

Runway Illusions

RUNWAY SLOPE ILLUSION

As depicted in the top diagram at right, a downsloping runway can create the illusion that the aircraft is lower than it actually is, leading to a higher approach. Meanwhile, an upsloping runway can create the illusion that the aircraft is higher than it actually is, leading to a lower approach.

RUNWAY WIDTH ILLUSION

The bottom diagram demonstrates the runway width illusion. A narrower-than-usual runway can create an illusion that the aircraft is higher than it actually is, leading to a lower approach. A wider-than-usual runway can create an illusion that the aircraft is lower than it actually is, leading to a higher approach.

A wider-than-usual runway can create an illusion that the aircraft is lower than it actually is, leading to a higher approach.

