

PIPER J-3C Model Guide

PIPER J-3C is a tandem two-place tailwheel Cub. The family includes the J3C-40, J3C-50, J3C-50S, J3C-65 and J3C-65S. The performance figures below come from a checklist for one J3C-85 example, so treat them as typical of that airplane, not of every J-3C. Gross weight depends on serial number and gear/strut configuration, so confirm it for the specific airplane.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The J3C-85 checklist example lists 753 lbs empty, 467 lbs useful load, 1220 lbs gross and only 20 lbs of baggage.
- It carries 12 gal of fuel and burns 4.5 - 5.0 gal/hr, so the checklist gives a cruise range of 2.0 hrs.
- Cruise is 73 mph, stall is 39 mph and Vne is 122 mph. Takeoff roll is 370 ft and landing roll is 290 ft at max gross.
- Check the wing lift struts and strut forks. An FAA AD requires repeat inspections of both on all J3C variants.

WHAT THE CHECKLIST EXAMPLE SHOWS

The J3C-85 example lists a 370 ft takeoff roll and 290 ft landing roll at max gross. Best rate of climb is 400 ft/min and absolute ceiling is 11,500 ft. Top speed is 83 mph, best glide is 50 mph and approach is 55 - 60 mph. The green arc runs 39 – 90 mph and the yellow arc 90 – 122 mph.

GROSS WEIGHT ELIGIBILITY

Under the type certificate, serial numbers prior to 7912 (with listed exceptions) are eligible for 1100 lb. They reach 1170 lb with revised lift struts and attachments, and 1220 lb with the revised landing gear. Serial numbers 7912 and up are eligible for 1170 lb, or 1220 lb with the revised gear. Serial numbers 10339 and up, and 2356 and up of the J3C-65, are eligible for 1220 lb. Verify the parts actually fitted.

WHAT TO INSPECT

The checklist preflight covers gear attachments (castle nuts and cotter pins), hydraulic brake lines for leaks, bungee shock tension, fabric damage, and wing strut bolts. It also covers aileron cables, tailwheel springs and bushings, and exhaust pipe cracks. Check for wing spar/rib flex (the checklist expects SOME FLEX), and look at the belly for damage and leaks.

SPECIFICATIONS

Empty Weight Lbs	753
Useful Load Lbs	467
Baggage Capacity Lbs	20
Gross Weight Lbs	1220
Fuel Capacity Gal	12
Fuel Burn Gph Min	4.5
Fuel Burn Gph Max	5

PERFORMANCE

Takeoff Roll Ft	370
Landing Roll Ft	290
Best Rate Of Climb Fpm	400
Absolute Ceiling Ft	11500

WEIGHT & BALANCE

Empty Weight Lbs	753
Useful Load Lbs	467
Max Gross Weight Lbs	1220
Baggage Capacity Lbs	20

SAFETY NOTES

- AD 99-01-05 (all J3C serial numbers): inspect wing lift struts for corrosion at intervals not to exceed 24 calendar months, or fit sealed struts.
- AD 99-01-05: magnetic particle inspect strut forks at 500 hours TIS. Replace them at 2,000 hours, or 1,000 hours if floats have been fitted.
- Service bulletin 84: use FULL carburetor heat in icing and never partial. Treat the prop as hot at all times.