

# RALEIGH AEROMASTERS

AMA Chartered Club   Fun And Family Oriented RC Airplane Flying Club   Keeping Safety First

**Welcome** to Raleigh AeroMasters. We are glad you are getting into the exciting and fun filled hobby and sport of radio control flying. Many new participants in this hobby, have the same question; how do I get started and where I can buy the equipment needed? Can I have someone teaching me how to fly a radio control model airplane? A group of club members have put together information about where they found some of the best equipment if you are getting in the hobby. Be aware that sometimes a ready to fly (RTF) airplane that is very low cost will perform poorly making your introduction into the hobby a frustrating one since the model has poor performance. Nevertheless for a reasonable amount of money there are some ready to fly and entry level kits and radios that will not break the bank and allow you to successfully enter the RC Flying world. Club members will be more than glad to help you set up your equipment and instruct you how to fly. Depending on the radio equipment you have, we may be able to connect you, by a cable, to an instructor's transmitter and help you to control your plane during your training sessions reducing the chances of crashing your plane during your first RC flying lessons.

**Electric vrs Nitro / Gas** has become a frequent question since electric powered airplane models have had a great advance in technology making them more reliable and cost has reduced to make them a good option besides nitro or gas fueled models. The advantages of electric power is that is clean (you don't have to clean oil mess from your airplane) and simple (you don't have to be adjusting carburetors and air / fuel mixtures) and you don't have to be spending money on expensive nitro fuel or mixing oil with gas. Electrics do carry a somewhat more expensive initial cost due to the need for batteries and battery chargers but not much more. Nitro / gas engines do provide the great sound that many modelers love. So, talk to some of the club members flying either electric or nitro / gas and get a feel for what to get that will work best for you. Many of us do both.

**KITS, ARF, RTF, PLUG & PLAY, RX-READY, BNF ?** Airplane models come in many completion formats. If you want to build your model from a "bunch" of sticks of balsa and plywood and then cover the model to your choice of colors, then kits are for you. It takes time and skill to put them together but a simple kit can give you the initial understanding of how models are put together plus allows you some options of customization. Many modelers don't necessarily have the time to do all the building so they look into the other options of completion. Almost Ready to Fly (ARF) models come with most of the structure built and covered from the factory. You put together the major components and add servos, receiver and motor. Many modelers choose this quicker way to get in the air. The Ready To Fly versions (RTF) are airplane models like ARFs but come with radio equipment and most of the items needed to get you flying. Just be aware that manufacturers and retailers frequently will make these combinations of equipment with poor quality parts to keep cost low. Just ask around to fellow modelers if they know about an RTF you intend to buy or check with some of the radio control discussion forums. The Plug & Play versions are models that come as an ARF with servos and motor and you install your receiver and radio equipment to complete the model. This allows you to do less building work and use a radio of your choice. Proprietary to the Horizon Hobby company, there are the Bind and Fly Models (B&N). These models come as an ARF with all the radio and servo equipment installed but you must use a 2.4 Ghz DSM2 radio system that can communicate with the receiver. Currently, DSM2 technology is under trademark use by Spektrum and JR Radio systems. So, which option to choose is a matter of how much completion you want on a model you buy. Many modelers prefer to buy their model and then the radio system separate to make sure the radio they get can be used for more sophisticated models in their hobby future and not having to rebuy a radio system each time they upgrade their airplane model.

**2.4GHZ VRS 72MHZ.** These are radio frequency systems where most radio control models operate on. If you are starting on the hobby, get a 2.4 Ghz radio system since it is the latest technology with the advantage

that they can be turned on and the radio will choose automatically a channel that is not being used by another modeler at the field and almost eliminates the chance of interfering with another flying model. 72 Mhz radios can only be turned on at the field if you have first made clear that your frequency is not being used by another modeler flying his airplane or helicopter. Be aware that many clubs and flying events are only accepting 2.4Ghz radios.

**WHAT BRAND OF RADIO SHOULD I GET?** You have several choices. Some brands are quite good but remember that service after the purchase is quite important for these systems. Most modelers use JR and Spektrum radios as well as Futaba. These are the most popular and the easiest to get serviced. Another good radio brand is Airtronics. In our club most pilots are using JR and Spektrum radios. Your radio selection is mostly based on your preference. Keep in mind that if you buy a brand that most modelers use, the better they can help you with questions. Also, you have a better chance of being able to connect to an instructor pilot's radio if your radio is compatible.

**LEARNING TO FLY SOLO OR BY "BUDDY CORD"** If you are learning to fly or have not flown in quite a while and you seek help from an experienced pilot in our club, as long as your radio is compatible, we can connect your radio to one of ours by a trainer cable. This allows for us to take off with your model, and then transfer the controls to your radio for flying and if you get in trouble we can regain control back reducing the chance that the model crashes during your training period. If your radio can not be connected to a "buddy cord" then we may take off and pass the radio to you. When in trouble we get the radio back and get your plane under control. This later system is much less reliable and increases greatly the chance of you losing your airplane during the learning process. So, as possible, we encourage the use of the "buddy cord" system.

**WHO IS RESPONSIBLE IF MY PLANE CRASHES WHEN I AM LEARNING?** You are. Any experienced pilot at any field will try to help you get started in this hobby the right way and teach you how to fly. They are volunteering their time to help you instead of flying their airplanes. They will do their best to avoid your airplane from crashing but if it happens it is not their financial responsibility. You must agree with this fact first. Any pilot in this hobby will tell you that you should not get too attached to your first and second trainer airplane. Remember that taking off is optional. Landing is not. Landing is controlled crashing. Any landing in which your airplane ends up in one piece is good. A good day at the field is when you go home with your airplane intact.

**AMA Registration / Insurance** The Academy of Model Aeronautics is the main organization that represents RC Flying modelers. As RC pilots, we do have responsibilities toward the public, fellow pilots and to life and property. Operating a radio control airplane or helicopter has an inherent amount of risk involved and liability. When you register with the AMA you get liability insurance coverage. Flying fields registered with the AMA do so also to obtain liability protection besides other benefits. Our club field is chartered under the AMA and we require that each pilot registers also. In order to fly in our field and most clubs and events you must have a valid and up to date AMA registration and have the card with you at the field. We abide by the AMA rules and safety regulations.

**CAN I FLY AT THE RAMS FIELD IF I AM NOT A MEMBER?** Only if you are with a RAMS member and have an up to date AMA registration. After four weeks since your initial flight we require paid membership if you and us decide that you are a mutual good fit to our club goals of fun, safety and proper behavior. Just remember that any flying in our field requires AMA registration.