



IS AEROBATICS A HIGH-LEVEL SPORT?

FACT SHEET #4 - version 1.0

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FACT #1: AEROBATICS IS A HIGH-LEVEL SPORT

Aerobatics, also known as aerial acrobatics or Haute Voltige, involves performing acrobatic maneuvers and figures with an aircraft. **It requires a combination of exceptional technical, physical and mental skills.** Aerobatic pilots must develop great precision, precise coordination and the ability to withstand high G-forces while maintaining total control of the aircraft.

Aerobatics competitions are held at national and international level. Pilots compete to perform sequences of complex figures as precisely as possible. Rigorous scoring criteria are used to evaluate pilots' performance, including the precision, symmetry, fluidity and rhythm of the figures performed.

The practice of aerobatics requires meticulous physical and mental preparation to manage the intense stress that accompanies this demanding sport. Pilots must remain calm and concentrated in order to make quick decisions and react with precision when executing aerobatic figures.



FACT #2: AEROBATICS IS NOT A SPORT FOR THE PRIVILEGED

Like all high-level sports, aerobatics requires sacrifice and a major personal investment.

Although aerobatics may seem like a sport reserved for the privileged few, due to expensive aircraft and high-level competitions, there are accessible options for enthusiasts from all walks of life. Thanks to aviation clubs, aerobatics can be practiced by those with the necessary passion and determination, regardless of their financial situation.

Indeed, you don't need to own your own aircraft to practice aerobatics; aviation clubs in Switzerland offer their members the chance to rent aerobatic aircraft and charge pilots for the time they spend in the air. Thanks to dual controls, pilots can also learn new tricks with an instructor.



FACT #3: THERE'S A CATEGORY FOR EVERY LEVEL

In aerobatics, there are several categories that define the types of competitions and tricks performed by pilots:

- **Sportsman** (min 500m ground): This category is designed for aerobatic pilots new to competition.
- **Intermediate** (min 500m ground): This category is designed for pilots who have proven themselves in the previous category. The figures performed are more demanding and complex, including negative maneuvers.
- **Advanced** (min 200m ground): The Advanced category is the next level up. Figures and sequences become more complex, including high-speed maneuvers and high load factors.
- **Excellence** (min 100m sol): The Excellence category is a technically demanding mid-way point between Advanced and Unlimited, increasing the pace of sequences and the number of elements per figure.
- **Unlimited** (min 100m floor): The Unlimited category is the highest aerobatic category. Pilots in this category perform the most complex and spectacular figures. In this category, physical and technical constraints reach their peak.
- **4-Minute Freestyle** (min 100m ground): Within a four-minute time limit, pilots must present a choreography demonstrating the aircraft's capabilities and showcasing their creativity and technical skill. The use of music and smoke lends an artistic dimension to this discipline, which is particularly popular with the public.

Sources and additional information:

- Swiss Olympic: <https://www.swissolympic.ch>
- SAA Competition Regulations: <https://www.saa.ch/regulations/>

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