

**A model's maiden flight - magical with exhilaration, or
maybe diabolical with palpitation.**



Whichever it's like for you - brown trousers and bicycle clips, or that winning moment on checking your lottery numbers - the maiden flight is going to be a whole lot easier - and maybe very much more successful in its outcome - if you can take away some of that pre-maiden flight stress and pressure.

But how?

Simple -



- we all know that in 'the heat of the moment', it's so easy to forget some important things you should have checked - so, why burden yourself with trying to remember it all.

Use a brief checklist - of just a few vital things.



I'm talking vital things, which if they're wrong, are at the very least likely to give your wallet some pretty serious palpitations.

So, a simple checklist of those vital items - items which you know if you fail to get them right, then even your bravest face on the outcome is unlikely to promote the claim: 'magic with exhilaration' !

Obviously, there are going to be all the usual pre-flight checks which you can probably do with your eyes closed and your transmitter tied behind your back - those you can probably do almost subconsciously.

But it's the checks which are particular to the fact that this is, as yet, an untried airframe and an untried setup -



- so it needs some highly focused thought - and, of course, this is where the situation can benefit from using a short aide memoir.

Below is a short list of some main points to check and, of course, you may wish to add items which are specific to your model. Or items you just think should be included in the list, such as checking for warps, or that the plane is laterally balanced.

If you think this check list a helpful idea, then go ahead and print out a few copies for you flight box -



- or use it as the basis for creating your own list.

Maiden Flight Checklist

1. To start with there's the **centre of gravity check** - pretty essential that this is correct. Now, of course, you did remember to note where the manufacturer (or plan) said the C of G should be.
2. Security of flight and control surfaces - check the **wings, tailplane and fin are all firmly attached** - though I know you're not the sort to forget to glue that tailplane or fin in position. Also check the **ailerons, elevator and rudder are all secured** by whatever means and that they don't just pull off.
3. **Engine / Motor and propeller** - check they are all tightly fastened in place.
4. **Undercarriage secure?** Gently push the plane along the ground - does it track straight? If not, something is out of **alignment** or there's a binding wheel. Though it could, of course, just be asymmetric encounters with worm casts !
5. **Battery secure** and not going to slide free. **Battery** in good state of **charge**.
6. Correct **model selected on transmitter**. Though, is anyone still using 35Meg?
7. With plane secure, try low throttle.
If electric, is the motor turning the correct way ie. **air being blown rearwards**.
Switch off the transmitter - does **the failsafe work correctly** - does it cut the motor/engine.
8. **Radio range check**.
9. Check of **control throws** and that **direction** of control surface movements are correct - indeed check the correct surface is moving and you've not got plugs in wrong sockets. Easy to do if you've elevons or V tail setups.
Exponential, if set up, is it working correctly - not set to make things more twitchy.
Rates, if opted for, are they working correctly and you know which switch or switches.
10. You may want to have someone help with this part. Hold each control surface as you command the servo to move it and check that with slight resistance applied, that the surface still moves. **Servos** can be faulty by way of being able to move an unloaded aileron or elevator, but **when a flight load is applied** the power isn't there to give the desired deflection.
And check control **surfaces centre correctly**.
11. (Plus those other items You'd like to check... jot them down while You remember them).