

Q: Can the Little Toot be licensed and flown as an LSA (Light Sport Aircraft)?

A: Yes and no. Here is how it works.....

There are two categories of LSA aircraft:

- SLISA (Special LSA) is a real production aircraft which rolls out of a factory in fly-away condition and has been licensed in that category. You would write a large check, they hand you the keys, and you fly away. The manufacturer does not need to actually manufacture finished airplanes if they sell kits, but there must be one master airplane licensed as an SLISA from which the kits are copied from exactly.

- ELISA (Experimental LSA) is a kit which is an exact copy of the manufacturer's licensed SLISA master airplane. The kit must conform 100% with the production aircraft. There is no allowance at all for deviation. Airplanes would have to be 100% complete kits with all parts included and explicit directions on how to assemble it. You cannot change anything about the design.

Little Toot cannot be licensed as LSA:

- Meyer Aircraft does not have a certificated SLISA master airplane.
- Meyer Aircraft does not make kits. We sell plans and certain parts. The rest is scratch built from raw materials.
- For the above reasons, Little Toot cannot be licensed in the Light Sport Category.

Little Toot may be flown by a Sport Pilot:

According to EAA's website: www.sportpilot.org a pilot who holds a Sport Pilot License may be able to fly the Little Toot:

Experimental amateur-built aircraft that meet the definition of an LSA may be flown by sport pilots. The aircraft is certificated as experimental amateur-built and must be operated in accordance with the operating limitations issued to the aircraft at the time it receives its airworthiness certification.

Little Toot may be flown as LSA by a Private Pilot:

If a pilot believes that they may not be able to pass a flight physical, they can choose to operate under the sport pilot rules and self certify their medical fitness and fly with a valid driver's license in lieu of an FAA medical certificate. According to EAA's website: www.sportpilot.org a private pilot who wishes to operate as a sport pilot may be able to fly the Little Toot if it conforms to LSA specifications:

An individual holding a recreational pilot certificate or higher (e.g. private) may exercise the privileges of a sport pilot certificate, provided the holder complies with the privileges and limitations of a sport pilot certificate. The main benefit for existing pilots is that sport pilot requires only a valid state driver's license to establish medical fitness. No more need for a third-class medical! Unfortunately, the rule includes one major exception: Existing pilots, including previous student pilots who have had their most recent FAA medical certificate application denied, suspended, or revoked by the FAA are not allowed to operate using their driver's license.

Here are the LSA specifications:

The FAA defines a light-sport aircraft as an aircraft, other than a helicopter or powered-lift that, since its original certification, has continued to meet the following:

- Maximum gross takeoff weight—1,320 lbs, or 1,430 lbs for seaplanes.
- Maximum stall speed—51 mph (45 knots) CAS
- Maximum speed in level flight with maximum continuous power (Vh)—138 mph (120 knots) CAS
- Single or two-seat aircraft only
- Single, reciprocating engine (if powered), including rotary or diesel engines
- Fixed or ground-adjustable propeller
- Unpressurized cabin
- Fixed landing gear, except for an aircraft intended for operation on water or a glider
- Can be manufactured and sold ready-to-fly under a new Special Light-Sport aircraft certification category. Aircraft must meet industry consensus standards. Aircraft under this certification may be used for sport and recreation, flight training, and aircraft rental.
- Can be licensed Experimental Light-Sport Aircraft (E-LSA) if kit- or plans-built. Aircraft under this certification may be used only for sport and recreation and flight instruction for the owner of the aircraft.
- Can be licensed Experimental Light-Sport Aircraft (E-LSA) if the aircraft has previously been operated as an ultralight but does not meet the FAR Part 103 definition of an ultralight vehicle. These aircraft must be transitioned to E-LSA category no later than January 31, 2008.
- Will have FAA registration—N-number.
- Aircraft category and class includes: Airplane (Land/Sea), Gyroplane, Airship, Balloon, Weight-Shift-Control ("Trike" Land/Sea), Glider, and Powered Parachute.

- U.S. or foreign manufacture of light-sport aircraft is authorized.
- Aircraft with a standard airworthiness certificate that meet above specifications may be flown by sport pilots. However, the aircraft must remain in standard category and cannot be changed to light-sport aircraft category.
- Holders of a sport pilot certificate may fly an aircraft with a standard airworthiness certificate if it meets the definition of a light-sport aircraft.
- May be operated at night if the aircraft is equipped per FAR 91.205, if such operations are allowed by the aircraft's operating limitations and the pilot holds at least a Private Pilot certificate and a minimum of a third-class medical.

The bottom line:

If you built your Little Toot as light as possible, leave out the full IFR panel and power it with a moderately sized powerplant, then it should fall within the 1,320 pound weight limit. If it can be shown to comply with the conditions listed above, your Little Toot will be eligible to be flown by the holder of the Sport Pilot certificate or a self certified private pilot, even though the plane must be licensed in the Experimental-Amateur Built category. On a side note, there aren't many planes that are this much fun to fly that can be flown by a Sport Pilot!