

The Regs

Part 43 of the FARs covers aircraft maintenance. In FAR 43.3, you'll find a list of persons authorized to perform various actions, including preventive maintenance: "(g) Except for holders of a sport pilot certificate, the holder of a pilot certificate issued under Part 61 may perform preventive maintenance on any aircraft owned or operated by that pilot which is not used under part 121, 129, or 135.... [A] sport pilot...may perform preventive maintenance on an aircraft owned or operated by that pilot and issued a special airworthiness certificate in the light-sport category."

Appendix A of FAR 43 includes a list of what the FAA considers "preventive maintenance" as long as "it does not involve complex assembly operations."

Below, we've summarized and categorized that list and leave it to the individual to decide what constitutes "complex assembly."



LANDING GEAR

- Remove, install and repair tires.
- Replace elastic shock absorber cords.
- Service landing gear shock struts and wheel bearings.
- Replace wheels and skis not requiring a weight and balance computation.

GENERAL

- Replace defective safety wire or cotter keys.
- Lubrication not requiring disassembly other than removing inspection covers, cowlings and fairings.
- Simple fabric patches.
- Replenish hydraulic fluid.
- Replace and service batteries.



COSMETICS

- Refinish a fuselage, balloon basket, wings, tail surfaces (excluding balanced control surfaces), fairings, cowlings, landing gear or interior.
- Apply preservative or protective material to components.
- Simple repairs to fairings, inspection covers, cowlings.
- Simple replacement of side windows.
- Replace/adjust standard, non-structural fasteners.
- Replace safety belts, seats or seat parts with approved replacements.



ELECTRICAL

- Troubleshoot and repair broken landing light circuits.
- Replace bulbs, reflectors and lenses of position and landing lights.

POWERPLANT

- Simple replacement of any cowling.
- Replace, clean and set gap of spark plugs.
- Replace any hose except hydraulic hoses.
- Replace prefabricated fuel lines.
- Clean or replace fuel and oil strainers or filter elements.
- Remove, check and replace magnetic chip detectors.

