

Air Traffic Control Phrases

"Cleared to taxi" (Jeppesen Private Pilot 5B; AIM Section 3, Airport Markings)

When told by ground control or tower that you are cleared to taxi, the controller has given you instruction to taxi along taxiway centerlines according to taxiway markings. It is important to repeat all controller instructions and runway crossing instructions. The taxi is the first phase of the flight, so constantly scan for traffic and maintain attention to radio calls. If in doubt or unsure of potential conflict, STOP, and be the courteous pilot.

"Taxi into position and hold" (Jeppesen Private Pilot 5B)

The tower expects you to taxi onto runway centerline and maintain a stopped position while the aircraft in front of you gains separation or clears the runway. It is important that, prior to crossing the hold-short lines, you verify your instructions, verify runway of use, and scan extended final for traffic. At Centennial you may be asked to taxi into position and hold with room for aircraft behind you.

"Cleared for takeoff" (Jeppesen Private Pilot 5B)

The tower controller is the only authority to clear you for takeoff at a controlled airfield. Repeat back your takeoff clearance and call sign, as well as scan final for traffic. The tower will expect you to maintain runway centerline on takeoff until reaching 500' AGL. Upon reaching 500' AGL, you may begin your crosswind turn, or on-course turnout. The tower may request other specific instructions, so listen closely to your takeoff clearance.

"Cleared for immediate takeoff"

This means the controller has minimal separation between you and the aircraft on final. If you decide to proceed with the takeoff the aircraft must be fully configured and you should apply full power upon reaching runway centerline. If you feel you are not ready or unable to takeoff, advise the tower that you are unable and remain holding short of the runway.

"Enter closed traffic" (AIM Pilot/Controller Glossary)

The tower has acknowledged the pilot's intention to perform successive operations involving takeoffs and landings or low approaches where the aircraft does not exit the traffic pattern.

"Cleared for the option" (AIM 4-3-22)

When you are cleared for the option you have been given permission to either do a touch-and-go, make a low approach, missed approach, stop and go, or full-stop landing. If requesting this clearance, the pilot should do so upon establishing downwind on a VFR traffic pattern.

"Cleared touch-and-go"

When authorized by the tower, the touch-and-go procedure allows the pilot to land on the runway, reconfigure the airplane and perform a takeoff to re-enter the traffic pattern. If requesting this approach the pilot should do so upon establishing downwind on a VFR traffic pattern.

"Cleared low approach" (AIM 4-3-12)

A low approach clearance allows the pilot to perform a simulated emergency landing or normal landing down to the runway environment (100' AGL) and then perform a go-around to re-enter or depart the pattern. If requesting this approach you should do so upon establishing downwind on a VFR traffic pattern.

"Cleared stop-and-go"

A stop-and-go clearance allows the pilot to land on the runway, come to a full stop, and then takeoff on the remaining length of runway. The pilot must be aware of runway lengths and takeoff distance requirements. This procedure can be beneficial in keeping costs lower when performing night currency. If requesting this clearance the pilot should do so upon establishing downwind on a VFR traffic pattern.

"Cleared to land"

When given clearance to land the tower has authorized you to land on the runway in use. The phrase "cleared to land" gives you immediate use of that runway, unless the tower advises that you are in sequence for landing. After advising approach or tower that you are inbound for landing at your destination you do not have to make any further request for clearance to land.

"Land-and-hold-short" (AIM 4-3-11)

The land-and-hold-short procedure requires the pilot to perform an accurate landing on the runway so that the pilot can stop the aircraft before reaching an intersecting runway, intersecting taxiway, or construction area. If you are unable to comply with land-and-hold-short operations, you may request clearance for a different runway.

"Caution: wake turbulence"

This call from ATC advises the pilot of the potential for encountering wake turbulence from departing or arriving aircraft.

Exiting the runway after landing (AIM 4-3-20)

The AIM advises that you exit the runway at the first available taxiway, stop the aircraft after clearing the runway, and call ground control for instructions if you have not already received them.