New Pilot Resources

You've found FPV racing, and you can't wait to fly. Welcome! If you're new to the sport, or just new to flying with us, there are some things you need to know.

Spectators Welcome!

Spectators are always welcome. Feel free to ask us questions, but please keep conversation to a minimum within earshot of racing pilots.

Fly with us

We have monthly races normally at Buder Park. We also maintain a track at Antire Valley County Park for easy practice. Both of these locations are in the South West part of St. Louis, and so many of our pilots not close to there have found other nooks in which to fly. Connect with us on Facebook to find out when and where we are practicing.

Pilots flying with us must be members of the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA). Membership entitles the pilot to insurance, and comes with a wealth of information about events, news, and gear. Pilots who regularly fly at Buder Park must also be members in good standing of the GSLMA. Pilots who regularly fly at Antire Valley County Park must also be members in good standing of the St. Louis Whirlybirds.

Talk with us

If you need help with anything from building a quadcopter, to learning to fly, to finding places to practice, our very active Facebook Group is the place to be. Keep up to date with events, gear, and gossip!

Use a Flight Simulator

When getting into quadcopters, you can do yourself a big favor by learning to fly by using a flight simulator. Crash as often as you need and don't spend hours and dollars getting back in the air. Most of the time, the sims are a little harder to fly, so once you can fly around with the sim, you should be able to do the same in real life. Assuming your hardware is setup correctly. While you can use just about any usb joystick for a sim, it is best to get a regular Remote Control Transmitter to start building the right muscle memory. Here are some things to look for in that first transmitter.

- Easy hookup to a computer via usb cable or usb wireless dongle
- Telemetry between the Transmitter(in your hand) and the receiver(in the quadcopter). This helps out tremendously in changing your video frequency when you get a quad.

Here are two low cost transmitters that fit the above requirements and are popular so you can get easy support from other pilots.

- Frsky Taranis Q X7
- Spectrum DX6e
    - Wireless Simulator Dongle WS1000

There are many quadcopter flight simulators out there. Here are a few of the top ones below that will use your transmitter.

- DRL Sim
- Velocidrone
- Liftoff
- Rotor Rush
- FPV Freerider

Uncommon Sense

Drone Racing is a hobby full of mistakes that you'll only make once. Learn from our experience!

- Always remove propellers when the quadcopter is on the bench. If you're replacing a component or just updating your firmware via USB, take the time to remove the propellers. You'll have more fingers to fly with.
- Ask the group before you make a purchase. You may be pinching pennies on your first build, but some bargain bin clearances aren't worth buying. We're happy to give an opinion on all of the latest gear, and often can find a better part for a lower price. Save yourself the heartache of mismatched components!
- Don't fly over pavement. It's tempting to find an empty parking lot to take off in, but the wear and tear it can put on a quadcopter adds up, especially in the early days. Ask the group for tips on our favorite places to fly!

Fly Legal

It only takes a few bad apples to ruin the sport - Don't be that pilot! Be familiar with the [FAA rules for drone flight](#). A simple breakdown is available at http://knowbeforeyoufly.org - Some excerpts:

- NEVER fly near manned aircraft!
- Do not fly over people
- If you are getting paid in connection with your flight, you need to be certified under [Part 107](#).

Be a Ham

In FPV Racing, we use video transmitters to allow us to see from a bird's eye view. Some of the frequencies used by commonly available transmitters are regulated by the FCC, and their use requires a Ham Radio Operator's License. Thankfully, getting licensed is inexpensive ($15) and simple, especially compared to building and operating a racing drone. The test is 35 multiple-choice questions, drawn from a pool of 426 potential questions, all of which are available to study online.

- Sample tests (requires free registration)
- YouTube video series explaining each part of the test

Get Gear

There are many sources for quadcopter gear, with varying levels of selection, quality, and customer service. Here are some of our favorites.

- http://pirofliprc.com - Use coupon code STLFPV and, at no cost to you, Pirofliprc will provide race gates for the club. Score!
- http://racedayquads.com - Use coupon code STLFPV and, at no cost to you, a percentage will be donated directly to the STL FPV Racers. Thanks!
- https://www.fpvknowitall.com/ultimate-fpv-shopping-list/ - This is a list of gear worth buying, at several price points. This site provides candid reviews on every type of quadcopter component and tool.

For a deeper dive, checkout this guide.

https://www.propwashed.com/drone-racing-guide/