

of an engine failure. Additional altitude increases the time available to recognize and respond to any aircraft abnormality or emergency during the climb segment.

Excessive climb attitudes can be just as dangerous as excessive airspeed. Steep climb attitudes limit forward visibility and impede the pilot's ability to detect and avoid other traffic. The airplane should be allowed to accelerate in a shallow climb to attain V_Y , the best all-engine rate-of-climb speed. V_Y should then be maintained until a safe single-engine maneuvering altitude, considering terrain and obstructions is achieved. Any speed above or below V_Y reduces the performance of the airplane. Even with all engines operating normally, terrain and obstruction clearance during the initial climb after takeoff is an important preflight consideration. Most airliners and most turbine powered airplanes climb out at an attitude that yields best rate of climb (V_Y) usually utilizing a flight management system (FMS).

When to raise the landing gear after takeoff depends on several factors. Normally, the gear should be retracted when there is insufficient runway available for landing and after a positive rate of climb is established as indicated on the altimeter. If an excessive amount of runway is available, it would not be prudent to leave the landing gear down for an extended period of time and sacrifice climb performance and acceleration. Leaving the gear extended after the point at which a landing cannot be accomplished on the runway is a hazard. In some multiengine airplanes, operating in a high-density altitude environment, a positive rate of climb with the landing gear down is not possible. Waiting for a positive rate of climb under these conditions is not practicable. An important point to remember is that raising the landing gear as early as possible after liftoff drastically decreases the drag profile and significantly increases climb performance should an engine failure occur. An equally important point to remember is that leaving the gear down to land on sufficient runway or overrun is a much better option than landing with the gear retracted. A general recommendation is to raise the landing gear not later than V_{YSE} airspeed, and once the gear is up, consider it a GO commitment if climb performance is available. Some AFM/POHs direct the pilot to apply the wheel brakes momentarily after lift-off to stop wheel rotation prior to landing gear retraction. If flaps were extended for takeoff, they should be retracted as recommended in the AFM/POH.

Once a safe, single-engine maneuvering altitude has been reached, typically a minimum of 400–500 feet AGL, the transition to an en route climb speed should be made. This speed is higher than V_Y and is usually maintained to cruising altitude. En route climb speed gives better visibility, increased engine cooling, and a higher groundspeed. Takeoff

power can be reduced, if desired, as the transition to en route climb speed is made.

Some airplanes have a climb power setting published in the AFM/POH as a recommendation (or sometimes as a limitation), which should then be set for en route climb. If there is no climb power setting published, it is customary, but not a requirement, to reduce manifold pressure and rpm somewhat for en route climb. The propellers are usually synchronized after the first power reduction and the yaw damper, if installed, engaged. The AFM/POH may also recommend leaning the mixtures during climb. The Climb checklist should be accomplished as traffic and work load allow. *[Figure 12-7]*

Level Off and Cruise

Upon leveling off at cruising altitude, the pilot should allow the airplane to accelerate at climb power until cruising airspeed is achieved, and then cruise power and rpm should be set. To extract the maximum cruise performance from any airplane, the power setting tables provided by the manufacturer should be closely followed. If the cylinder head and oil temperatures are within their normal ranges, the cowl flaps may be closed. When the engine temperatures have stabilized, the mixtures may be leaned per AFM/POH recommendations. The remainder of the Cruise checklist should be completed by this point.

Fuel management in multiengine airplanes is often more complex than in single-engine airplanes. Depending upon system design, the pilot may need to select between main tanks and auxiliary tanks or even employ fuel transfer from one tank to another. In complex fuel systems, limitations are often found restricting the use of some tanks to level flight only or requiring a reserve of fuel in the main tanks for descent and landing. Electric fuel pump operation can vary widely among different models also, particularly during tank switching or fuel transfer. Some fuel pumps are to be on for takeoff and landing; others are to be off. There is simply no substitute for thorough systems and AFM/POH knowledge when operating complex aircraft.

Normal Approach and Landing

Given the higher cruising speed (and frequently altitude) of multiengine airplanes over most single-engine airplanes, the descent must be planned in advance. A hurried, last minute descent with power at or near idle is inefficient and can cause excessive engine cooling. It may also lead to passenger discomfort, particularly if the airplane is unpressurized. As a rule of thumb, if terrain and passenger conditions permit, a maximum of a 500 fpm rate of descent should be planned. Pressurized airplanes can plan for higher descent rates, if desired.