

pre-flight

paraglider checks and inspection

You will have been introduced to the various component parts of the paraglider by your instructor. The most important parts of the glider and harness are shown in the illustration. In common with all aircraft, it is of the utmost importance that thorough and systematic inspections are carried out before a paraglider is flown, to ensure that it is in good condition, properly connected and safe to fly.

There are three levels of inspection:

the daily inspection

This should be made before flying each day and also after any heavy landing. It is suggested that the pilot starts at the canopy and systematically works down, or vice-versa.

canopy

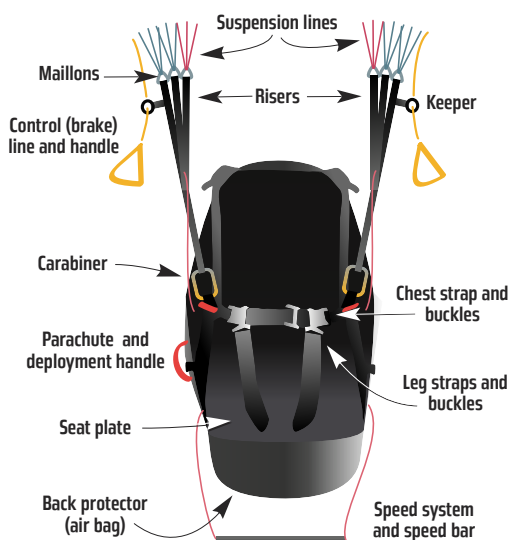
- Visually examine the top and bottom surfaces looking for damage, rips, loose stitching or contamination
- Inspect the interior of each cell for structural integrity

suspension

- Visually check the suspension and control lines looking for any loose stitching, fraying or damage to the protecting sheath; run any suspect line through your hand for any feeling of bulging, waisting or hollowness
- Pay particular attention to cascade points and where the lines are joined to the canopy or to maillons
- Scrutinise each maillon/carabiner and ensure they are properly secured with the gates exposed to view
- Scan each riser for loose stitching and abrasions, especially where there is contact with metal
- Check that the control lines are free running and that any guide rings, ferrules and poppers/attachment points are secure

harness

- Inspect for loose stitching, cuts or abrasions to the webbing especially where it contacts metal
- Ensure that buckles are rust free and that any elastic slip preventers are properly located and in good condition
- Check that the emergency parachute is securely stowed, the release pins are in place and the handle is accessible.



ancillaries

- Check tow yokes and instruments for serviceability if used

the pre-flight check

(Will Geordie Have His Cat Aboard [Today]?) This must be done before every flight. It is complementary to, but separate from, the Daily Inspection. If the sequence is ever interrupted the pilot should start again at the beginning.

W - Wind and weather

- Check the wind direction - is it shifting?
- Wind strength - is it varying much? Is it OK for your level of experience?
- Visibility - is it satisfactory?
- Weather. Is any rain approaching? Are there any signs indicating likely turbulence?

G - Glider

Give your glider a quick 'once-over' to confirm that nothing has altered since your DI. Check:

- Laid out properly?
- Cells clear?
- Lines untangled?

H - Helmet

- Check that you are wearing one
- That it fits snugly and will not drop over your eyes
- That it is fastened and won't fall off

H - Harness

Check the five main points:

- Left leg-strap fastened
- Right leg-strap fastened
- Chest strap fastened and adjusted correctly
- Left maillon/carabiner locked
- Right maillon carabiner locked
- Speed system connected on both sides

Check that any cross-bracing straps are secure and adjusted to give the correct distance between the carabiners, and that your emergency parachute (if fitted) is stowed correctly, the release pins are in place and that the handle is within reach.

C - Controls

- Check control handles in the correct hands
- Correct risers held appropriately
- Control lines free-running?

A - All clear

- Check that your take-off path is clear - nothing to trip you or wrench your ankles
- That you are well clear (in every

direction) from bushes, posts or other fixed obstructions and from roving people or livestock (a mishandled launch can use up a lot of space in any direction)

- That the airspace above, in front and below you is clear from other air users and will remain so during your take-off sequence
- That no-one is about to overshoot their top landing and need the airspace you are about to occupy

(T - Turn direction)

If you are using the traditional reverse launch, check which riser is on top: that shoulder must go back when you turn to face into wind

You are now ready to launch.

All the above checking may seem very complicated and long-winded. Be assured that it isn't. At school you will be thoroughly taught so that this becomes automatic for you. It's your personal safety that is at stake. Memorise the phrase: Will Geordie Have His Cat Aboard (Today)?

the periodic inspection

This is a major, comprehensive inspection as recommended by the manufacturer, possibly annual or after a specified number of hours flying. It is offered by certain manufacturers as a recommended service to their customers. The inspection will cover degradation of all fabric (canopy, lines and webbing) together with the integrity of metallic components. Lines may be replaced and minor repairs carried out. When you buy your first canopy you should seek assistance and preferably have the periodic inspection done by the manufacturer or his approved service centre. This inspection is far more important than the annual service on your car!

