

SPARKY'S 10 COMMANDMENTS FOR MOUNTAIN FLYING

1. Regardless of the operation – flying over the mountains, flying in canyons, or flying near ridges - **always remain in a position where you can turn to lowering terrain.** This requires a 45-degree angle approach to the terrain.
2. When flying upslope terrain, **do not fly beyond the point of no return.** This is the point (approximately 500-feet AGL) where, if the power is reduced to idle, the airplane can still turn around without impacting the terrain.
3. On a short runway, **if 71 percent of the takeoff speed is obtained at the halfway point,** the airplane will takeoff in the space remaining.
4. **Never enter a canyon if there is not room to turn around.**
5. Regardless of altitude, **always fly the approach for landing at the normal sea-level approach indicated airspeed** for the airplane; not slower and not faster. A 10-percent increase in approach speed causes a 21-percent increase in landing distance.
6. Thoroughly **study weather trends** and conditions before takeoff. Delay the flight during marginal weather.
7. **Approach ridges and mountains at a 45-degree angle** to allow an escape route if strong turbulence or down-drafts are encountered.
8. Do not **thermal shock** (power-off descents) or **detune** (rapid throttle movements) the engine.
9. Prepare an **emergency survival kit** and keep it in the airplane where it is accessible.
10. **Avoid becoming complacent.** Do not fly by rote, ignoring the warning signs of weather, terrain or wind.