

Piper PA-18 Super Cub Model Guide

The Piper PA-18 Super Cub is a two-seat, high-wing, tandem, fixed-gear piston single built from 1949 to 1994. It has a welded steel-tube fuselage with fabric covering. Versions differ mainly by engine, from a 90 hp Continental to the 150 hp Lycoming O-320. Agricultural (PA-18A) and seaplane (PA-18S) versions also exist.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Two seats in tandem. The base PA-18 spec lists 50 lb of baggage (Normal category only) and 18 gallons of fuel.
- Check which engine and model you are buying: the 90 hp, 105, 125, 135 and 150 versions have different limits.
- The PA-18 150 has a Lycoming O-320 rated 150 hp at 2700 RPM and a Vne of 133 kt.
- Look for open Airworthiness Directives on lift struts and forks, exhaust mufflers, fuel selector valve and rudder post.

VARIANTS AND ENGINES

Piper catalogs cover PA-18 Models 95, 105, 125, 135 and 150, and PA-18A (agricultural) Models 125, 135 and 150. The base PA-18 uses a Continental C-90 limited to 2475 RPM (90 hp). The 150 uses a Lycoming O-320 at 2700 RPM (150 hp). PA-18S models are seaplanes. PA-18A models have a hopper door and removable rear seat.

STRUCTURE AND LANDING GEAR

The fuselage is welded steel tube, with some highly stressed members in 4130 chromemoly. Wings have aluminum spars and ribs, with lift struts adjustable at the forked fittings. The shock-cord gear needs only occasional greasing of hinge bolts and strut members, plus inspection of the steel hinge bolt bushings. Main tires are 8.00 x 4 at 18 psi.

WHAT TO INSPECT

The NZ CAA schedule dated 27 February 2025 lists these inspections: lift struts and forks, exhaust mufflers, fuel selector valve, lower fuselage attachment tab, and rudder post. It also lists control stick security, stabiliser adjustment screw, front landing gear fittings, and rudder pedal welds. Confirm compliance in the logbooks.

SPECIFICATIONS

Fuel Capacity Gal	18
Max Baggage Lbs	50
Engine Power 150 Model Hp	150
Tire Pressure Psi	18

V-SPEEDS

Vne 90hp Kts	120
Maneuvering 90hp Kts	82
Flaps Extended 90hp Kts	70
Structural Cruise 90hp Kts	96
Vne 150 Model Kts	133
Maneuvering 150 Model Kts	83
Flaps Extended 150 Model Kts	74
Structural Cruise 150 Model Kts	105

WEIGHT & BALANCE

Max Weight Normal 90hp Lbs	1500
Max Weight Utility 90hp Lbs	1400
Max Baggage Lbs	50

SAFETY NOTES

- Lift the airplane only at the extreme end of a lift strut, never mid-strut, to avoid bending it.
- Do not use the tail brace wires for lifting or handling. Use the handle on the right rear fuselage.
- Hopper-equipped aircraft: the AD notes undetected residual load can cause overloading with the CG beyond the aft limit.