

Tether Balloon Operation and Safety

General Guidelines

The perfect introduction to a hot air balloon flight! Safety must be the first consideration in all situations involving hot-air balloons. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) rules and regulations are specific regarding the safe performance of any aircraft, and the judgment of a qualified pilot is vital to ensure the safe operation of a hot-air balloon. Tethered balloon events must comply with all FAA regulations. The pilot-in-command is directly responsible for the safety of everyone involved, including the crew, passengers, and bystanders. Therefore, the pilot-in-command shall have full decision-making authority regarding any and all activities during a ballooning event. Balloon will rise up to 60-70 feet for up to 5 minutes carrying 3-5 passengers at a time.

Time of Day/Weather Considerations

The tether event must occur between the hours of sunrise and sunset. Winds of six miles per hour (five knots) or more could cause serious problems for tethered balloon operations and must be avoided. There should be no rain within 50 miles and no thunderstorms within 75 miles of the location. It is best to disappoint people rather than put them at risk of injury. Visibility and ceiling limitations of the FAA regulations will be adhered to at all times.

Passenger Safety Requirements

Pilot has final say as to who can and cannot fly:

- passenger must be able to step up and over basket side to get into basket
- passenger must be able to stand during the ride
- passenger must be able to handle the possibility of a hard-bouncy landing
- no pregnancies
- no recent back, hip leg operations
- children must be able to stand at least 45" tall
- no one weighing over 280 lbs – pilot discretion if greater weight
- no visibly intoxicated person

