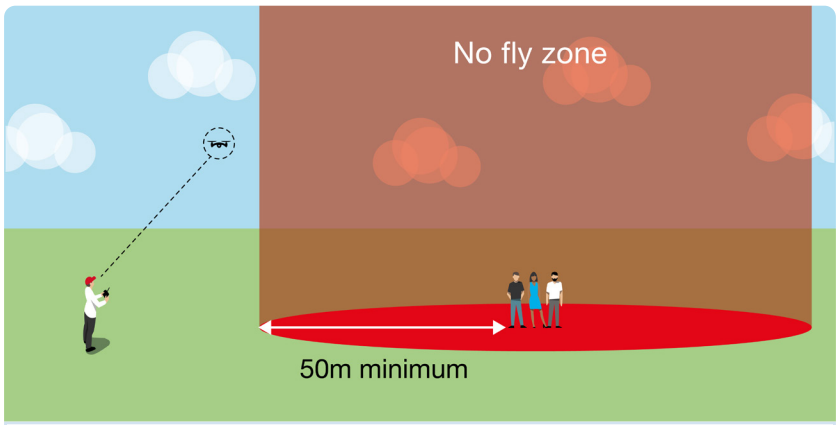
4 Do not fly closer to people than 50m

This includes people in buildings and transport, including cars, lorries, trains, and boats.

You must keep a minimum horizontal distance of 50m between your drone or model aircraft and people. This creates a no fly zone around people that goes all the way up to the legal height limit. It can help to think of this no fly zone as a cylinder.

You must not fly over people in this no fly zone, even if you fly higher than 50m.

There are some exceptions to this rule, described in the sections below.



Do not fly closer to people than 50m

People involved in what you're doing

The rule on minimum distances is different for people involved in what you're doing.

You can fly closer than 50m to people who are with you and who are involved in what you're doing, such as friends, family or colleagues out flying with you. Remember, you must never put anyone in danger.

Point 4 continues on next page ›

Point 4 continued

Drones and model aircraft below 250g, or UK0, UK1, C0 or C1 class

The rules on minimum distances to people are different for drones and model aircraft below 250g, or UK0, UK1, C0 or C1 class.

You can fly a drone or model aircraft that's below 250g, or UK0, UK1 or C0 class closer to uninvolved people than 50m and you can fly over them. From 1 January 2026 until 31 December 2027, you can also fly a C1 class drone or model aircraft closer to uninvolved people than 50m and you can fly over them.

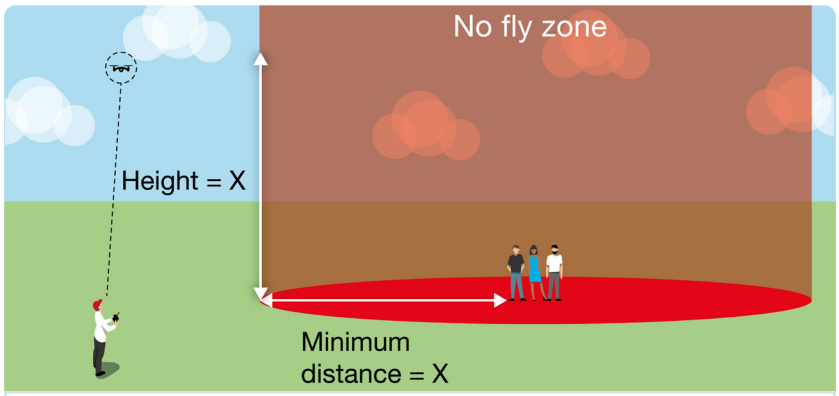
You still can't fly over crowds.

Remember, you must never put people in danger. Even small drones and model aircraft could injure people if you don't fly them safely.

Always keep a safe distance

Sometimes, you'll need to increase the 50m minimum distance from people to make sure that your flight remains safe. Follow these general rules:

- If you fly higher than 50m, you should keep the same distance horizontally. For example, keep 80m away if you fly at a height of 80m.
- If poor weather conditions mean that there could be a greater risk to people, fly further away from them. For example if it's very windy, you should fly further away from people.
- If you fly at high speeds, fly further away to give yourself more time to react.



If you fly higher than 50m, you should be at least the same distance away from people

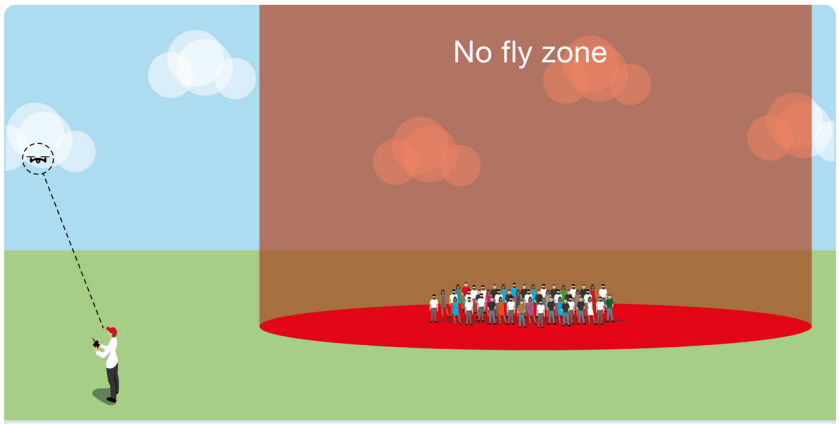
5 Never fly over people who are crowded together

A crowd is any group of people who cannot move away quickly because of the number of other people around them.

Never fly over people who are crowded together, no matter what size of drone or model aircraft you have.

Examples of places where people are often crowded together include:

- shopping areas
- sports events
- religious gatherings
- political gatherings
- music festivals and concerts
- marches and rallies
- at a crowded beach or park
- parties, carnivals and fêtes

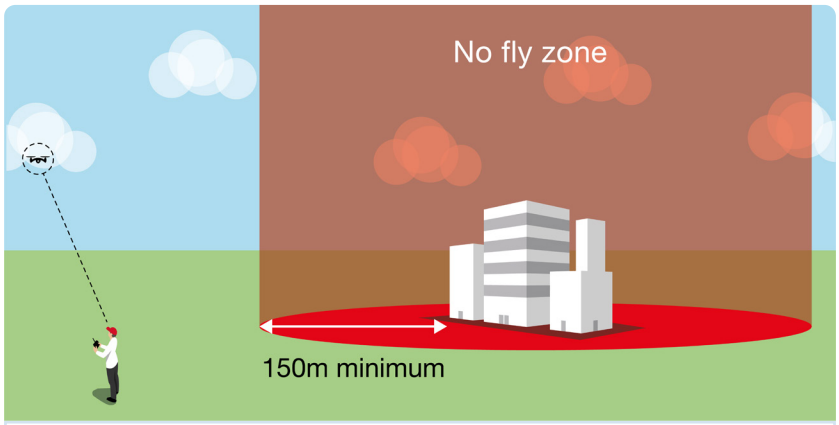


Never fly where people have gathered in crowds or groups

6 Keep at least 150m away from residential, recreational, commercial and industrial areas

150m is the minimum distance. Be prepared to increase the distance if you need to do that to fly safely.

You must keep at least 50m from individual buildings.



Keep at least 150m away from residential, recreational, commercial and industrial areas

Small drones and model aircraft below 250g, or UK0, UK1, C0 or C1 class

You can fly drones and model aircraft that are below 250g, or UK0, UK1 or C0 class in residential, recreational, commercial and industrial areas. From 1 January 2026 until 31 December 2027, you can also do this with a C1 class drone or model aircraft.

Remember, you must always fly safely.

Point 6 continues on next page ›

Point 6 continued

Examples of residential, recreational, commercial and industrial areas

Residential areas include:

- small groups of residential buildings that are within 50m of each other
- housing estates
- villages
- cities and towns
- schools

Recreational areas include:

- tourist attractions
- sports facilities
- beaches and parks
- theme parks

Commercial areas include:

- shopping centres
- warehouses
- business parks

Industrial areas include:

- factories
- docks
- rail and transport hubs

7 Stay well away from airports, airfields, spaceports and aircraft

If you endanger the safety of an aircraft, you could go to prison for five years.

Most airports, airfields and spaceports have a flight restriction zone (FRZ).

Never fly in this zone unless you have permission from the airport, airfield or spaceport. The zone is in place to avoid any collisions with aircraft or spacecraft at or near the site.

Some smaller airfields do not have an FRZ, but you still must not fly on or near these airfields where you could pose a danger to the safety of aircraft.

Checking for airport, airfield and spaceport or other airspace restrictions

You can find details of FRZs and other airspace restrictions in NATS' map of airspace restrictions. Some other airspace restrictions, especially those created at short notice, are not shown in this map.

There are several drone apps that show airspace restrictions.

Details of airspace restrictions in your drone's inbuilt software may not always be up to date. You must check a correct and up-to-date source before flying.

Smaller airfields may not appear on the map or in drone apps, so you must always look out for light aircraft, equipment or facilities that suggest there could be an airfield nearby.

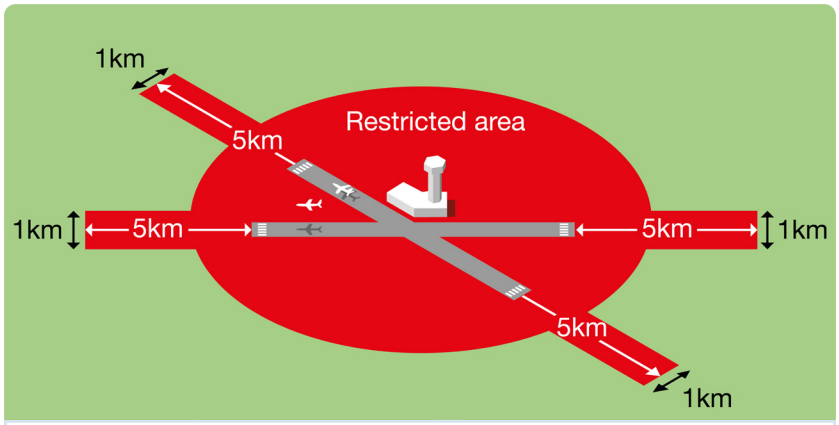
Point 7 continues on next page ›.

Point 7 continued

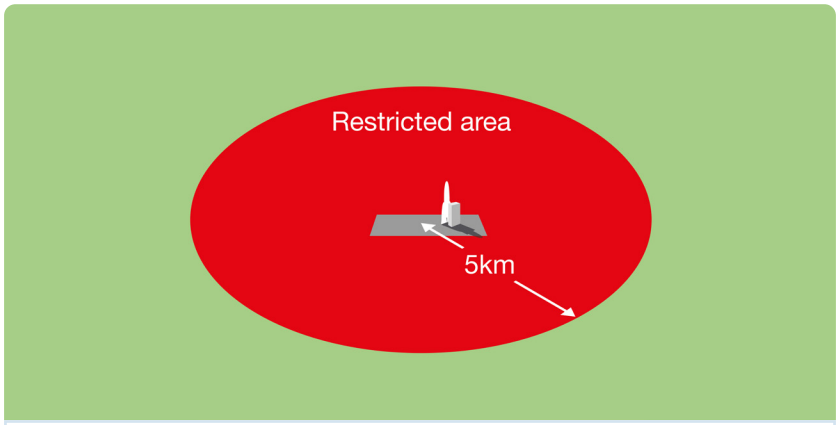
Geo-awareness systems

Some drones have geo-awareness systems that alert you if you fly in restricted airspace. This can help you avoid flying in restricted areas.

Remember, you must always keep your geo-awareness system up to date.



Never fly in an airport's flight restriction zone



Never fly in a spaceport's flight restriction zone

8 Follow any flying restrictions and check for hazards

Always check for restrictions and hazards before you fly.

Examples of restrictions and hazards

Restricted airspace

Flying may be restricted around some sites, such as prisons, military ranges, royal palaces, and government buildings.

Events

Flying may be temporarily banned in specific areas during some events, such as airshows or festivals. This is to keep everyone safe. There may also be security reasons for banning flying, such as at political conferences.

Emergency incidents

You must keep out of the way and not fly in any way that could hamper the emergency services when they're responding to an emergency incident.

If you're out flying at or near to an emergency incident when it happens, you must safely and immediately stop flying unless the emergency services give you permission to continue.

You must:

- follow any temporary restrictions that are put in place
- take particular care not to hinder any aerial support to the emergency services
- respect and protect the privacy of anyone involved in the emergency

Examples of emergency incidents include road traffic accidents, fires, floods, rescues, and similar events.

Byelaws

Byelaws may restrict when you can fly and where you can fly from.

Look out for local signs for information and contact details where you can find out more. Byelaws are unlikely to be shown on apps or drone websites.

Point 8 continues on next page ›

Point 8 continued

Tall structures

Check for any tall structures, such as cranes, masts and wires.

Do not fly if there are structures in the area that will mean it's not safe or legal.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Flying may be restricted at some Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) where that flight may disturb animals or wildlife. Check on the web for byelaws or look out for local signs and then follow any restrictions that apply.

The following national authorities provide information on SSSIs:

- Natural England
- Natural Resources Wales
- NatureScot
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)

Animals and wildlife

Do not fly where you'll disturb or endanger animals and wildlife.

Other aircraft

Always be ready to respond in the safest way possible if other aircraft appear where you're flying.

Look and listen out for unusual or specialist flying activities, such as air ambulances, police helicopters, light aircraft, military aircraft, crop spraying, and electricity pylon surveying.

Useful places to check for restrictions and hazards

Signs

Check for signs that say you cannot fly drones or model aircraft. Some sites may have restrictions that are not listed in apps and other services.

NOTAMs (Notice to Aviation)

NOTAMs are official notices that tell people about activities that may be a hazard to flying. For example, a balloon show.

Many drone apps include details of NOTAMs. You can also find NOTAMs at the NATS drone website.

Point 8 continues on next page ›

Point 8 continued

Apps and other resources with details of restrictions

Some flying restrictions are given in the following:

- drone apps that show airspace restrictions
- the NATS drone website (NATS is the air traffic control organisation)
- the Aeronautical Information Publication

When you use any of these resources, make sure you understand exactly what information it is giving you.

9 Get the right authorisation before flying outside this code

This Code covers basic flying in the Over People (A1) and Far from People (A3) sub-categories. If you want to fly outside the rules in this Code, you must first get the correct authorisation to move on to more advanced flying.

For example, you'll need authorisation from the Civil Aviation Authority if you want to fly:

- at different heights or distances to the ones in this Code
- closer to a residential, recreational, commercial or industrial area
- over crowds or groups of people

If you want to fly at or near an airport, you need permission from the airport.

If you want to fly in other types of restricted airspace, you'll need permission.

Authorisation that comes with membership of a club or association

In some cases, being a member of a recognised club or association may give you additional flying authorisation. For example, you may be able to fly in an area that is normally restricted as long as you follow the conditions in the authorisation.

Check with your club or association before you fly.

Making every flight safe

What to do before, during, and after a flight.

10	Make sure you know what your drone or model aircraft can and cannot do	› Page 26
11	Make sure your drone or model aircraft is fit to fly	› Page 27
12	Never drop anything from your drone or model aircraft while it's flying	› Page 28
13	Never carry any dangerous cargo on your drone or model aircraft	› Page 28
14	Make sure any equipment is secure	› Page 28
15	Do not fly if the weather could affect your flight	› Page 29
16	Make sure you're fit and safe to fly	› Page 30
17	Take action quickly and safely if the situation in the air or on the ground changes	› Page 31
18	Report any dangerous incidents, near misses or suspicious activity	› Page 32
19	Use a flashing green light when flying at night	› Page 33
20	Make sure you have the appropriate insurance	› Page 34

10 Make sure you know what your drone or model aircraft can and cannot do

Make sure you have read any instructions before you fly.

Key points to know are:

- how far your drone or model aircraft can fly from you before it loses signal
- how long your drone or model aircraft can fly before running low on power or fuel.

Software and functions

If your drone or model aircraft has any of the following functions, you should know how to set and update them:

- maximum flying height or maximum altitude
- a lost connection or 'return-to-home' function, which means your drone or model aircraft automatically flies back to you if there's a problem.

Geo-awareness

Some drones have a geo-awareness function that alerts you if you fly in restricted airspace.

If your drone or model aircraft has a geo-awareness function:

- do not alter or disable the software
- make sure the software is up to date before you go flying.

11 Make sure your drone or model aircraft is fit to fly

Check fuel and battery levels

Take special care to check that fuel and battery levels will last through your flight. This includes any extra fuel you might need in an emergency or for flying in difficult weather, such as windy conditions.

Remember to check the battery power in the controller too.

Check any built-in software is up to date

The built-in software (called firmware) controls important navigation and flying controls. Depending on the type of drone or model aircraft you have, this could include:

- how your drone uses its power
- how your drone knows its position
- how your drone lands if there's a problem
- in some cases, the latest information on flight restriction zones and other airspace restrictions

Keeping this software up to date will also help to protect against cyber attacks.

Follow the instructions to update the built-in software (firmware). Always check that the software has updated correctly before going flying.

12 Never drop, lower or fire anything from your drone or model aircraft while it's flying

13 Never carry any dangerous cargo on your drone or model aircraft

You must never carry any cargo on your drone or model aircraft that could be dangerous to people, property or the environment if there was an accident.

For example, never carry:

- poisonous or corrosive cargo, such as acid or bleach
- flammable cargo, such as petrol or oil, apart from what the engine needs for that flight

14 Make sure any equipment is secure

If you plan to carry any equipment on your drone or model aircraft, you must not go over the maximum take-off mass (MTOM). This is the maximum safe weight your drone or model aircraft can take-off and fly with. It includes fuel and any items or equipment attached to it.

You can find the maximum take-off mass in your drone or model aircraft instructions.

15 Do not fly if the weather could affect your flight

Some of the things to look out for:

- strong winds could blow your drone or model aircraft off course or make it difficult to fly safely
- wind on the ground is often very different to the wind at height
- rain or other water, snow and cold weather could stop parts of your drone or model aircraft from working
- fog could mean you lose sight of your drone or model aircraft
- glare from the sun could mean you lose sight of your drone or model aircraft
- cold or wet weather could affect your ability to control your drone or model aircraft safely
- standing out in the sun could affect your ability to concentrate

Make sure your drone or model aircraft will work if the temperature is low

Follow the manufacturer's guidance on the safe temperatures to fly at.

Some types of battery do not hold their charge as long in cold weather and this may reduce the amount of time you can fly.

16 Make sure you're fit and safe to fly

Do not drink and fly

You must not fly when under the influence of alcohol. Alcohol will seriously affect your judgement and ability.

Do not fly under the influence of drugs or medicine

Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking medicines that may affect your ability to operate your drone or model aircraft safely. Do not fly if they advise that your ability to drive a car or operate machinery may be affected.

Do not fly if you're tired or unwell

Your judgement and ability could be affected if you are tired or unwell.

Do not fly while you could be distracted by another activity

For example:

- do not fly while driving, riding or operating a vehicle or bicycle
- do not fly while messaging or making a phone call
- do not fly more than one drone or model aircraft at a time

17 Take action quickly and safely if the situation in the air or on the ground changes

Always be ready to land your drone or model aircraft or reduce your flying height and wait until it is safe to fly again. For example, you may need to land if a group of people or animals turn up in the area where you're flying.

Low flying aircraft

Reduce your flying height or land as soon as you hear or see a low flying aircraft that may be affected by your drone or model aircraft.

Land your drone or model aircraft, or hover at a low level well out of the way, and wait until it's safe to continue with your flight. If it appears the aircraft is attempting to land, you should land your drone or model aircraft immediately.

18 Report any dangerous incidents, near misses or suspicious activity

If you witness or are involved in a serious incident or near miss involving a drone or model aircraft, you must report the incident to the Civil Aviation Authority. You can choose to do this anonymously or you can give your details.

A serious incident includes anything that did, or could have, put any of the following in danger

- people
- property, buildings, or equipment
- aircraft

The Civil Aviation Authority will use this information to monitor potential hazards and risks to help keep flying safe for everyone.

The Civil Aviation Authority website has more guidance on what must be reported.

Suspicious activity and mis-use

If you see anybody using a drone or model aircraft in a suspicious or dangerous way, call your local police on 101. If it's at an airport, call airport security.

Retrieving your drone or model aircraft after a forced landing

If you make a forced landing or crash on private property, you must get the property owner's permission before retrieving your drone or model aircraft.

This is especially important at sites where security services are likely to respond if you enter without permission.

19 Use a flashing green light when flying at night

If you fly a drone or model aircraft at night, your aircraft must have a flashing green light turned on. This will make it easier for other people and aircraft to spot your aircraft.

What to do if your drone or model aircraft does not have a built-in flashing green light

If you want to fly at night and your drone or model aircraft does not have a built-in flashing green light, you must securely fit a specialist drone flashing green light.

The weight of the flashing light add-on is included in the overall weight of the drone or model aircraft, so you must check to see if the weight of the light means different regulations apply to your operation.

20 Make sure you have the appropriate insurance

The insurance you need depends on the size of your drone or model aircraft and what you use it for.

Insurance for drones and model aircraft below 20kg

If you fly a drone or model aircraft that weighs less than 20kg for fun, recreation, sport, or as a hobby, you can choose whether or not to have insurance.

If you fly for any other reason, you must have third party liability insurance. For example, you must have insurance if you:

- get paid to take pictures or record video or carry out surveys
- use your drone for work, such as on a farm, park or estate

Although insurance is optional if you only fly for fun, recreation, sport, or as a hobby, remember you're responsible for your actions. You could be held personally liable for any injury or damage you cause, so you may want to consider getting third party liability insurance.

Insurance for drones and model aircraft 20kg and above

If your drone or model aircraft is 20kg or more, you must always have third party insurance, no matter what you use your aircraft for.

Protecting people's privacy

Making sure that you don't invade anyone's privacy when you're out flying. What you can and can't do with photos and videos.

21	Respect other people and their privacy	› Page 36
22	Make sure you know what your camera can do and the kind of images it can take	› Page 36
23	Make sure you can be clearly seen when you're out flying	› Page 36
24	Let people know before you start recording or taking pictures	› Page 37
25	Think before sharing photos and videos	› Page 37
26	Keep photos and videos secure	› Page 37

21 Respect other people and their privacy

If your drone or model aircraft is fitted with a camera or listening device, you must respect other people's privacy whenever you use them.

If you use these devices where people can expect privacy, such as inside their home or garden, you're likely to be breaking data protection laws.

It's against the law to take photographs or record video or sound for criminal or terrorist purposes.

Any photos or recordings you take may be covered by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

22 Make sure you know what your camera can do and the kind of images it can take

Knowing this will help to reduce the risk of taking photos or recording videos that invade privacy.

Make sure you know:

- what quality you can record
- how close your camera can zoom in
- if you can start and stop recording when you are flying

23 Make sure you can be clearly seen when you're out flying

This means people will know who's responsible for your drone or model aircraft.

24 Let people know before you start recording or taking pictures

In some cases, this will be easy. For example, if you're taking a photo of family and friends at a family barbecue.

In other cases, this will be less practical, so you must be careful to respect everyone's right to privacy.

Remember, you must never fly over groups, crowds, or any people who are not with you.

25 Think before sharing photos and videos

Avoid sharing anything that could be unfair or harmful to anyone.

Think carefully about who could see your photos and videos – especially before posting them on social media. Apply the same common-sense approach that you would with images or video recorded on a smartphone or digital camera.

26 Keep photos and videos secure

Store images safely. Delete anything you don't need.

If you record images for commercial use, you'll need to meet further specific requirements as a data controller.

Getting a Flyer ID before you fly

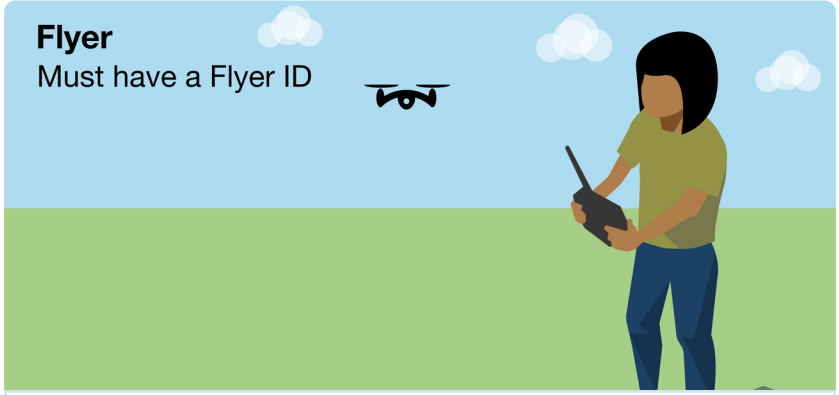
What to do if you will fly a drone or model aircraft that requires you to have a Flyer ID, and requirements for children under the age of 13.

27	You must pass the CAA's official online theory test to get a Flyer ID	› Page 39
28	You must pass the theory test to renew your Flyer ID every five years	› Page 39
29	Always fly safely and legally	› Page 39

27 You must pass the CAA's official online theory test to get a Flyer ID

Children and adults must pass the test: there is no age limit.

For data protection reasons, children under 13 must be with a parent or guardian when they take the test and register.



You must pass the CAA's official online theory test to get a Flyer ID

28 You must pass the theory test to renew your Flyer ID every five years

Your Flyer ID will last for five years.

If you took your last test under the previous regulations, that Flyer ID will last for three years. You can check when your ID expires in the My registration area.

29 Always fly safely and legally

Following the points in this Code will help you to do this.

Getting an Operator ID before you fly

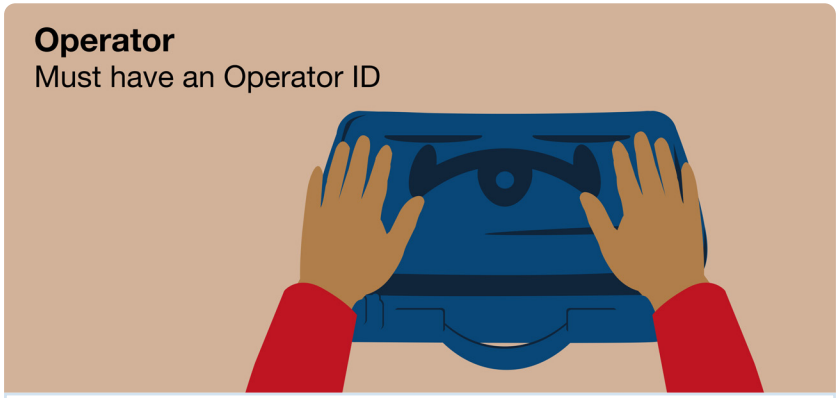
What to do if you're a drone or model aircraft operator.

30	The person or organisation that's responsible for a drone or model aircraft that requires an Operator ID must register to get an Operator ID	› Page 41
31	Label all your drones or model aircraft with your Operator ID	› Page 42
32	Fly with Remote ID switched on when flying a UK1, UK2 or UK3 class drone or model aircraft	› Page 43
33	Always make sure that anyone flying your drone or model aircraft has the right competence certificate, such as a valid Flyer ID	› Page 43
34	Set out what you expect from anyone who'll fly your drone or model aircraft and what you'll be responsible for yourself	› Page 44
35	Maintain your drone or model aircraft so that it's safe to fly	› Page 44
36	You must renew your Operator ID every year	› Page 44

30 The person or organisation that's responsible for a drone or model aircraft that requires an Operator ID must register to get an Operator ID

You must be over 18 to register as an operator. If you're under 18, you'll need to ask a parent or guardian to register for an Operator ID.

Points 31 to 36 set out what you're responsible for if you're an operator.



The person or organisation responsible for a drone or model aircraft that requires an Operator ID must register to get an Operator ID

31 Label all your drones or model aircraft with your Operator ID

You must label your Operator ID on every drone or model aircraft you're responsible for.

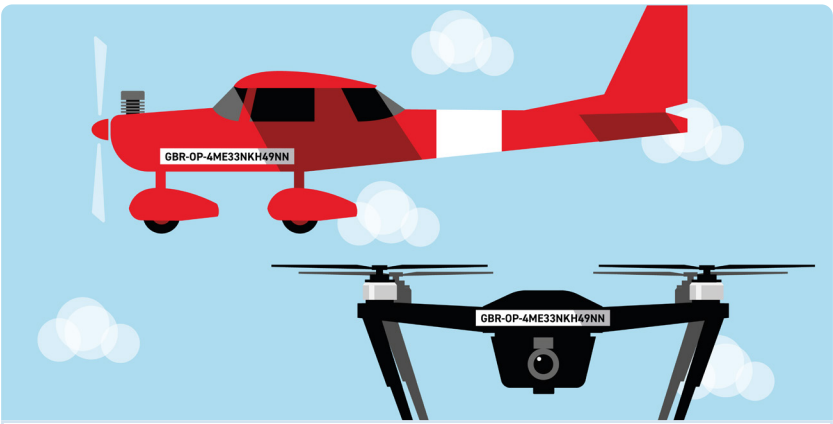
You can use the same Operator ID for all your drones and model aircraft.

Always label with your Operator ID, not your Flyer ID.

How to label your drone or model aircraft

Your Operator ID must be:

- visible from the outside, or within a compartment that can easily be accessed without using a tool
- clear and in block capitals taller than 3mm
- secure and safe from damage
- on the main body of the aircraft



You must label your Operator ID on every drone or model aircraft you're responsible for. You can use the same Operator ID for every aircraft.

32 Fly with Remote ID switched on when flying a UK1, UK2 or UK3 class drone or model aircraft

A Remote ID system transmits the identity and location of your drone or model aircraft when in-flight. This information can be received by anyone using a Remote ID receiver.

Every UK1, UK2 and UK3 class drone or model aircraft is fitted with a Remote ID function. From 1 January 2026, you must add your Remote ID and switch on the Remote ID function before flying a UK1, UK2 or UK3 class drone or model aircraft.

Adding your Remote ID to your drone or model aircraft

We provide every operator with a Remote ID.

You can view your Remote ID in My Registration.

Check your drone or model aircraft manual for instructions on how to add and switch on Remote ID.

If you don't comply with Remote ID requirements, you may face prosecution.

33 Always make sure that anyone flying your drone or model aircraft has the right competence certificate, such as a valid Flyer ID

You can do this at the check someone's registration status service.

If you are the operator of a drone or model aircraft that is being flown by someone who does not hold the right competence certificate, you may be liable to prosecution.

34 Set out what you expect from anyone who'll fly your drone or model aircraft and what you'll be responsible for yourself

If anyone else will fly a drone or model aircraft you're responsible for, you must tell them:

- to fly safely and follow this Code when they fly
- to follow the manufacturer's instructions for flying
- what you'll be responsible for, such as keeping any built-in software up to date
- what you expect them to do, especially to do with flying and maintaining your aircraft

If several people will fly, such as in a business, club or school, consider writing this information down and making it available somewhere that everyone can easily access it.

35 Maintain your drone or model aircraft so that it's safe to fly

This includes following the manufacturer's instructions on maintenance and keeping any built-in software (firmware) up to date.

36 Renew your Operator ID every year

It is a legal requirement to keep your Operator ID registration details up to date.

Less common flying

Carrying out less common flying activities.

These points are not included in the theory test.

37	Flying with follow-me mode active	› Page 46
38	Height limits for model gliders up to 10kg	› Page 46
39	Flying over very tall structures	› Page 47

37 Flying with follow-me mode active

Some drones or model aircraft have a follow-me mode that means you can set your aircraft to follow you within a fixed distance.

You do not have to keep your drone or model aircraft in direct sight when follow-me mode is active and set to follow within 50m of you. You must still follow all of the other points.

38 Height limits for model gliders up to 10kg

The maximum height for model gliders is up to 120m (400ft) above the height you're standing at rather than above the ground level directly below it.

This is to allow for flying from hills and mountains.

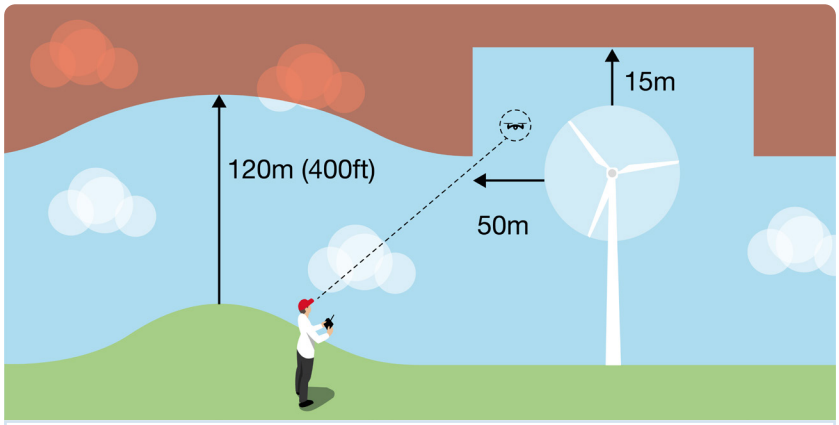
The maximum height for all other drones and model aircraft is measured from the closest point of the earth's surface to the aircraft during flight.

39 Flying over very tall structures

If the person or organisation responsible for a very tall structure over 105m asks you to carry out a task related to their structure, you're allowed to fly higher than 120m (400ft). For example, if they ask you to take pictures for a survey.

You must never fly more than 15m above the structure.

Your drone or model aircraft must be within 50m of the structure horizontally when flying over 120m (400ft).



You can fly up to 15m over a building or structure taller than 105m if the person or organisation responsible for the structure asks you to do a task related to it

Ready to take the theory test?

You're ready to take the theory test when you know the Code.

You can do this online at https://register-drones.caa.co.uk/individual/register-and-take-test-to-fly

Background: Drones and model aircraft in the law

Acts and regulations

The following acts and regulations include some of the key points of law that this Drone and Model Aircraft Code is based on. The list is not intended to be comprehensive.

For the precise wording of the law, please see the acts and regulations. These are also available in print from The Stationery Office.

- CAP1789A:
  Consolidated version of the EU UAS Implementing Regulation.
- CAP1789B:
  Consolidated version of the EU UAS Delegated Regulation.
- The Air Navigation Order 2016,
  including the 2018 amendment and 2019 amendment.
  The Civil Aviation Authority has published a copy of the Air Navigation Order with amendments inserted.
- The Data Protection Act 2018.