

Which Instrument?

At first glance the instruments featured in our shop seem to have a bewildering array of features. When you look more closely this impression is reinforced even more!!

The electronics industry has made such strides in recent years that stuff that was pure science fiction a few years ago is now commonplace. (Just look at mobile "phones). Luckily for us, the increase in sophistication has been hand-in-hand with a decrease in price. This has been the same in our field. Varios A vario tells you if you are going up or down using changes in pressure. It does this with an audible sound and most have a visual display. We are always asked by new students if a vario is essential. Our usual advice is to wait for a while and get a few hours under your belt trying to develop your senses before introducing a vario. Most however cannot resist the temptation of knowing how high they are and having something else to tinker with! All of the entry level alti-varios, such as the Flytec 6005, have more features than most new pilots need. They have multiple altimeters, varios, averagers, flight recorders, stopwatches etc, etc. These are by far the most popular choice for the pilot looking for their first instrument. We do sell audio only varios such as the Sonic, or Solario, and these are popular with minimalists or as a backup instrument.

The new breed of high-end varios, such as the Flytec 5020 have integrated Variometer, Altimeter and Global positioning systems. It can supply a huge range of data ranging from your true groundspeed to the likely location of the next thermal, and can store track log data on your flight to be downloaded 3D flight tracks to your PC. This kind of technology makes cross-country flying much more accessible, and these instruments are simple to use.

To fly XC you will need an integrated altimeter. Compass

The compass is valuable for not only checking your track and (with a map) navigating both on the ground and in the air, but is invaluable should you fly into cloud to ensure you fly in a straight line back out of it. The Sup'Air Mini Compass is perfectly adequate for this task. Windspeed Indicators

A wind-speed indicator is a very useful to confirm (or not!) your opinion on the wind strength and most importantly to monitor the gust factor and so the likely turbulence of the airflow before you launch. With experience you will learn to gauge this without the WSI, but having one is a useful confirmation.