



HORSHAM & DISTRICT RADIO CONTROL MODEL CLUB

GETTING STARTED IN MODEL FLYING

Acknowledgements to the Bury Model Flying Club for the bulk of the text

There are many ways to start model flying, however most of them are somewhat expensive and can be very frustrating. It is very easy these days to walk into a model shop or even a toyshop and walk out with a plane that is almost ready to fly (ARTF). Read these notes and hopefully you won't end up with an ARTB (almost ready to bin) model.

In other words, the plane may be almost ready to fly, but are you?

Hopefully, these notes will identify some of the pitfalls and ensure that your first steps into this fascinating hobby are as painless as possible.

Before you part with your hard earned cash, visit your local flying club and talk to the guys flying (when they have landed of course). Most members will be more than happy to show you what it is all about and give you lots of free advice. Some clubs will even allow you to have a trial flight of a plane, albeit linked to a master transmitter so that the instructor can take over if you get into difficulties. It is always a good idea to arrange this in advance of any visit. If you decide that you would like to continue in the hobby, it is a good idea to join a model-flying club because they can usually provide a structured training programme that will ensure that you don't wreck your plane every time you attempt to fly it. The club can also provide insurance through their membership scheme. **SAFE FLYING IS VITAL**, and most clubs have

instructors who will teach these aspects of flying, as well as the skills required to control the model.

This hobby will give you years of fun and enjoyment, and as you progress, you can work towards British Model Flying Association's (BMFA) proficiency scheme.

So what do you need to buy?

Probably the best way to start is with a trainer type model, of which there are many to choose from starting from about £60 for an ARTF trainer, it will require an engine of about 6.5cc (0.40 cu in) in size, these are available from about £40 upwards. An alternative is to start with an electric powered glider, a contradiction of terms I know but a glider with a small motor and prop is a good way to start as they are usually more stable than an I.C. powered plane, these can be obtained for less than £50 complete with motor and prop. You would need a speed controller, battery and a means of charging it. A transmitter will be needed to control the model and inside the model you will need a receiver (brain) and some servos (muscles) and a battery (energy) to convert the commands sent from the transmitter to move the control surfaces as required. These usually come as a package starting at about £100 but may be purchased separately. There are many makes and models to choose from but it is a good idea to base your choice on what the majority of the club member's use so that you will be compatible with any "buddy box" system that they may use

It is best to choose one that will take you past the learning stage so that as you progress you don't have to keep up grading but just add components to your existing system.

In the UK we fly models on 35mhz and within this frequency range a specific channel needs to be chosen, this range runs between ch55 and ch90, it is always a good idea to check if the flying club reserve any of these channels for specific disciplines e.g. gliders, helicopters or any local interference sources.

Since December 2006, full range 2.4ghz radio systems have been available for flying. These systems use mobile phone technology and give us interference free control with 40 channels available; they either scan continuously or lock onto a free channel depending on the make of system. If this is to be your first radio set then 2.4 is the way to go.

Of course there are other items that will be needed; these include fuel, a starter, a means of heating the glow-plug and some method of getting the fuel in and out of the models fuel tank (most flyers started with a "squeeze" bottle for the fuel and a 2v accumulator to energise the glow-plug and a strong finger to flick the engine into life).

Again talk to your local club members who are more than willing to help with advice and practical experience.

The Horsham club is happy to teach you and is committed to safe and responsible flying. If you are interested give Keith Wright (secretary) a call on 01293 524663 or visit our web-site www.hdrcmc.co.uk for further information.