Hastings Aerodrome
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CAN ANYONE FLY A GLIDER?
Yes. Age is no limit. Although gliding doesn't have the stringent medical constraints of power flying, a medical certificate is required before flying solo. People of any age can learn to fly.

IS IT FOR ME? HOW DO I FIND OUT IF I LIKE IT?
Trial membership flights are available where you will be taken with a qualified instructor. You will have a short ground briefing before launching. Once flying, you will get some hands on control during the flight and get to try your hand at some basic manoeuvres to get the feel of what soaring is all about.

CAN I GIVE SOMEONE ELSE A FLIGHT AS A GIFT?
Yes!, see http://www.glidinghbw.co.nz/home.html for further details of vouchers available.

HOW DO I FIND YOU?
We are based at Hastings Aerodrome (Bridge Pa Airfield), which is beside the Hastings Golf Course on Maraekakaho Road. Leave Hastings from Stortford Lodge on Maraekakaho Road, drive south until the roundabout, turn right and the Aerodrome is approximately 3km further down this road on the right. In Waipukurau, the airfield is located on SH2, Takapau Road, Waipukurau. See http://www.glidinghbw.co.nz/contact-us.html for maps.

WHEN DO YOU OPERATE?
Every Sunday unless it is pouring with rain or blowing a real gale. Saturday and Wednesday afternoon flying is sometimes arranged if the conditions are good. We usually start flying around midday and fly until dusk if conditions are suitable.

Ideal conditions for trial membership flights and training are calm, clear days. Soaring days require sources of lift e.g. thermals (often marked by cumulus clouds), wave (often marked by roll clouds and lenticulars) and convergences (often marked by a line of cloud).

WHAT EQUIPMENT DO YOU HAVE?
We own our hangar at Bridge Pa that houses our two two-seaters, GMX, a Twin Astir and GHB, a self launching Grob G103C Twin III SL and one single seater glider, GYP, a PW5. We also own our own towplane, a Citabria CPD, and ancillary equipment.

WHAT WOULD I LEARN IN?
Primary training is carried out in either our basic trainer, a Twin Astir, GMX, and or our more advanced glider GHB, a Grob G103C Twin III SL.

HOW LONG WOULD IT TAKE ME?
Training to first solo flight usually takes about 8 to 10 hours flying time depending upon ability and application. Most people reach this stage within six months if they complete 2-3 flights each flying Sunday.

WHO WOULD TEACH ME?
The club has fully qualified instructors rostered on duty each Sunday to undertake all training of club members regardless of the stage of their flying ability. You would learn with a number of different instructors.

WHAT ABOUT AIRCRAFT THEORY?

This is also the function of the instructors but much is learned by talking to club members and simply being there. Meteorology is an essential part of gliding and instruction is also given on this subject. There are a variety of good books on the subject available at both the Hastings and Napier libraries.

WHAT ELSE WOULD I HAVE TO DO?
Members usually arrive in time to assist in preparing the gliders for the day's flying, e.g. cleaning, inspection etc. This may also include towing the gliders on the ground and generally helping out. Members who are not instructors or tow pilots are rostered as Duty pilots for the day. This involves being in charge of ground operations all day and in particular keeping accurate records of flight times of the tow plane and all gliders.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE AIRCRAFT?
Everyone!!! As each club member has a vested interest in our aircraft, hangar and clubhouse, we are all expected to take care of them. We also have our own engineers to complete the technical work.

ARE ANY FLYING TESTS REQUIRED?
To fly solo you must be judged to be competent by the Chief Flying Instructor. Each pilot has a log book in which all their flights are recorded. There is a written training syllabus of skills and manoeuvres in which the pupil must display competence.

DO I HAVE TO PASS A WRITTEN TEST?
Yes. During your post-solo training you are required to pass a number of multi-choice exams on different subjects. A radio operator's rating is also required. None of the exams are difficult,

DO THESE TESTS RESULT IN A LICENCE?
Yes. Gilder pilots obtain what is known as a "Soaring Pilot" licence, by meeting set flying standards and passing the above written tests.

DO YOU REALLY LAND IN PADDOCKS?
Yes. Anyone can be caught out by deteriorating flying weather and be left with no choice but to land in a paddock. This is not a problem as the aircraft are designed for it. However, most members do their best to avoid it because offenders must ‘shout the bar’ at the end of the day.

COULD I TAKE PASSENGERS?
Yes. After gaining the required experience you may obtain a passenger rating and take friends, family or prospective members for a flight.

HOW LONG DOES A FLIGHT LAST?
That depends entirely on the weather and your ability. Club aircraft must return within the hour if other members are waiting. Trainees may have three consecutive flights within the hour.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?
It would probably cost about $2,500 to $3,500 to attain solo status. This is spread over six to twelve months which takes some of the pain out of it. However, when compared with power flying, it is very competitive.

IS IT CHEAPER AFTER SOLO?
Yes and no! Pre-solo flights are more intensive and usually of shorter duration. Post solo flights are the same cost but your abilities have improved and you can achieve more in each flight. Membership fees and tow fees are the same regardless of your flying ability.

HOW DO I JOIN?
An application form is completed by the prospective member, signed and with membership fee attached or paid electronically, is passed to the Club treasurer or secretary. The membership application is then considered at the next committee meeting. A copy of the application form and current costs are on the Club Details page at http://www.glidinghbw.co.nz/club-details.html

A medical declaration form for your Doctor's signature is available on the Gliding New Zealand. This must be completed and returned to the Club CFI prior to you going solo.

So what are you waiting for? To learn more about these and the “air pockets” you fly through in powered aircraft, come and join the gliding club.

While soaring flights are weather dependent, once you have experienced one, you will want to join us.

Further details about the club and learning to glide are on the gliding club website at http://www.glidinghbw.co.nz/