

TASK B. TRAFFIC PATTERNS (CONTINUED)

- **Skills:** The applicant exhibits the skill to: **3**
- PA.III.B.S1 Identify and interpret airport/seaplane base runways, taxiways, markings, signs, and lighting.
- PA.III.B.S2 Comply with recommended traffic pattern procedures. **4**
- PA.III.B.S3 Correct for wind drift to maintain the proper ground track. **5**
- PA.III.B.S4 Maintain orientation with the runway/landing area in use.
- PA.III.B.S5 Maintain traffic pattern altitude, ± 100 feet, and the appropriate airspeed, ± 10 knots.
- PA.III.B.S6 Maintain situational awareness and proper spacing from other aircraft in the traffic pattern. **6**

3 | Chair Fly Patterns for Every Nearby Airport

Traffic pattern issues too often result in a bust. Try to land at as many airports in your area as possible during training. Study the airport along your assigned cross-country as you know you are going to get a diversion at some point.

Be sure to check left or right traffic, and use Google Earth or similar at home as you review the airport information. Practice imaginary pattern entries from various directions using that satellite view. — *Wally Mo. (DPE)*

4 | Fly by the Book, Do the Math

AC 90-66 and the AFH show how to enter a pattern. Follow these procedures. Also do the math for actually entering on a 45° entry. If you are entering the left downwind for Runway 18, that's $360-45=315^\circ$, or a heading of 315 to enter on the 45. — *Pete R. (DPE)*

5 | Traffic Patterns Are Rectangular Courses

If there is a crosswind, make sure you adjust the downwind to maintain a track parallel to the runway—especially if the wind is pushing you towards the runway. If you allow the base leg to get short, you'll usually end up overshooting the base-to-final turn. This will destabilize your approach and make your landing more difficult than it had to be, or force a go-around. — *David G. (DPE)*

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Few DPEs have an applicant fly a rectangular pattern away from the airport, because the applicant must fly a good rectangular traffic pattern.

Apply the knowledge about bank angles and headings gained from flying rectangular patterns and apply that in the pattern. I don't have words to describe the geometric shapes of some of the patterns I witness on a practical test. — *Doug S. (DPE)*

6 | Check for Aircraft on Long Straight-Ins

There is no place during the test where I want to see the applicant looking outside for traffic more than in the traffic pattern. Sure, you have a high workload and are worried about the landing. But spend a few seconds at least whenever you turn from one leg of the traffic pattern to the next, looking for traffic on that leg or joining from an extended leg (even at towered airports).

That's most important just before turning final. Repeated failure to check for traffic approaching you on extended final will lead to a failure. — *Doug S. (DPE)*