


Airspace + Airport Cheat Sheet

The 4-question flight decision

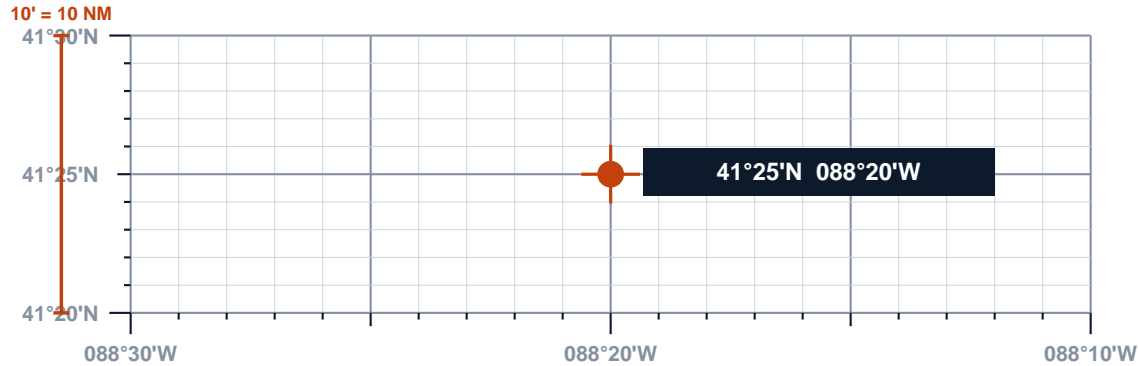
| 01 / FIND AIRSPACE | 02 / SURFACE OR ABOVE? | 03 / TEMPORARY RULES | 04 / TRAFFIC CLUES |
|--|--|---|--|
| B solid blue, C solid magenta, D dashed blue, E surface dashed magenta, G open background. | If Class E starts at 700 or 1,200 ft AGL, a sub-400 ft drone flight is usually still in Class G. | Check NOTAMs/TFRs, wildfire activity, VIP movement, stadium events, runway closures, and chart notices. | Tower status, runway heading, CTAF, UNICOM, ATIS, and traffic calls tell you where manned aircraft may be. |

Airspace classes: the line, the numbers, the drone answer

| Line | Class | Altitude numbers | Drone answer + trap |
|---|------------------------------|--|--|
|  | B Solid blue rings | 100/30 = ceiling 10,000 / floor 3,000 ft MSL (hundreds of feet). | Controlled. LAANC before launch. Numbers are MSL, not AGL. |
|  | C Solid magenta rings | Two tiers, e.g. 41/13 = 4,100 / 1,300 ft MSL. | Controlled. LAANC before launch. |
|  | D Dashed blue ring | Ceiling in a dashed box: [25] = 2,500 ft MSL. A minus, [-30], = up to but not including 3,000. | Controlled while the tower is open. Authorization required. |
|  | E sfc Dashed magenta | Controlled from the ground up. | Authorization required. The Class E that matters most to drones. |
|  | E 700 Faded magenta | Floor 700 ft AGL. The soft / faded side marks the lower (700) floor. | Fly under it in Class G below 400 ft — no authorization. |
|  | E 1200 Faded blue | Floor 1,200 ft AGL — the default where nothing else is marked. | Fly under it in Class G — no authorization. |
|  | G Open background | Surface up to the overlying Class E floor. | Uncontrolled. No ATC authorization, but Part 107 still applies. |
|  | A Not on sectionals | 18,000 ft MSL and above. | Never a drone layer. Just know it exists for the test. |

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Latitude / longitude: read it from zero



Parallels = latitude (measure N / S).
Meridians = longitude (measure E / W).
 Read latitude first. In the U.S. = N / W.
 1 minute of latitude ≈ 1 nautical mile.
 Measure distance on the SIDE scale only.
Each small tick = 1 minute (60 per degree).

Airport operations: the stuff a basic airspace chart leaves out

| Clue | What it means for the test | Drone-pilot move |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Blue airport symbol | Airport has an operating control tower. | Expect tower traffic and controlled airspace if a B/C/D/surface-E area is drawn. |
| Magenta airport symbol | Non-towered airport. | Monitor CTAF for traffic awareness; authorization depends on airspace, not color alone. |
| CTAF | Common Traffic Advisory Frequency. Manned pilots self-announce. | Listen for downwind, base, final, departure, and clear-of-runway calls. |
| UNICOM | Airport advisory station at some non-towered airports. | Useful context, not FAA authorization. |
| ATIS | Recorded weather, runway use, and airport notices at many towered fields. | Good situational awareness; does not replace LAANC. |
| Runway 18/36 | Runway numbers approximate magnetic heading / 10. | Runway 18 = roughly southbound final; runway 36 = roughly northbound final. |

Airspace + Airport Cheat Sheet

| Radio + pattern calls | Obstructions + terrain | Special use + temporary rules |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Downwind: parallel to runway, opposite landing direction. Base: turning toward final. Final: aligned with runway to land. Left base runway 18: aircraft is about to turn final for a southbound landing.</p> | <p>1549 (612): top is 1,549 ft MSL; object is 612 ft AGL. MEF: maximum elevation figure in a quadrangle, in hundreds of feet MSL. Guy wires: FAA study guide recommends avoiding skeletal towers horizontally by at least 2,000 ft.</p> | <p>Restricted: hazardous when active; permission required. MOA: military training may occur. NSA: security-sensitive, avoid if requested. TFR: temporary flight restriction; check NOTAMs before every flight.</p> |

Six exam traps this sheet prevents

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Dashed magenta != faded magenta Dashed = Class E surface. Faded = Class E at 700 ft AGL.</p> | <p>Airport color != airspace class by itself Blue airport means towered; the airspace ring tells the authorization answer.</p> | <p>MSL != AGL Chart altitudes and obstacle top numbers are often MSL; drone ceilings are AGL.</p> |
| <p>Radio is not permission Monitoring CTAF/ATIS improves awareness. Controlled airspace still needs authorization.</p> | <p>Charts age Use current charts and check NOTAMs/TFRs for changes between chart cycles.</p> | <p>Class G still has rules No ATC authorization does not cancel VLOS, 400 ft AGL, visibility, and right-of-way rules.</p> |

Not for navigation. Verify actual flights with current FAA charts, NOTAMs/TFRs, and an FAA-approved LAANC provider.