Basic Licence Information

1.1 Getting Started: Registration

When you sign up for your beginner's course, you will register you as an annual **member** with the Paragliding Association of Kenya (PAK)..

- You should get a confirmation email within **1-2 weeks**. If you don't, just contact PAK.

1.2 What your License allows you to do

Think of your first license as a "learner's permit" for the sky. The rules are designed to keep you safe as you gain experience.

- **Your First Wing:** You may only fly the safest, most beginner-friendly gliders (called **EN-A**) until you have completed **80 flights**.
- **Next Step:** After 80 flights, you can progress to **EN-B** gliders, which are a bit more advanced.
- **Advanced Wings:** Higher-performance gliders (EN-C and above) are only for pilots who have upgraded to a **Sports License**.
- **Where to Fly:** You'll start at beginner-friendly sites. To fly at more advanced locations, you'll need to be signed off by a senior pilot.

Our strong advice: Keep flying with instructors and experienced pilots even after you get your license! It is the best way to learn, make friends, and stay safe.

1.3 How you earn your License (PAK1, PAK2, PAK3)

Your training is broken down into three levels. You'll master the skills for each one before moving on.

PAK1: Beginner

- Learn to lay out your gear, do safety checks, and control the glider on the ground (this is called ground handling).

PAK2: Elementary

- Complete 15 low flights
- Show you can do consistent, unassisted take-offs.

PAK3: Club Pilot

This is the final step to get your full Basic License.
You need to prove you can handle yourself in the air. Here's what's required:

PAK3 Flight Experience:

- At least 35 total flights and 4 hours in the air.
- At least 20 flights from a height of over 100 meters.
- At least 1 flight lasting 20 minutes or more.
- At least 2 flights where you catch rising air (thermals) for 10 minutes, including doing 360° turns to stay in the lift.
- Experience flying along a ridge with other pilots, using the same wind to stay up.
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PAK3 Launch & Ground Skills:

- Confident forward and reverse launches in light winds.
- Good control of the glider during inflation and ground handling.

PAK3 In-Flight Skills:

- Controlled straight flight, S-turns, and figure-8s.
- 180° and 360° turns in both directions.
- Safety maneuvers like Big Ears (to descend faster) and using the rear-risers to land accurately.

PAK3 Landing & Safety:

- Prove your accuracy: 3 landings in a row within a 50-meter circle.
- Consistently perform pre-flight checks and proper gear care.
- Pass the PAK3 written exam.
- Fly at two different sites (e.g., one training hill and one mountain site).

Once you've completed all this, you and your instructor sign your license booklet, and your info is sent to PAK. Congratulations, you're a licensed pilot!

1.4 Your Training Course

- **PAK1 & PAK2 Training Duration:** For PAK1 & PAK2 the training is a minimum of 6-**7 days**. This can be a full week or spread out over weekends.
- **PAK3 Training Duration:** Is a minimum of 35 flights or 4h of flight time, this is equivalent to around 10 days of training.
- **Your Gear:** You will train on a beginner-friendly **EN-A glider**, a harness with back protection, a certified helmet, and usually a radio for instruction.

1.5 Getting Ready for your Training Days

- **Food & Water:** Enough snacks and drinks for the whole day. Staying hydrated is crucial, even if it's not hot.
- **Clothing:**
  - **Sturdy shoes** or boots (to protect your ankles).
  - Long pants (like jeans).
  - A shirt **with sleeves** (to protect from harness rub and sunburn).
- **Protection:** Sunscreen, a hat, and insect repellent.
- **Your Gear:** This training manual and a pen.

1.6 Important Rules to Follow

- **Punctuality:** Be on time and let your instructor know if you're delayed.
- **No Alcohol:** Do not drink before or during training.
- **Smoking:** Do not smoke near the equipment. Always take your cigarette butts with you.
- **Respect the Gear:**
  - Don't drag the glider on the ground.
  - Keep it in the shade or a bag when not in use—sunlight damages the fabric.
  - Wear a shirt to keep harnesses and backpacks clean.
- **Safety First:** Only take off when your instructor says so. Always fly under direct supervision.
- **Leave No Trace:** Keep the sites clean. Pick up all trash, even if it's not yours.
- **Log Your Flights:** Write down your flights in your logbook after each day and get it signed by your instructor.

1.7 Final Important Note

This course teaches you the fundamentals to fly safely in good conditions. It does **not** make you an expert ready to handle strong winds, difficult terrain, or advanced gliders.

You participate in this sport **at your own risk**. However, this does not affect your legal rights in case of wrongdoing or negligence.

Your instructor is committed to teaching you the full syllabus. If you choose to leave the course, you may not be entitled to a refund. Your instructor will do their best to complete your training, even if the weather causes some delays.

1.8 A Quick Word on Buying Your First Wing

Please talk to your instructor before buying your first glider!
They know your skill level and progress best and can recommend the perfect, safe wing for you. Buying your initial equipment through your school also helps support them, which keeps course costs affordable for future students.