

Preparing to Fly to SUN 'n FUN

It's almost here! The 49th annual SUN 'n FUN Aerospace Expo is shaping up to be another super event, and pilots everywhere are preparing to "unfreeze their birds" and join us at Lakeland Linder International Airport in beautiful Lakeland, Florida.

While we are very anxious and excited to have you all back, we wanted to take a moment and point out some safety tips to remember before you head south. After all, it's SUN 'n FUN, and we want your experience here to be safe and enjoyable from start to finish!

1. Get current - Don't make your trip to SUN 'n FUN be your first time back in your aircraft after winter. Practice landings, emergency procedures, stalls, navigation, etc.
2. PLAN YOUR Trip! Many pilots just hit Direct-Enter-Enter in the GPS and wing it, which is irresponsible and dangerous. Know your aircraft's limitations and fuel capacity. Do your flight planning the way you were taught: Fuel burn, plan for headwinds 15-25% higher than predicted, and the weight you'll carry. Also, make careful note of the daily airshow and TFR times, as the field will be closed to arriving traffic without exception.
3. Crosswind landings – it can get windy in Florida! Plus, we re-designate a taxiway to become a parallel runway during the Fly-In, so it's a good idea to sharpen your centerline landing skills. Know your aircraft's limits for crosswinds and, more importantly, your personal limits.
4. Personal minimums should be thought over carefully. Get-there-itis kills more pilots than just about any other cause. We want you to get here, so make sure that you assess your personal go/no-go criteria and STICK TO IT.
5. NOTAM – SUN 'n FUN has an extensive NOTAM to guide you through your aerial navigation to and from the event. There are instructions for every type of arrival and departure, so be sure to read them carefully. You can download and print the NOTAM from the Home Page at www.flysnf.org.

6. Weather – Florida in the spring is normally a fantastic time to fly. Spring weather, though, can be unpredictable, so be sure to get the latest forecasts before you go and look them over at every stop for changes along your route.

7. Maintenance – Be sure your aircraft is in tip-top shape before you attempt the trip to SUN 'n FUN. Check your tire pressure, make sure your oil has been changed and check for currency on AD's and service bulletins. Be sure your avionics are current and that your VFR/IFR certifications and requirements for your aircraft are up to date