

How much does it cost to learn to fly a microlight?

Embarking on a course of lessons is a big investment, and you should make sure that you are fully informed before signing up so you don't get any surprises further down the line.

When starting a course, it is worth sitting down with your instructor and going through all the associated costs that you will be expected to pay throughout your training. This factsheet aims to outline the areas that you should check on. Prices vary depending on the location of the airfield, the experience of the instructor, and the aircraft used, and any prices quoted here are purely ballpark figures.

1. Lessons

Most schools will offer a pay as you go price and also discounts if you book a course of lessons. As a rough figure, expect to pay at least £100 per lesson for flex wing, and £130 for fixed wing if you are booking as part of a course.

The minimum hours required to attain your NPPL is 25 hours. The number of hours you can take can vary hugely depending on how often you can come, age, motivation, natural aptitude and weather. To be realistic, budget at least 35 hours - be aware that some people take a lot longer.

2. Exams

You will need to complete 5 theoretical exams, which are set and supervised by a ground examiner who will charge for his time, typically £20-£30 per exam. Some ground examiners will let you resit for free if you fail, others will charge you again - ask before booking.

When you are ready to take your General Flight Test (your practical test) you will typically need to pay for the use of the microlight for an hour or so, and for your flight examiner's time.

3. Ground School

Some students get through their exams just by reading and self study, but ground school will not only help you with your exams, it will ultimately make you a better and safer pilot, so it's worth the investment. Most instructors offer one to one sessions and group sessions, and price accordingly.

4. Insurance

Some schools roll insurance into the hourly cost, some charge you a one off or annual fee, typically when you go solo, and others ask for a bond that is only payable in case of an accident. Insurance costs vary according to planes covered, and how many students are sharing the cost. Ask your instructor before embarking on your course.

5. Airfield Membership/Landing Fees

Most regular students will be expected to join the airfield where the school is based, and their membership fees contribute towards maintenance and upkeep. Costs vary. If you are based at one airfield and training at another (for example if circuit training is not allowed at your school's home airfield, you may need to fly to the closest suitable location), then you may be asked to pay a landing fee. Again, landing fees vary depending on the airfield - from a fiver to upwards of £20.

6. License Fee

The cost of the NPPL License is currently £150 (1.9.11)

7. BMAA Membership

You don't have to join the BMAA unless you own a plane, but it is worth being a member to use the resources such as news, information and forum. The current cost is £65 per year, (1.9.11)

8. Books, maps and equipment

There are 3-4 books that your instructor will recommend, so budget around £80 if you want to buy them all new. You can also use Amazon and Ebay if you want to shop around. You will need to buy a log book and navigation equipment - budget around £40 for both.

9. Clothing and accessories:

Most schools will allow you to use their flying suits, gloves and helmets. If you'd prefer to buy your own, ask your instructor for recommendations.

Budget

	School 1		School 2		School 3	
	Per hour	Total	Per hour	Total	Per Hour	Total
Lessons						
Exams						
Ground School						
Insurance						
Airfield Fees						
License Fee						
BMAA membership						
Books, maps, etc						
Clothing etc						
Other						
Total						

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