



AIRSPACE CLASS REFERENCE CHART

UNDERSTANDING CONTROLLED AND UNCONTROLLED AIRSPACE



CLASS	WHERE YOU'LL FIND IT	ATC SERVICES PROVIDED	PILOT REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES	MEMORY TIP
A	18,000 ft MSL to 60,000 ft MSL (FL 600)	Positive control ATC clearance required	IFR only	High altitude en route airspace	A = ABOVE The highest class of controlled airspace.
B	Surrounds the busiest airports	Full separation All aircraft	ATC clearance required to enter	Major airports (e.g., ATL, LAX, ORD)	B = BIGGEST AIRPORTS Busy airports get the most protection.
C	Around busy regional airports	Radar service to IFR aircraft VFR traffic information	Two-way radio communication required	Medium traffic airports	C = CITY AIRPORTS Lots of activity, lots of communication.
D	Around airports with control towers	Tower services Traffic separation as required	Two-way radio communication required	Smaller airports with control towers	D = DAILY TOWER Towers are open during daily operations.
E	Most controlled airspace not designated A, B, C, or D	Advisory services to VFR Primarily IFR services	IFR: ATC clearance VFR: Two-way radio in some areas	En route airspace; extends from the surface to various altitudes	E = EVERYWHERE CONTROLLED It's everywhere in between.
G	Airspace not controlled; typically below 14,500 ft MSL	No ATC services (except in special circumstances)	See and avoid other aircraft Follow basic weather minimums	Rural areas, small airports, remote locations	G = GO IT ALONE Pilot is responsible for separation.

TYPICAL CONTROLLED AIRSPACE SHAPES

CLASS B
UPSIDE-DOWN WEDDING CAKE

10,000 ft MSL
7,000 ft MSL
4,000 ft MSL
Surface

Extends from the surface to 10,000 ft MSL (varies by airport).

CLASS C
WEDDING CAKE

4,000 ft MSL
Surface

Extends from the surface to 4,000 ft MSL (varies by airport).

CLASS D
CYLINDER

2,500 ft AGL
Surface

Extends from the surface to 2,500 ft AGL (varies by airport).

QUICK FACTS

- Class A is for high-altitude airliners and IFR only.
- Class B provides the most protection for the busiest airports.
- Classes C and D require two-way radio communication.
- Class E is the most common controlled airspace.
- Class G is uncontrolled—pilots are responsible.

★ MEMORY AID ★

A ABOVE	
B BIGGEST AIRPORTS	
C CITY AIRPORTS	
D DAILY TOWER	
E EVERYWHERE CONTROLLED	
G GO IT ALONE	



REMEMBER: Airspace is designed to keep everyone safe. Know the rules, communicate clearly, and always follow ATC instructions.

