

“SEE AND AVOID” GUIDANCE

A. General:

1. The primary means to avoid collisions between all aircraft flying within our National Airspace System (NAS) is “See and Avoid.”
2. Vigilance must be maintained by each person operating an aircraft (whether model or manned) so as to “see and avoid” other aircraft.
3. Model aircraft must avoid manned aircraft. Our privilege to fly model aircraft in the NAS depends on our commitment to remain “well clear” of manned aircraft.
4. Simply avoiding an actual collision is not enough. A “near miss” is not acceptable.
5. Unless flying at a mixed-use site where manned and model aircraft routinely share airspace through their own site-specific rules, model aircraft must fly sufficiently far away from manned aircraft so as not to create a collision hazard.
6. Model aircraft flying must not only be safe, it must be perceived to be safe by the greater manned aviation community. Modelers must continually demonstrate their respect for the safety of manned aircraft by remaining vigilant and well clear.
7. Whenever a potential conflict arises between model aircraft and manned aircraft, the pilot of the model aircraft must always give way to the manned aircraft.
8. The pilot of a model aircraft must never assume the pilot of a manned aircraft can see the model or will perform any maneuver to avoid the model’s flight path.
9. Visual Line of Sight is required by the AMA Safety Guidelines. It means that visual contact with the aircraft must be maintained without enhancement other than by corrective lenses prescribed for the model aircraft pilot. All RC flying must remain clear of clouds smoke or any other obstruction to the line of sight.
10. “Blue Sky” is a term used to explain the method used to increase separation between a model and a manned aircraft in the same vicinity. The modeler should maneuver the aircraft in such a way as to increase the amount of blue sky perceived between the model and the manned aircraft. By increasing the blue sky separation, the question about depth perception is taken out of the equation and the modeler need not worry whether the model is closer to him than the manned aircraft or further away. Increasing the blue sky between the model and the manned aircraft automatically increases separation between them.

Academy of Model Aeronautics

5161 East Memorial Drive Muncie, Indiana 47302
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11. A modeler should never place any consideration for the well-being of the model aircraft above the safety of manned aircraft. Maneuvering to avoid the conflict may require that the model aircraft be sacrificed.

12. Free flight models should not be launched with relatively low altitude manned aircraft in sight and downwind or headed downwind from the launch site.

B. Spotters:

1. Before a flight, the pilot must insure that the spotter understands his/her duties and expectations.

2. A spotter should be used to assist in monitoring the surrounding airspace for manned aircraft whenever a flight is expected to exceed 400 feet above the ground and that operation is expected to be in proximity to known manned aircraft traffic such as at a mixed-use facility or within three miles of an airport. The spotter must have sufficient visual acuity and be mature enough to take this responsibility very seriously.

3. A spotter should also be prepared to assist his/her pilot in the event that another model aircraft or spectators become endangered or in turn are perceived to be a danger to the pilot or the pilot's model aircraft.

4. If a model aircraft pilot experiences what he or she considers a near miss with a manned aircraft, that model aircraft pilot should notify AMA Headquarters with a written report of the incident, including action taken by the model aircraft pilot to avoid the manned aircraft. This report is intended to help the modeler, the club, and the AMA capture as much detail as possible so that it may be used to assist all parties in recalling the particulars of the incident at a later time. Call 1-800-435-9262 (1-800-IFLYAMA) extension 230 or 251 for assistance with this report.

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For a complete copy of AMA's Safety Handbook please visit:
www.modelaircraft.org/files/100.pdf