

Basic Radio Control Definitions

*The Knight Flyer, Northern Knights Model Airplane Club
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Angle of attack: Direction from which you are hit after setting up a nice mid-air with your club mate's new airplane.

Autorotation: What your car does on icy roads.

Balsa: What dreams were made of.

Bernouillism: Name of an antique sect regularly discussing religious problems (the weight of air, the speed of air, the 'mystic' reconnection of air).

Also—auto generates flames.

Blind nut: Judge at a pattern contest.

Carpet fiber: When others are bragging about their high-tech composite airplanes, and you have only the Gentle Lady you built on the floor of your two-room apartment, you mutter quickly, under your breath, "Yep, this baby's reinforced with carpet fiber!"

Circle tow: How to point someone in the direction of the scoring tent when you have both hands holding your airplane together until the quick epoxy sets.

Crash: Quick method of removing the radio and engine from one model to fit them in your new model.

Center of gravity: Point in which G-forces, dedicated to separating wing from fuselage, do their stuff.

Computer: Device that enables you to make mistakes at the speed of light.

Cyanoacrylate: Special glue, designed to instantly glue fingers to balsa structures. Also—special glue, instantly curing when parts are misaligned, will hardly (if at all) cure when parts are correctly aligned. Also—substance used to make eyes water profusely at critical points in construction.

Dead stick: Two of these can be found on your transmitter after failing to properly charge your batteries. Also—how the yucca your aunt gave you to clear the air in your shop looks after three months lack of water.

Downwind turn: Sensitive item that, when posted in rc.models.rc.air, will generate more than 100 entries.

Engine: Device designed to make noise. It will suddenly stop making this noise when beyond glide-in distance.

Epoxy: The stuff that has replaced the balsa after the flying season.

Failsafe: Option on PCM radios that allows a pilot to choose whether to crash nearby or far away.

Firewall: Removable part of fuselage that comes off on landing.

Flare: What someone has when they're good enough to show off. Also—beginner's luck.

Flying wing: To be seen after too tight a loop.

Fuel tank: Plastic bottle, designed to leak when placed in totally inaccessible locations.

Fuselage: Optional interconnecting structure between wings and engine. Also: Receptacle into which the radio control (RC) pilot stuffs money in the hope his airplane will fly better.

Glitch: What you holler when you pull up elevator while flying inverted at a 10-foot altitude.

Gravity: Force of nature designed to reduce aircraft to their component parts.

Landing gear: Structure to separate fuselage from runway after landing.

Mean air chord: That nasty minor eighth note caused when your wings snap on launch and whack together.

Mixture screw: Device to meter too little fuel to the engine at critical moments.

Nose wheel: Implement used to remove firewall.

Propeller: Rotating knife that cuts holes in the air, which the aircraft falls into, thus propelling the aircraft. Also—handy tool to cut away excess skin on knuckles.

Prop nut: What Glider pilots call Power pilots.

Radio: Expensive electronic device to randomly alleviate overcharged batteries.

Radio glitch: Documented electronic occurrence, causing immediate and irreparable loss of control. Also—the source of any crash when there is a possibility of someone else's radio in close proximity to the airplane.

Sink: Non-mythical meteorological event stimulated by RC soaring contests.

Snap roll: After a nice hard G roll, something snaps (usually the wing). Aerodynamic ability will slightly diminish.

Stall: Score: Gravity - 1 , Mr. Bernoulli - 0.

Swept area: The only part of your apartment not covered in balsa dust.

Tail-dragger: RC pilot who has spent an hour looking for his airplane in a forest.

Thermal: Mythical occurrence of rising air usually where one's sailplane is not.

Tip stall: Offering several minutes worth of un-requested advice to a nearby pilot instead of taking your turn to launch off the winch; used when sink is in the air and contest points are at stake.

Trainer cord: Handy device for electronically instilling false confidence in rookie pilots.

Tree: Implement used to separate wings from fuselage.

Upwind turn: Same as downwind turn ... No, it isn't! Yes, it is! No, it isn't! Yes, it is! and so on.

Wing: Device that, due to its airfoil, allows air to flow faster over the top, thereby giving you the opportunity to pour excess funding into the resulting low-pressure area.