

BUYER'S CHECKLIST

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Comprehensive Aircraft Pre-Purchase Evaluation Checklist

INTRODUCTION

Purchasing an aircraft is a significant investment, and a thorough pre-purchase evaluation can prevent unexpected costs and ensure you're making an informed decision. Here's a checklist that covers everything from essential record checks to in-depth inspections, along with guidance on when professional assistance can add value.

1. CORE PRE-PURCHASE ESSENTIALS

These high-priority items form the foundation of a sound pre-purchase evaluation and can sometimes be started by the buyer if accessible.

Records Verification

- Confirm presence of critical documents: Weight & Balance (W&B), Airworthiness Directives (AD) list, Aircraft MODs (337s and STCs), and Airworthiness Certificate.
- Ensure current AD compliance records are organized and up-to-date for the airframe, engine, and propeller.

Technical Data and Serial Number Confirmation

- Review Type Certificate Data Sheet (TCDS) for airframe, propeller, and engine. Verify serial numbers match documentation.
- Confirm total time and accuracy in logbooks; ensure documented compliance with required placards.

Condition & Compliance Checks

- Perform basic visual inspections for corrosion in critical areas:
- wing attach points, spar, tail section, and other high-risk locations.
- Confirm compliance with mandatory transponder and pitot-static checks (91.413/217 and 91.411).

Engine Health

- Review engine compressions, take an oil sample or inspect oil filter, and borescope cylinders. Assess cam condition if accessible.

USEFULL LINKS

- AD research - https://drs.faa.gov/browse/ADFRAWD/doctypeDetails
- TCDS search - https://drs.faa.gov/browse/TCDSMODEL/doctypeDetails

2. IN-DEPTH EXAMINATION

For a thorough understanding of the aircraft's history and maintenance quality, these detailed checks are advised, often requiring expertise to interpret records or inspect components.

Legal and Damage History

- Obtain an Oklahoma CD (title search) for records on liens or previous damage history.
- Review aircraft logbooks and maintenance records for any discrepancies, missing sign-offs, or gaps in historical documentation.

Component and Serial Verification

- Confirm serial numbers and AD compliance for specific equipment such as radios and installed STCs, which may not appear in general airframe ADs.

System Functionality & Component Inspections

- Test ELT functionality and verify battery status.
- Check AD compliance with logbook sign-offs and verify visual adherence.
- Investigate service bulletins, SIDs (Service Inspection Documents), and any noted problem areas.

Flight Test

- Conduct a flight with the owner to confirm operational condition and verify equipment functionality.

USEFULL LINKS

- Oklahoma CD (title search) for records - https://aircraft.faa.gov/e.gov/ND/

3. OPTIONAL: ANNUAL INSPECTION ANALYSIS

A deeper examination, akin to an annual inspection, may uncover additional hidden issues, focusing on airframe integrity, unapproved parts, and servicing needs.

Comparative Checklist Options

- While a FAR 43 Appendix D annual inspection is standard, a more exhaustive Cessna checklist provides a thorough airframe review that may reveal additional insights.

ADDITIONAL FOCUS POINTS

ATo ensure no details are overlooked, you may consider including:

Avionics Inspection

- Confirm that all installed avionics are up-to-date with necessary firmware and service bulletins, particularly for critical navigation equipment.

Environmental System Check

- For pressurized aircraft, check the environmental and pressurization systems for leaks or deferred maintenance.

UNLOCK EXPERT GUIDANCE & RESOURCES

Completing a pre-purchase evaluation can feel overwhelming, and expert guidance can save time and prevent costly mistakes. I offer a coaching program and a recorded video series designed to help aircraft buyers understand these evaluations in-depth and navigate ownership confidently.

Next Steps

- Download Video Series: Coming Soon! Our video series will share visual insights into performing evaluations.
- Book a Coaching Session: Receive personalized assistance on navigating your aircraft purchase and future ownership.

For more information, or to schedule a consultation, email us at admin@airframeenvy.com or call 916-625-6654

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