

Cessna 120 Model Guide

The Cessna 120 is a two-seat, single-engine piston tailwheel aeroplane built from 1946 to 1950. It is the Cessna 140 without wing flaps, and it uses a Continental C-85 engine rated at 85 hp. Registry data for the model family lists up to 106 kt cruise and 380 nm range. Confirm the real figures from the individual aircraft's papers.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Cessna 120: 2 seats, 85 hp Continental C-85, 25 gal fuel, 1450 lbs maximum weight (landplane).
- No wing flaps are fitted, so landings carry more speed and run longer than in flapped types.
- Check the original landing gear legs for corrosion and cracks at the step bolt holes.
- Forward doorposts, drag wires and many old FAA ADs need log-book proof of compliance.

WHAT IT CARRIES AND BURNS

Two seats, 80 lbs of baggage and 25 gal of fuel in two 12.5 gal tanks. Maximum weight is 1450 lbs as a landplane or skiplane, and 1556 lbs as a seaplane. The engine is a Continental C-85-12 or C-85-12F running on 73 minimum octane fuel. The specification lists optional engines.

AIRWORTHINESS ITEMS TO VERIFY

Ask for evidence of the forward doorpost inspection (serial numbers 8001 through 8799) and of the wing drag wire inspection. The Australian ADs repeat both at intervals of up to 100 hours. The NZ schedule also lists rudder cable horns, elevator spar web, aileron ribs, stabilizer bolts, mufflers and the cabin heat system.

LANDING GEAR AND LANDING TECHNIQUE

A UK accident report found a fractured gear leg on a 1946 aircraft whose original leg had never been changed. Fatigue cracking started at a corroded step bolt hole. A separate 1948 aircraft ran off a wet, downhill grass runway after a fast, long landing. The pilot was used to flaps and was near maximum weight.

SPECIFICATIONS

Max Takeoff Weight Lbs	1450
Fuel Capacity Gal	25
Max Baggage Lbs	80
Engine Power Hp	85

PERFORMANCE

Max Level Flight Speed Kts	100
Seaplane Max Level Flight Speed Kts	91

V-SPEEDS

Max Glide Or Dive Speed Kts	122
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WEIGHT & BALANCE

Max Takeoff Weight Landplane Lbs	1450
Max Takeoff Weight Seaplane Lbs	1556
Max Baggage Lbs	80

SAFETY NOTES

- Inspect gear legs at the step bolt holes; corrosion there led to a leg fracture on a 1946 Cessna 120.
- A Cessna 120 has no flaps. A fast, long touchdown on wet grass led to a hedge strike near maximum weight.
- Do not skip the forward doorpost and drag wire inspections; both are repeating AD items.