



GO-AROUND PROCEDURE - VFR

1. Introduction

This documentation deals with going-around when flying under visual flight rules.

The expression “missed approach” only applies to IFR flights and is irrelevant to VFR flights. Note that a specific documentation exists for flights under instrument flight rules.

2. Regulations

When flying under visual flight rules, there is no specific regulation about going-around.

Contrary to flights performed under instrument flight rules, there is no particular trajectory following a visual go-around. And as a generality for VFR flights, there is no safety calculation or limitation.

We will review rules of good practice whatsoever.

3. Practical aspects

3.1. Occurrence

There are several situations that lead to perform a go-around procedure:

- Approach is not stabilized (runway axis, descent path, speed)
- Runway is not clear of traffic or obstacles
- ATC will not issue landing clearance
- ATC will command a go-around for safety reasons
- Training

About stabilization, operators will issue mandatory or recommended stabilization heights at which an aircraft must be configured for landing, in good position with runway, at a correct airspeed. Deviation values will exist to tolerate parameter variations due to environmental factors. If one of these values is exceeded, a go-around must be initiated.

Here are some values extracted from a real aviation school:

- Stabilization height: 300ft AGL
- Runway axis: no deviation
- Descent path: no more than one degree above or below (consider vertical rate)
- Airspeed: not below approach speed, no more than 5 knots in excess

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3.2. Initiate a go-around

Following the pilot's decision or the ATC's order to go-around, it is vital to establish as fast as possible a climb confirmed by:

- a relevant pitch value necessarily positive, near the takeoff standard setting
- a positive rate of climb.

It is critical to ensure that power/thrust will be available when you will pitch up the aircraft! Throttle must be set to takeoff setting at the same time.

Failure to do so will result in:

- very low or no climb at all
- rapidly decreasing airspeed bringing the aircraft near stall.

3.3. Aircraft management

Just after initiating the go-around, workload will be very high for multiple reasons:

- You will need to adjust pitch and power/thrust
- You will have to adjust your aircraft configuration
- You will need to anticipate your next trajectory
- You will have to communicate with ATC

Remember that airmanship is achieved in this order: FLY – NAVIGATE – COMMUNICATE

Since you had configured your aircraft for landing, you will need to configure it back to takeoff/climb position. This will take more or less resources depending on your aircraft complexity:

- Retract flaps if required
- Retract landing gear if possible
- Adjust power/thrust to normal climb power/thrust

Then, consider your flight trajectory.

Only when you have established a stabilized climb and run your after-takeoff/climb checklist, you may communicate with ATC about your position and intentions.

3.4. Flight trajectory

Depending on your intentions, you may have two possibilities:

- 1st situation: the airfield is not your destination. Therefore, if you do not want to attempt another landing, upon initial climb you will directly proceed toward your next navigation waypoint.
- 2nd situation: the airfield is your destination. You will therefore proceed toward crosswind and downwind leg to attempt another approach.

It is good practice to keep runway heading until you overflew the opposite runway threshold.

ATC may also request you turn immediately after establishing a positive climb toward downwind leg.

Caution: always pay extra attention when joining downwind due to traffic possibly entering the traffic circuit, in particular around unmanned facilities.

4. Conclusion

Cancelling the approach when flying under visual flight rules does not require a specific flight trajectory and going-around only results in normal aircraft management.

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