

For Widest Dissemination:

The following monthly safety tip is from Vermont Aviation and Flying Magazine. Autumn days are generally clear and crisp, but we should always keep our situational awareness sharp. It was not that long ago a tragic mid air took place in Western NY.

Aviation Tip of the Month: Midair Collision Considerations

Thankfully midair collisions are rare, but when they do occur they're usually fatal. As you probably know already, see-and-avoid techniques remain the foundation of avoiding midair collisions when flying VFR, but there are other precautions you as pilot in command can take to reduce your risk of tangling with other traffic inflight.

A rash of recent midairs, including the collision of a Cessna 150 and F-16 fighter in South Carolina and a collision between a Cessna 172 and Sabreliner jet near San Diego, prompted the AOPA Air Safety Institute to issue an Alert that repeats things we should already know, but which still serves as a good review of the basics.

The following is a brief outline of things to be aware of and to watch out for:

- · Pilots flying VFR must be extra vigilant and constantly scan the airspace for traffic.
- · Always fly on a designated VFR cruise altitude: Easterly-odd thousands plus 500 feet; Westerly-even thousands plus 500 feet.
- · Request ATC's VFR flight following service to the maximum extent possible.
- · If your aircraft is equipped, ensure the transponder is always on to increase

image: <http://images.intellitxt.com/ast/adTypes/icon1.png>

your aircraft's electronic visibility.

- · Consider equipping with ADS-B (both Out and In) so you can benefit from the increased situational awareness available with the Traffic Information Service-Broadcast (TIS-B).
- · Consider installing an active traffic system or carry a portable traffic awareness product.

The Air Safety Institute notes that more than half of all midair collisions happen within 5 nm of an airport - so extra vigilance is required in the terminal area. The following are suggestions for increasing safety in this higher-risk area:

- · At towered airports monitor the tower frequency and communicate early with the tower to gain situational awareness.

- · At nontowered airports, broadcast your position and intentions no closer than 10 nm from the airport. Follow standard traffic pattern entry procedures, and broadcast your position and intentions on the common traffic advisory frequency in accordance with Section 4-1-9 of the Aeronautical Information Manual.
- · Ensure aircraft landing lights, position lights, and anti-collision lights are on in the terminal area for maximum visibility.
 - · If carrying passengers, involve them in your traffic awareness process.

Credit : Stephen Pope Flying Magazine

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