Shallow Approach / Running Landing

Purpose and Objective

A shallow approach to a running landing is performed when you find yourself in a power-limited situation. The goal is to get safely to the ground without pulling too much power.

Maneuver

1. As early as possible determine your reference mark by drawing an imaginary line from your spot to your windshield. Your reference for a shallow approach should be slightly below your reference for a normal approach.

2. Once the landing spot is intercepted with the shallow approach angle, lower the collective to begin descent.

3. On final, you should be looking to maintain the “brisk walking pace” towards the landing site until vibrations of ETL are felt.

4. Once you feel the vibrations of ETL, raise collective and apply forward cyclic to maintain the vibrations to ground contact.

5. Above 20 feet, the helicopter should be in trim with the pedals. Below 20 feet, the helicopter should be adjusted to align with the ground run for you approach.

6. Keeping your eyes outside and far ahead of the helicopter, using the collective to control the descent to the touchdown.

7. Just before ground contact, apply a slight forward cyclic pressure to ensure skids are level and allow the helicopter to settle on the ground.

8. Once the skids make ground contact, lower the collective a slow, steady pace to increase skid friction. Apply pedals for necessary heading corrections and lateral cyclic movement for any lateral corrections.

9. After the helicopter has come to a full stop, lower the collective fully.

Common Errors

- Rushing ground contact at ground speeds that are too high.
- Lowering the collective to initiate ground contact.
- Lowering too much collective, too quickly after ground contact.
- Using aft cyclic to attempt to slow the helicopter after touchdown.

Performance Standards

Private Pilot for Rotorcraft Category Helicopter Rating ACS, Area of Operation V, Task H.

Highlights

- Establish and maintain the recommended approach angle and proper rate of closure.
- Maintain effective translation lift during surface contact with landing gear parallel to the ground track.
- Make smooth, timely, and correct control inputs after surface contact to maintain directional control.