

Piper PA-17 Vagabond Trainer Model Guide

The Piper PA-17 Vagabond Trainer is a two-seat, side-by-side, fabric-covered, steel-tube-fuselage taildragger with a 65-hp Continental A-65. The registry lists it for 1948 to 1950. It was a less austere version of the PA-15 Vagabond, adding dual controls, gear shock cords, instruments and a spinner. About 200 were built.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Two seats side by side, dual controls, 65-hp Continental A-65. About 200 PA-17s were built, against just over 500 PA-15s.
- It sold for about \$200 more than the \$1,990 PA-15 and added shock cords, flight and engine instruments, and a spinner.
- The Short Wing Piper Club has about 900 members and a bimonthly magazine, which is useful support for an older type.
- The sources give no PA-17 weights, speeds or V-speeds. Get those from the airplane's own documents.

WHAT YOU ARE BUYING

The PA-17 is a shorter-span, shorter-bodied alternative to the Cub with side-by-side seats. Its wing is the Cub's, about 3 feet per side shorter. It has a steel-tube fuselage and fabric covering. Piper built it as a cheaper postwar airplane, and the PA-16 Clipper replaced the Vagabond in 1949.

FAMILY-LEVEL REGISTRY FIGURES

The registry entry for the PA-17 family gives maxima of up to 220 nm range, up to 76 kt cruise, up to 500 kg maximum takeoff weight, up to 2 occupants and up to 12,500 ft service ceiling. These are family-level ceilings. Do not treat them as verified figures for any one airplane.

MARKET AND SUPPORT

A 1990 article called \$5,000 to \$7,000 not unusual for a flyable but tattered short-wing Piper, and said good ones can fetch premium sums. Those prices are dated. No Vagabonds attended that year's club convention. Listed mods for short-wing Pipers include floats, skis, tundra tires, STOL kits and metal skins to replace fabric.

SPECIFICATIONS

Engine Power Hp	65
Seats	2
First Year	1948
Last Year	1950

SAFETY NOTES

- Confirm the airplane is a PA-17 and not a PA-15. The PA-15 had no main-gear shock system, no right-seat controls, no engine primer and no cabin heat.
- The sources contain no PA-17 limitations, weights or V-speeds. Do not borrow figures from other short-wing Pipers.