

FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR • INSTRUMENT AIRPLANE

CFII

Quick-Review Guide

Teaching a skill you cannot see the learner perform from outside — the scan, the mental picture, the decision at minimums. The instrument instructor rating tested to a Practical Test Standard, not an ACS: what that changes, the legal and logging frame, the diagnosis of instrument-flying errors, and how to build and debrief the lesson.

MODE 01

5-minute scan

The PTS Task-selection rules, the 61.65 and 61.57 numbers, the endorsement set. Find it, move on.

MODE 02

30-minute review

Work the error-diagnosis tables and the lesson and debrief structures. Say the explanations out loud, as you will while flying.

MODE 03

Oral prep

Answer each evaluator prompt as an instrument instructor would, before reading the model response.

STANDARD

FAA-S-8081-9E, Flight Instructor Instrument Practical Test Standards for Airplane Rating and Helicopter Rating — November 2023; incorporated by reference into 14 CFR (61.14). **A PTS:** Tasks are stated as Objectives with numbered elements, not ACS K/R/S codes.

SCOPE

Adding the instrument-airplane rating to an existing flight instructor certificate. Legal frame and logging, PTS architecture, instrument teaching methodology, error diagnosis, assessment and debrief, currency and IPC as instructor responsibilities. Six IFR refresher pages (13–18) carry the instrument knowledge the CFII must teach and diagnose — equipment, instruments, navigation systems, weather, procedures, approaches, lost communications, aeromedical, SRM — so the guide stands alone; the Instrument guide is optional depth.

SOURCE SNAPSHOT

04 SEP 2026 — eCFR (Part 61 at Amdt. 61-159), FAA-S-8081-9E, FAA-S-ACS-8C (the learner's standard), FAA-H-8083-15B, FAA-H-8083-9B, AC 61-65K

STATUS

Version 1.0. Technical and owner review: Javier Ramirez, CFI / CFII / MEI.

Use boundary. A review and oral-preparation reference for the instrument instructor practical test. It does not replace the current regulations, the PTS, the Instrument ACS, the Instrument Flying Handbook, an approved AFM/POH or the judgment of the instructor who trained you. **Aircraft-specific numbers, the conduct of partial-panel, lost-communication and engine-inoperative procedures, and any checklist sequence come from your airplane's approved material, the regulation itself, and your own instructor — never from a study guide.** Where a claim depends on a source that could not be verified on the snapshot date, that boundary is stated on the page.

Adding the instrument instructor rating: what the law asks, and what the test reuses

You already hold a flight instructor certificate. The instrument rating on it is an additional rating under 61.183 and 61.187 — with its own knowledge test, its own areas of operation, and a PTS table that tells the evaluator what not to test again.

DIRECT ANSWER — ELIGIBILITY FOR THE ADDITIONAL RATING

Hold a commercial or ATP certificate with an **instrument rating** on it (61.183(c)(2)); pass the **flight instructor instrument** knowledge test (61.183(f) — the FOI test is not repeated, 61.183(e)); receive and log training on the **61.187(b) areas of operation for an instrument-airplane instructor rating** and the endorsement that you are prepared (61.183(g), 61.187(a)); and pass the practical test in an airplane (61.183(h)). The 15-hour PIC rule of 61.183(j) applies to category and class, which you already hold.

14 CFR 61.183(c), (e)–(h); 61.187(a), (b)(7)

61.187(B) AREAS OF OPERATION – INSTRUMENT AIRPLANE	
i	Fundamentals of instructing
ii	Technical subject areas
iii	Preflight preparation
iv	Preflight lesson on a maneuver to be performed in flight
v	Air traffic control clearances and procedures
vi	Flight by reference to instruments
vii	Navigation systems
viii	Instrument approach procedures
ix	Emergency operations
x	Postflight procedures
The PTS Areas of Operation I–X map onto this list one for one. The regulation names the areas; the PTS says what is tested in each.	
14 CFR 61.187(b)(7); FAA-S-8081-9E	

CHECKRIDE TRAP

"I'm a CFI, so I can already give instrument training toward the rating." 61.195(c) says the opposite: instrument training for an instrument rating, for a type rating not limited to VFR, and the instrument training required for Commercial and ATP certificates needs the instrument rating on your *instructor* certificate. Until the CFII is added, the only instrument time you may give is the Private applicant's 3 hours — and in a multiengine airplane, none of it (61.195(c)(2)).

WHAT THE EVALUATOR WILL NOT TEST AGAIN –existing rating: airplane	
PTS ADDITION TABLE	
AREA	HOLDER OF A FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATE, AIRPLANE
I Fundamentals of instructing	Not required
II Technical subject areas	Required — the table names specific Tasks (see ledger; A and C as read on the snapshot date)
III Preflight preparation	Required — Tasks B and C
IV Maneuver lesson	Not required
V–X	Required, per the selection rules on page 02
A holder of an instrument <i>helicopter</i> or powered-lift instructor rating gets more credit (Areas V and VII not required; Area VIII one approach). The table was read through the fetch tool and is flagged U-CFII-01 in the register: read the table in your own copy before the test and settle the Area II Task letters with the evaluator.	
FAA-S-8081-9E, Introduction – Addition of an Instrument Instructor Rating table	

WHAT THE RATING AUTHORIZES, AND WHAT IT DOES NOT	
Authorizes	Instrument training toward an instrument rating and the Commercial/ATP instrument blocks (61.195(c)); the instrument proficiency check (61.57(d)(3)(iv), an "authorized instructor" with the rating); the IPC endorsement (61.195(d)(6)); logging instrument time while instructing in actual conditions (61.51(g)(2))
Does not change	Your 8-hour limit, your 61.189 record-keeping, your recent-experience cycle (one certificate, one 24-month period, all ratings), the 61.195(f) 5-hour make-and-model rule for multiengine, or the prohibition on self-endorsement
14 CFR 61.51(g), 61.57(d), 61.189, 61.195, 61.197	

EVALUATOR ORAL	
Do you have to be tested on the fundamentals of instructing today?	
STRONG FIRST ANSWER	
No — the PTS addition table marks Area I not required for a holder of a flight instructor certificate, and 61.183(e) exempts me from the FOI knowledge test for the same reason. But the PTS still defines "instructional knowledge" as teaching the way the Aviation Instructor's Handbook says, and every flight Task is graded on it — so the fundamentals are not tested as a Task, they are tested in every Task.	

Instrument currency and the IPC — as the instructor's responsibility

The Instrument guide (page 01) teaches 61.57(c) to the pilot. This page is the other side: what you must know to give an IPC, to sign for it, and to answer the currency question for a pilot who is asking you.

DIRECT ANSWER — 61.57(C)(1)

To act as PIC under IFR or in weather less than VFR minimums, within the **6 calendar months** preceding the month of the flight the pilot must have performed and logged, in actual conditions or simulated with a view-limiting device: **six instrument approaches, holding procedures and tasks, and intercepting and tracking courses** through navigation systems. Devices count under (c)(2)–(5). Miss it for more than **six further calendar months** and only an **instrument proficiency check** restores it — 61.57(d)(1).

14 CFR 61.57(c)(1)–(5), (d)(1)

61.57(D) — WHAT AN IPC IS, LEGALLY

Content The areas of operation the **Instrument ACS** lists for an IPC (61.57(d)(1) → Part 61 Appendix A → FAA-S-ACS-8C, IPC table)

Where An aircraft of the category, or a full flight simulator or FTD representative of it — (d)(2)

Who An examiner; a military instrument examiner for military members; a company check pilot for that operator's employees; **an authorized instructor**; a person approved by the Administrator — (d)(3)

Endorsement Only by the person who conducted it — 61.195(d)(6); logged with the Tasks completed

"Authorized instructor" here means one with the instrument rating on the instructor certificate for the category — the CFII. An ATD is not on the (d)(2) list for the IPC itself even though it counts for currency under (c).

CONDUCTING THE IPC — THE INSTRUCTOR'S METHOD

Before Open the Instrument ACS IPC table with the pilot; agree the Tasks; ask what they fly and how they have been flying it; set the standard out loud — the ACS tolerances, not "safe enough"

During An evaluation, not a lesson: you observe, note, and intervene only for safety. Instruction after an unsatisfactory Task is a separate event, logged as training, and the IPC Task is re-flown

The decision Every required Task to the ACS standard, or no endorsement. There is no partial IPC and no "IPC with remarks." An unsatisfactory IPC is not a failure to be recorded against the pilot — it is training to be scheduled

After Collaborative debrief (page 10); the endorsement with the Tasks and the date; your 61.189 record if a test endorsement was involved — an IPC is not one, but keep the record anyway

14 CFR 61.57(d); FAA-S-ACS-8C Appendix (IPC); FAA-H-8083-9B Ch. 6, 8

CHECKRIDE TRAP

"An IPC counts as a flight review." Not by itself. 61.56(d) lets a *practical test or proficiency check* conducted by an examiner or the FAA substitute; an IPC given by a CFII substitutes only if the flight also meets 61.56(a) — the 1 hour ground on Part 91 rules and the 1 hour of flight, and the instructor endorses both. Say which endorsements you are giving, and give each on its own terms.

EVALUATOR ORAL

A pilot's last six approaches were 8 calendar months ago. He asks for "a quick currency flight." What do you tell him?

STRONG FIRST ANSWER

He's inside the 6-month grace period — out of currency for IFR, but not yet owing an IPC — so he can regain it by flying six approaches, holding and tracking with a safety pilot or in a qualifying device, without me. If he wants me aboard, I'd rather make it a real training flight than a box-ticking one, and log it as such. If it had been more than 12 calendar months since he was last current, the only route is an IPC to the ACS, and I'd tell him that plainly before we schedule.