

## What if the motor quits?

It's a glider, and glide it will! You'll obviously start descending but the glider flies about 6 feet forward for every foot lost (a 6 to 1 glide ratio). With minimal control input you'll be dropping less than 4 mph as you glide forward at about 20 mph. You can land in a space smaller than the average car so a motor failure is rarely more than an inconvenience.

## Flying Without the Motor

Paragliding, or free flying, can be done using your same wing with a different harness. It is usually done in mountainous areas and ridges but can also be done by being towed up. But towing can be surprisingly dangerous. Never, ever try towing without using proper equipment and certified tow operations.

Free flyers use nature's own energy in the form of rising air to stay up. That lift, as it's called, comes either heated air that rises or from air that is deflected upwards over hills.

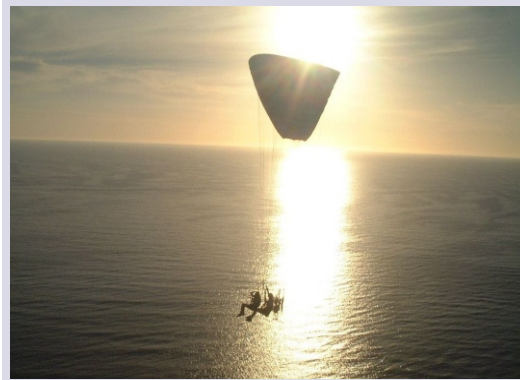
## Can I take people up?

The simple regulation we operate under is intended for solo operations. However, recognizing the value of two-place (tandem) training, an exception is made for instruction using two-place craft. The instructor must be qualified under a special program run by an organization allowed to do so by the FAA. A list of such organizations can be found at [www.USPPA.org](http://www.USPPA.org).

Tandem operations require significant knowledge and skill to operate safely since you must manage the motor, wing and another person at the same time. Many instructors use a wheel-equipped machine to make it easier.



William Shatner was 72 years old when he flew a powered paraglider for a charity event and helped the USPPA with its Risk & Reward safety video.



### Fast Facts

**Altitude:** Up to 18,000 feet although most pilots fly between 200 and 2000 feet.

**Speed:** 20-35 mph although most fly about 25 mph.

**Weight:** about 65 lbs ready to launch including fuel. The wing weighs about 15 pounds but the pilot doesn't feel it.

**Cost (New):** \$3500-\$6000 Motor, \$1700-\$3500 Wing, \$600-\$1500 Training

**Payload:** 170 - 400 Lbs. Powerful tandem units provide the highest payload.

**Fuel:** 1.2 - 5 US Gallons of Auto fuel or Avgas mixes with 2-stroke oil.

**Endurance & Range:** 1 to 3 hours, 40-70 miles (no wind)

**Transport & Storage:** Small Car, Room corner, and conveniently shipped pretty affordably in boxes.

**Motor:** 12-25 hp 2-Stroke, 15 hp 4-stroke, 14 hp electric (electric may not yet be available)

**Propeller:** 30 to 51 inch wood or composite with from 2 to 4 blades. Larger props are spun through reduction drives.

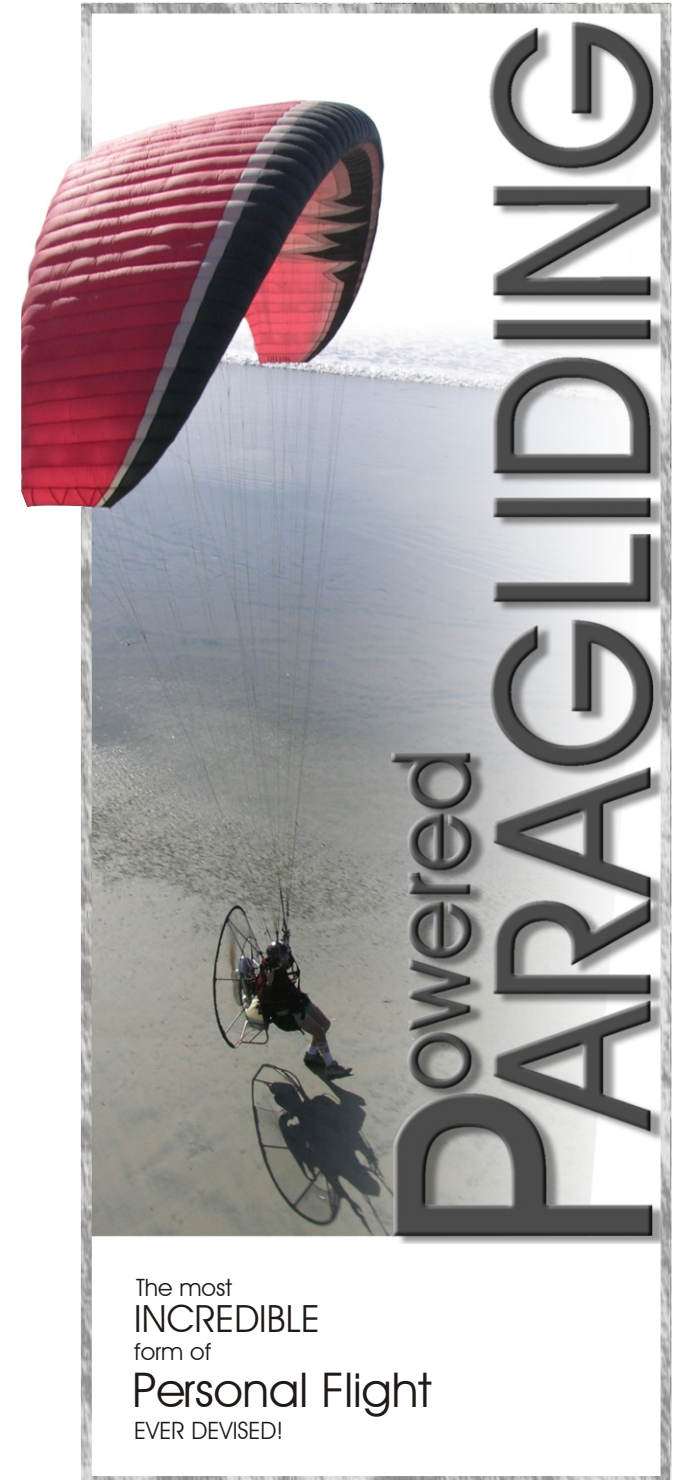
**Launch/Land Area:** It depends dramatically on wind and terrain but, in calm air, 200' x 400' with another 400' clear climbout zone is good. Experienced pilots can fly out of a 50' x 200' area with another 400' clear climbout zone.

**Glide Ratio:** 6:1 With a motor. Wings advertise higher numbers because they are tested without the motor and its draggy cage.

**Getting Started:** Go to the [USPPA.org](http://USPPA.org) web site and find a certified instructor in your area. Do that before buying equipment, not all instructors will teach on all units.

For more information  
on powered paragliding please visit

 **FOOTFLYER.COM**  
The source for Powered Paragliding Information



Powered  
**PARAGLIDING**

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EVER DEvised!

## POWERED PARAGLIDING

### The Ultimate High



Ten minutes after putting your car in park, everything is ready. It's just you and the perfect morning air, at the perfect place, ready to go fly.

You throttle up and start to run. The wing springs to life, fills with air and comes overhead. You squeeze into full power and with a few more steps, run into the sky.

The view is essentially unobstructed and the control precise. With experience, a pilot can control the flight path within inches of his or her desire.

Many pilots enjoy just tooling around to enjoy the sights while others enjoy carving up the sky and thrilling to the fine control. The same wing that is used for powered paragliding (PPG) can be used for soaring, just like sailplane pilots.

### What is a Powered Paraglider?

Paragliding is the simplest form of flight: no plane, no windows, just you in control, flying through the air. It is easy to transport, easy to launch, and easy to land. The paraglider itself has no rigid structure and the pilot is suspended by lines. The pilot is clipped into a harness that turns into a comfortable seat once airborne. The paramotor, a backpack power unit that attaches to the harness, provides thrust to climb and fly level at your own will.

It is not a parasail or powered parachute which use very stable, but far less efficient wings.

### Physical Requirements

The motor does most of the work. Although you must be able to walk around and handle its weight you certainly don't have to be an athlete. Numerous pilots continue flying into their 70's and others have started as young as 13 years old.

### License, The Law, & Where You Can Fly

No license is required although training is incredibly important. PPGs are minimally regulated under the Federal Aviation Administration's Part 103. Essentially we can fly during daytime in wide-open areas. We must avoid congested areas, busier airports and a few other locales.

Private open fields, some airports, and a few parks are great places to fly. One beauty of the sport is that we don't need an airport! Most state and national parks are off-limits to launch but do allow overflight.

There are many groups of pilots who have established local flying sites where you can launch. Courtesy of neighbors is important to minimize complaints.

### Fear of Heights

Ask just about any pilot if they're afraid of climbing ladders and the answer will be yes. Human nature is to be afraid of heights, a healthy response to obvious risk. Everybody starts with that fear and, after a few flights, it is essentially gone. Once you internalize how secure the harness and wing is, there becomes nothing to fear.

### Training

Different courses are available, but be very careful to pick a qualified, certified instructor with an organized program. Making sure they use the USPPA syllabus, or equivalent, and have thorough emergency training including simulator rehearsal. Whenever towing is done, operators should adhere to USPPA tow guidelines. Solo pilot certification is available for student (PPG1), pilot (PPG2) and advanced pilot (PPG3) levels through the USPPA/USUA. Visit [www.USPPA.org](http://www.USPPA.org) for a list of schools and instructors.

You can reasonably expect to have your first flight (achieve the PPG1) in 3 days but are far from ready to be considered a pilot. Accelerated courses, which take significant extra precautions, can get someone a flight on their first or second day. Expect 5 to 8 days to earn a PPG2 rating.

### What Weather Can It Handle?

This is a light-wind sport. Generally a maximum wind of 12 mph is acceptable although, under certain conditions, experienced pilots can fly in stronger winds. We generally fly in the mornings and evenings so as to avoid the bumpy mid-day air. A few pilots seek out those mid-day conditions at the expense of some added risk.

### What's the Risk?

Powered paragliding is probably the safest form of aviation ever devised. Pay attention to your instructor and respect the prop to minimize most of the risk. Like any recreation with humans in motion, there is risk. Training and the first few hours of flight are the most critical. We estimate the overall risk is about half as much as motorcycle riding or free flying (paragliding with no motor) and about twice that of driving a car.

Of the minimal risk, the vast majority comes from pilot error, not equipment malfunction. A conscientious pilot with the right attitude can make this sport incredibly safe.

