

OHGS Lesson Policy – Developing “Your Plan”

Oregon Hang Gliding School really wants to see you succeed! Good schools and instructors have found that steady, consistent effort in small increments over several months is the best way to learn hang gliding. Therefore, we have must develop a structure to your lesson plan that counters the natural variability of the weather AND our own non-flying schedules - that distract from the lessons. The **customized equipment** that you will need late in step two is often a big distraction and limiter. Our policies are designed to give you a financial and service incentive when you decide to carry out “Your Plan” with the appropriate equipment we are familiar with at the time you will need it. **This also assures the long term attention you will need beyond your official lessons.** We need to have the equipment before those lessons arise, so deciding to order it before the third lesson is essential. The most important thing is to have the intent and desire to have a lesson as frequently as your body or wallet or schedule can stand. The period between flight lessons is to study the online aerodynamic and weather topics and pass the online interactive tests. **If you are frequently thinking of having a lesson on some kind of regular basis, then you know you will succeed!** There is a natural fatigue limit of around 3 consecutive days of training for most people. But, if you really are in shape, a whole week is possible. The instructor and student performance are at their best when package lessons are bought, the student regularly attends, future equipment is ordered and **all we have to think about is the challenge of learning and teaching hang gliding in the present moment.** Please help us be the best instructors we can be.

Definition of a lesson through eighth session

A flight is defined as the glider lifting your weight on the hill or on tow under your control effort. A full lesson with OHGS is defined as 7 to 12 flight event opportunities. The glider lifting off your shoulders requires aerodynamic control and learning. If this is achieved, "practice, learning and flight" is possible. Two lifted glider ground runs is equivalent to one flight event. If 7 flight event opportunities cannot be achieved because of weather you will be provided a "wind check" and will be able to take them at a future date. Once a lesson is started (flights taken), flight event opportunities lost due to fatigue cannot be redeemed. The instructor reserves the right to stop lessons due to fatigue. It is the responsibility of the student to develop the physical fitness to complete a lesson, camp or program. Each student progresses at a different rate and the number of lessons in the program will vary somewhat on the pace of proficiency of each student. More than 12 flight events indicates more than average personal attention, instructor effort and resources available and is debited against any training package but previous shortfalls are added to current session. **Flight event limits are waived with each 3 lesson package purchase. A lesson discount is provided with approved equipment purchase in each step.** It usually requires between 80 and 120 flight events in various wind conditions to gain all hang I and II proficiencies. The **number of flights is more important than time on the hill.** Ratings are not guaranteed. Only the instructor's expertise, experience and effort of providing a USHGA standard of teaching are guaranteed. Lesson quality, in part depends on the weather. The instructor is not in control of the weather, so sometimes we will have to cancel before or during a lesson. Lesson objectives are tailored to meet the demands of the weather and skill level of the student. Remember, the instructor has limited time, attention and physical effort and there is wear and tear on the expensive equipment... Some lessons are finished within three hours. Some take the whole day. The student is required to devote the entire day to the lesson.

_____ Initial here

Progress and Pace During the Training Program

Although students learn at their own pace, usually, a student going for the high altitude hang two rating requires to devote 14 flying lesson-days within a 4 month period or they can have a longer term expectation of attaining the ratings. **To fulfill the shorter term program, several consecutive-day training camps is strongly recommended. Reservations and notification must be made no later than the three days before each scheduled lesson day and cancelled by the next day.** Students will be required to travel to various centers of operation for training depending on conditions and skill level. Steady effort leads to steady progress. If there has been a significant layoff (1 month or more) from the training program, students resuming after a layoff will be required to fly less challenging tasks from the time of the last lesson, till previous levels of skill are achieved. Be forewarned, you will spend more on lessons continually back-tracking and taking “review lessons” if lessons become sporadic and irregular. Near the **eighth lesson**, depending on the pace of the student, the definition of a lesson turns to **tasks accomplished and understood** rather than the number of flights. Instruction turns to decision-making “strategic” skills rather than “control” skills – which only require simple repetition. **Time with the instructor going over strategic skills is more important now** The instructor is not in control of the weather so your availability, persistence and patience is essential to allow the “law of averages” to work for us. Showing up on two bad weather days for your skill level in one month is no reflection on the quality of the program or the instructor. The goal of the program is to develop flying skills and the mental attitude that can handle the variability of the Oregon flying environment. No equipment may be delivered from OHGS until prepaid lessons leading to a rating are processed and you become fully rated to use it. _____ Initial here

Please develop your lesson plan with the help of your instructor. Figure out when you will be available for lessons. What days of the week or rotations are you generally NOT available? _____

- Full lesson payment is required in advance of each lesson or start of training package. Please do not expect a lesson unless the tuition is paid in full before class. Payment may be made through email using paypal or by sending a check payable to “**Oregon hang gliding school**” to 131 NW 4th St. PMB 273 Corvallis, OR 97330. Otherwise, payment before each lesson or package will be accepted at the lesson site. There are no refunds on used lessons, expired lesson packages, or used training camps. All unused single day lessons expire six months from the date of enrollment. Step packages and extended lessons expire 7 flyable and scheduled lesson weekends from the date of contract and issue of Step Card.
- Reservations must be made no later than two days before each scheduled lesson and cancelled by the next day. No shows and late cancellations will be charged as if they had attended the lesson. If Oregon Hang Gliding cancels a lesson, full credit will be applied to the next lesson. If a lesson is only partially completed, the unused portion will be credited to the next lesson. Unused portions of camps may be refunded or used toward full credit of future lessons.

I have read, understood and agree to the conditions set forth in this policy.

Signature _____ Date _____

So, What if I Just Want to Jump Off a Cliff?

Only a very small percentage of people are totally prepared for accelerated or intensive hang gliding lessons. Typically, only younger, physically fit and exceptionally coordinated people - that also have some previous very specific radio controlled model glider experience - are “naturals”. Even then, they must humble themselves, behave like a beginner and not try to “apply” any previous knowledge – hang gliding is that different. The vast majority of successful people have decided to apply all the instructor’s advice, prescriptions and pace of instruction. They tend to have more patience and determination and see hang gliding as a longer term learning process. They tend to have even, smoother progress, feel comfortable at all levels and develop consistency and reliability in all phases of flight.

It is possible to get minimal instruction and then be led to make a launch in the mountains or towed high in ideal conditions and survive. These “students” have not experienced nor have been tested by Mother Nature in many variable wind conditions and situations – so, many fundamental gaps are part of their skill-set. Further successful flights are simply lucky. Hang gliding will guarantee you natural feedback (accidents) from this situation. The next day you go out it will be an entirely different set of challenges because of the site or weather. Each flying site has different strategies to fly safely and without good instruction and mentoring, a lone wolf is lost, doesn’t even recognize the challenges and will likely crash. In the best case, you will have a slower progression because now you must learn through harsh trail and error. Hopefully, you will keep the error small and expense of repair low. Unneeded and incapacitating anxiety is also a problem in trying to learn on your own, once you have realized the challenge and know what you are up against.

Well-intended but amateur “instructor friends” are not helpful because they may not exactly know or be able to communicate how they actually fly safely – it’s that ingrained in them. Flying skill is not the same as teaching skill. It is also unfair to them, because they are usually frightened that they could be responsible for your mistakes. Also, they have no motivation to provide a “continuity” to your lessons - insuring that no skill gaps are present (since you are not paying them). In the end, most people that have gone this route have spent more money in repairing expensive equipment or medical bills or have quit because they have had one or more harrowing experiences. It only takes one bad experience to make a hopeful hang glider pilot an “also ran”. It’s all about the choices we make regarding education, experience and equipment. You truly get what you pay for in hang gliding.