

close to the field on that first flight of a new airplane and on the first flight of the day. cb

A SIMPLE CHECK-LIST

About a third of all model crashes can be traced to a pilot's failure to perform a simple preflight check of his aircraft and radio before and after each flight. This simple checklist is for aircraft that have already flown. If it is the first flight of the day, or the first flight of the aircraft, hopefully you have accomplished the FULL checklist. You know the one; check servos, radio range, balance, battery pack voltage, etc. This checklist should be accomplished **BEFORE EACH FLIGHT!!!**

1. Ensure you have the "correct" flag for your transmitter. I've failed in this area a couple of times and paid the price.
2. Ensure you have the "correct" aircraft selected on your transmitter. You gotta be smarter than the transmitter you are using.
3. Verify that the elevator, rudder, and ailerons all MOVE!!!!!! Proper surface "direction" shouldn't be a problem because you have already flown once already.
4. Start the engine and adjust it for proper operation. If the engine worked well the last flight, why are you adjusting it?!?!?
5. Check elevator, rudder and ailerons "AGAIN" as you taxi out.
6. After landing and taxi, KILL THE ENGINE!!!! DO NOT turn the radio off while the engine is running.
7. Check controls once again for proper operation. If they move slower than they did before take off, you probably got lucky and completed your flight before the battery went dead.
8. Check transmitter meter for proper output/battery level. This ensures that your transmitter battery isn't about to go dead.
9. Turn the receiver off.
10. Turn the transmitter off.
11. Return the transmitter and the flag to the impound so others can fly.

Follow these simple rules and you will keep your aircraft a LOT LONGER!!! cb

EXPIRATION DATE

Of what? The receiver? The battery pack? The engine? The airplane? What I have in mind isn't that obvious. I'm thinking of the small often overlooked items like the clevises, control horns, hinges, and other insignificant but crucial items.

We like to think that we maintain our equipment properly and do adequate preflight inspections on your planes. We aren't going to actually fly IN these planes so how important can this be? A crash only hurts our pride and our pocketbook doesn't it?

Well, maybe not. The odds are slight but there is a chance that the critical element of our control system that reaches its expiration date might choose the moment when we are flying towards the pits and bystanders.

A one pound object (engine) traveling at a modest speed of 50 miles per hour horizontally at an altitude of 50 feet will continue another 75 feet unaided before it hits the ground. It will still be going fast enough to be a serious head thumper.

We're all good conscientious pilots, but we can't be in control of everything all the time. However, we can manage our environment so that we minimize the opportunity for a serious mishap.

Keep in mind the potential trajectory of your plane should it reach its expiration date and suddenly become an unguided missile. Great aerobatics and responsible flying are not mutually exclusive. Check your equipment; check your attitude.

If it sounds like I'm beating a dead horse here on the subject of preflight's, YES I AM. Yes I would love to see you enjoy your aircraft for a long time. But mostly I want you to be safe. Let's not get hurt or hurt someone else simply because we failed to do a simple preflight before we flew. CB

Letters to the editor

Dear Chuck,

As a new comer to Radio Control, I have a lot of questions. Maybe you can answer some of them for me. First, I am a little confused as to when to use the thin CA glue, when to use the thick stuff and when to use epoxy. I am also curious as to what percentages of nitro I should use. I am flying a plane that is powered by an Enya 53. Should I be using 5%, 10%, or 15% fuel?

Thanks,

Joe Jinks

Dear JJ,

Let's talk about the glue thing first. As far as CA is concerned, that super thin stuff is treacherous. It runs like water and heads directly for you fingers. As soon as it settles on a surface, it gets hotter than the desert floor in August. Not only will it glue your fingers together it will cook you in the process.

