

Frequently asked Questions

Getting Started

1. Q: What is an RC model aircraft?

A: It's a small-scale, remotely controlled aircraft powered by batteries or fuel, operated via a handheld transmitter.

2. Q: Do I need a license to fly RC aircraft in Ireland?

A: You don't need a license, but you must register yourself with the Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) and follow their drone safety rules. Please refer to <https://www.iaa.ie/general-aviation/drones/faqs/registration>

3. Q: What's the difference between a drone and an RC plane?

A: Drones are typically quadcopters with Cameras and have many stabilisation systems on board; RC planes and Helicopters usually require manual control and mimic real aircraft flight.

4. Q: What are good beginner RC aircraft models?

A: Electric powered Trainer planes such as the “E-flite Apprentice STS or “Arrows Prodigy” are great for beginners due to their stability and ease of use. An Electric trainer helicopter like the “EFlite Blade Prodigy” would be a good place to start. There are many other options available to suit everybody's budget.

5. Q: Where can I purchase my RC Plane or Helicopter?

A: There are several model shops where you can go such as:

<https://www.modelheliservices.com/> or

<https://www.radiocontrolledshop.ie/contact-us-remote-control-toys-dublin-ireland-best-drones-rc-cars>

There are of course many others available online.

Equipment & Controls

6. Q: What is a transmitter?

A: A handheld remote control with gimbals and switches that sends signals to the aircraft to control its movement.

7. Q: How many channels should my transmitter have?

A: Beginners should start with at least 4 channels, throttle, rudder, elevator, and ailerons.

8. Q: What's the difference between brushed and brushless motors?

A: Brushless motors are more powerful, efficient, and durable than brushed ones

9. Q: What battery type is common in RC planes?

A: LiPo (Lithium Polymer) batteries are most common for their high power-to-weight ratio.

10. Q: How long do flights last?

A: Most electric RC planes offer 5 -10 minutes of flight time per battery, dependant on model type and many other factors

Flying Skills & Techniques

11. Q: Is RC flying hard to learn?

A: It takes practice, but many planes have beginner modes (gyro-assisted) to help stabilize flight.

12. Q: Should I join a flying club?

A: Yes, our clubs offer mentorship, controlled and regulated flying areas, and can help you grow quickly in the hobby. Expert advice is always readily available, with guidance provided towards your choice of beginner model.

13. Q: Where can I legally fly in Ireland?

A: You really should fly in designated model airfields which are located throughout the country, at least 120m away from people/buildings, and below 120m in altitude. A list of flying sites can be found here <https://maci.ie/flying-sites>

15. Q: What's mode 1 vs mode 2 on transmitters?

A: Mode 2 is most common in Europe—it places throttle on the left stick and elevator/aileron on the right.

Safety & Legal Tips

16. Q: Do I need to register my RC aircraft or Helicopter

A: No, you do not have to register individual models just yourself as an operator. All your models will carry the same registration number so you must register yourself on the IAA's MySRS platform

(<https://www.iaa.ie/general-aviation/drones/faqs/registration>)

17. Q: Do I need training or certification?

A: For all hobby aircraft and helicopters greater than 4 Kg, basic training is required under EU and Irish Aviation Authority regulations, even for RC models. The internal MACI training scheme fulfils these requirements.

18. Q: Can I fly near airports?

A: Absolutely not. It's illegal to fly within 5km of any airport or airfield.

19. Q: What's the max altitude I can fly at?

A: 120 meters (400 feet) above ground level is the legal limit.

Maintenance & Repairs

20. Q: What tools do I need for maintenance?

A: A basic toolkit includes screwdrivers, pliers, glue (CA or foam-safe), and spare parts like props and landing gear.

21. Q: How do I store LiPo batteries safely?

A: In a fireproof LiPo bag at room temperature. Never leave them charging unattended. Available from all good Model shops.

22. Q: How often should I check my aircraft before flying?

A: Always do a pre-flight check: battery secure, control surfaces responsive, prop not chipped, no general damage to the model.

23. Q: What happens if I crash?

A: It happens occasionally, assess damage, repair with glue or replacement parts, and learn from the mistake. Spare parts are available from all good Model shops.

24. Q: Can I upgrade my aircraft as I improve?

A: Yes! You can install better motors, larger batteries, or more advanced electronics like telemetry.

Etiquette

25. Q: Can I fly in the wind or rain?

A: Avoid flying in wind over 15 km/h as a beginner. Never fly in rain. Consult your local club for more advice.

26. Q: Do I need insurance to fly?

A: The MACI provide Public Liability and member Insurance cover through membership of the organisation. This is mandatory for flying on MACI Club registered sites.

27. Q: Where can I find more resources in Ireland?

A: Visit your local club (<https://maci.ie/flying-sites>) for club info, training, and events, or contact your local model shop (<https://www.modelheliservices.com/>) or (<https://www.radiocontrolledshop.ie/contact-us-remote-control-toys-dublin-ireland-best-drones-rc-cars>) for expert advice and assistance.