

What is EN 926-2?

The EN 926-2 standard allows pilots to get an objectively-measured impression of the passive safety of a paraglider. It comprises 24 flight tests to be carried out by an independent test house. As well as testing the launch and standard flight characteristics, there are tests to establish the wing's responses in various departures from normal flight, for example stalls and collapses.

As it is impossible to generate turbulence in a repeatable form, tests are carried out in specific benign test conditions. The flight responses, including the departures from normal flight induced by the test pilot, are measured against the test's set criteria. For most of the tests the paraglider achieves a letter from A to D, with D being the most demanding in terms of piloting skills to return to normal flight.

The paraglider's overall class is that of the 'highest' letter it achieves in any single test. If a paraglider achieves a C in one test and A in all others, it is an EN C Class paraglider.

It is worthwhile reminding pilots (in particular those considering 'stepping up' from a lower class) that an EN C paraglider will have potentially dynamic reactions to turbulence and pilot errors. A pilot choosing an EN C paraglider will have several hundred hours/flights logged, many of these in thermic conditions. They will be adept at flying actively, be able to recognise the onset of asymmetric collapses, etc, and to make precisely-timed and appropriate pilot inputs to recover to normal flight.

A paraglider's EN class is one of the essential pieces of information to arm yourself with when determining what level of glider may be suitable for you. And read the manufacturer's information in the user manual on the level of piloting skill required for flying that glider. It is also recommended to seek advice from an instructor who knows your flying level.

