

Cessna 421 Golden Eagle Model Guide

The Cessna 421 Golden Eagle is a pressurized, retractable-gear piston twin with 6 to 8 seats, built until 1985 in 421, 421A, 421B and 421C versions. Family-level registry data shows up to 840 nm range, up to 240 kt cruise and up to 31,000 ft service ceiling across the variants.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Pressurized piston twin with two 375 hp Continental GTSIO-520 engines; 1,901 were built before production ended in 1985.
- The 421C (859 built) brought a new wing, wet wings and no wingtip tanks. The 421B (699 built) came before it.
- A 1976 421C was valued by VREF in August 2021 at \$220,999.88, with paint and interior rated D - Poor. Condition drives price.
- Inspect the nose gear downlock microswitch: corrosion has caused false green 'down-and-locked' lights on 400-series Cessnas.

VARIANTS AND WHAT CHANGED

421 (200 built, 6,800 lb max takeoff), 421A (158 built, 6,840 lb), 421B (699 built, 7,250 lb, later 7,450 lb) and 421C (859 built, 7,450 lb). The 421C added a new wing, wet wings, no wingtip tanks, and trailing-link landing gear from the 1981 model year. An icing-equipment package was offered from 1975.

WHAT SAMPLE LISTINGS SHOW

A 1972 421B listing had 7,095 airframe hours, a 1,600-hour engine TBO, full de-ice, vortex generators, and original, complete logs with the annual complied with April 2018. A 1976 421C was valued by VREF (August 2021) at \$220,999.88 after a \$26,250 condition deduction; its engines had 829.90 and 710.80 hours since major overhaul.

AUTOPILOT UPGRADE OPTION

The Genesys IntelliFlight 2100 three-axis digital autopilot is certified for the 414 and 421, with a 2016 retail price of \$39,995. It reuses S-TEC 55X servos, needs a slight panel modification and extra wiring, and needs a yaw servo if no yaw damper is fitted. A 1973 421 owner reported being extremely pleased with it.

SPECIFICATIONS

Engine Power Hp	375
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PERFORMANCE

Cruise Speed Kts	241
Range Nm	882
Takeoff Run Ft	1786
Takeoff Run 50ft Ft	2323
Landing Roll Ft	720
Max Operating Altitude Ft	31000

WEIGHT & BALANCE

Max Takeoff Weight Lbs	7579
Basic Empty Weight Lbs	5162
Useful Load Lbs	2417
Payload Full Fuel Lbs	1317
Usable Fuel Weight Lbs	1138
Usable Fuel Volume Gal	170

SAFETY NOTES

- A nose gear collapsed with three green lights lit because a corroded downlock microswitch stuck closed. Inspect and reseal it per SNL 89-3 (N1FY, 2010).
- Emergency gear extension is by air bottle blow-down. It was not used in that accident because the pilot had no sign the nose gear was unlocked.
- A broken nosewheel mudguard brace and a worn tyre sidewall led to a nose gear collapse on a 1977 421C. Check the mudguard, tyre and fork.