

Cessna 172RG Cutlass Model Guide

The Cessna 172RG Cutlass is a four-seat, single-engine piston airplane built from 1980 to 1985. It has retractable tricycle gear and a constant-speed propeller, and a 180 hp carbureted Lycoming O-360. The POH lists a 2650 lb max takeoff weight and 1100 lb useful load. The wider 172 family reaches up to 140 kt cruise and 700 nm range, but those are family maximums, not Cutlass figures.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Cessna 172RG Cutlass: 180 hp O-360, constant-speed prop, retractable gear; 1558 lb standard empty weight, 1100 lb useful load, 2650 lb max takeoff.
- Fuel: 66 gal total. Usable is 52 gal in one POH and 62 gal on a data sheet, so confirm the figure for the specific airplane.
- Reference speeds differ by source (Vne 163 vs 164, Vno 129 vs 145 kt). Use the POH for the exact airplane you are buying.
- A normally aspirated engine loses about 3.5 percent power per 1,000 ft of density altitude, so check performance charts before hot or high flights.

GEAR, SYSTEMS AND ENGINE

The retractable tricycle gear is raised and lowered by an electrically driven hydraulic power pack. A hand pump gives manual extension if the pack fails. A squat switch on the nose gear prevents retraction on the ground. The horn sounds if the gear is not locked down and manifold pressure is below 12 inches, or flaps are beyond 20 degrees. The carbureted engine takes 100LL (blue) or 100 (green) fuel.

HOW IT IS FLOWN

Normal takeoff uses flaps 0: rotate at 55 KIAS, climb at 80 KIAS, and retract the gear once climb is positive. The short-field technique uses no flaps, lifts off at 58 KIAS and holds 63 KIAS until obstacles are clear. Soft-field takeoff uses flaps 10 degrees. Extend the gear below 140 KIAS.

WHAT TO CHECK BEFORE BUYING

The 172RG service manual temporary revisions cover main landing gear pivot inspection, Service Bulletin SEB99-18 inspections, stop-drilling of cracks at the trailing edge of corrugated-skin control surfaces, component time limits, and a fuel quantity indicating system test. Ask for records showing these were done.

SPECIFICATIONS

Max Takeoff Weight Lbs	2650
Standard Empty Weight Lbs	1558
Max Useful Load Lbs	1100
Baggage Limit Lbs	200
Total Fuel Gal	66
Engine Power Hp	180

PERFORMANCE

Rotation Speed Kts	55
Initial Climb Speed Kts	80
Short Field Liftoff Speed Kts	58
Short Field Climb Speed Kts	63
Best Glide Speed Kts	68
Max Crosswind Kts	15

V-SPEEDS

Vne Kts	163
Vno Kts	129
Vfe Kts	85
Vs1 Kts	48
Vso Kts	40
Vx Kts	56
Best Glide Kts	68
Max Crosswind Kts	15

WEIGHT & BALANCE

Max Ramp Weight Lbs	2658
Max Takeoff Weight Lbs	2650
Max Landing Weight Lbs	2650
Standard Empty Weight Lbs	1558
Max Useful Load Lbs	1100
Baggage Area 1 Lbs	200
Baggage Area 2 Lbs	50

SAFETY NOTES

- A UK AAIB report describes a Cutlass that yawed left after a normal landing on a short grass strip and left the runway. There were no injuries, but damage was substantial.
- At 9,000 ft density altitude about 32 percent of engine power is lost. Do weight and balance and run the performance charts before heavy, hot or high-elevation flights.
- Use the BOTH fuel position for takeoff, climb, descent and landing. Use LEFT or RIGHT only in level cruise. Demonstrated crosswind is 15 kt.