

Vacating and joining at aerodromes

CIRCUIT TRAINING

Objectives

- To vacate and join the circuit in accordance with applicable procedures.
- To join an uncontrolled circuit in accordance with the standard overhead join procedure.

Considerations

Uncontrolled aerodromes

Vacating

- Climb straight ahead to 1500 ft
- Via crosswind or downwind
- Climb overhead
- All can be done from controlled aerodrome – with clearance

Standard overhead join

(consider possible parachute and winching activity)

- Used
 - To keep clear of the circuit until safe to join
 - To observe other traffic, including NORDO
 - To identify circuit direction
 - To determine conditions on the aerodrome – wind, surface, etc
 - When unfamiliar with the aerodrome
- Check aerodrome chart in AIP Vol 4 in preparation
- Terminate flight plan once on the ground

Controlled Aerodromes

Vacating

- Same as uncontrolled, but clearance is needed
- With clearance, could turn opposite to circuit direction – good lookout

Joining

- Can request overhead join
- Normally join downwind, base, or final
- Could also “Cross overhead and join downwind”
- Can request joining or may be given joining instructions
- Must still give way to those already in circuit

Airmanship

- Vol 4, VNC, joining checklists
- Right-of-way rules
- LOOKOUT, don't rely on listenout
- Wind awareness

Air exercise

Vacating

- From home base
- From (un)controlled aerodrome

Uncontrolled aerodrome joining – standard overhead join

- Radio call to circuit traffic 5–10 NM from aerodrome
 - position
 - altitude
 - intentions

Approach

- Cross overhead at 1500 ft AGL (if no other restrictions)
- Position aeroplane so aerodrome can be seen out of student's window
- Look for other traffic, windsocks, and ground signals/markings

Runway in use

- Look at windsocks, and other traffic established to establish circuit direction
- If can't tell circuit direction continue left until can tell
- Watch out for helicopter or glider circuits
- When circuit direction established,
 - all turns in that direction
 - Identify traffic and non-traffic sides
- Position on non-traffic side, make radio call
- Others already in circuit have right of way

Descend to circuit height

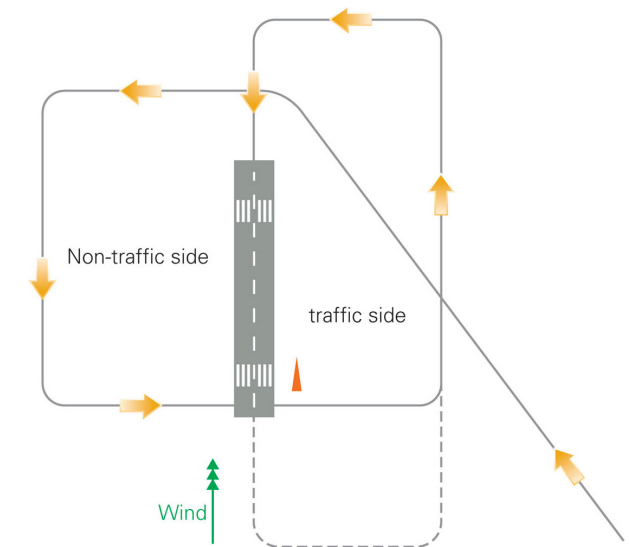
- Low rate of descent
- Cross upwind end of runway **at** circuit height
- Track crosswind – give way to aircraft already on downwind leg
- Prelanding checks before downwind
- Downwind call on downwind leg
- Rest of circuit as normal

Aeroplane management

- Speed below 120 kts
- Landing light on

Controlled aerodrome joining

- In accordance with ATC clearance or instructions



Human factors

- Orientate using windsocks and aerodrome chart
- Relative movement of small objects
- Systematic approach best