

**SECTION 6  
WEIGHT AND BALANCE**

**6.1 GENERAL**

In order to achieve the performance and flying characteristics which are designed into the airplane, it must be flown with the weight and center of gravity (C.G.) position within the approved operating range (envelope). Although the airplane offers flexibility of loading, it cannot be flown with the maximum number of adult passengers, full fuel tanks and maximum baggage. With the flexibility comes responsibility. The pilot must ensure that the airplane is loaded within the loading envelope before he makes a takeoff.

Misloading carries consequences for any aircraft. An overloaded airplane will not take off, climb or cruise as well as a properly loaded one. The heavier the airplane is loaded, the less climb performance it will have.

Center of gravity is a determining factor in flight characteristics. If the C.G. is too far forward in any airplane, it may be difficult to rotate for takeoff or landing. If the C.G. is too far aft, the airplane may rotate prematurely on takeoff or tend to pitch up during climb. Longitudinal stability will be reduced. This can lead to inadvertent stalls and even spins; and spin recovery becomes more difficult as the center of gravity moves aft of the approved limit.

A properly loaded airplane, however, will perform as intended. Before the airplane is licensed, a basic empty weight and C.G. location is computed (basic empty weight consists of the standard empty weight of the airplane plus the optional equipment). Using the basic empty weight and C.G. location, the pilot can easily determine the weight and C.G. position for the loaded airplane by computing the total weight and moment and then determining whether they are within the approved envelope.

The basic empty weight and C.G. location are recorded in the Weight and Balance Data Form (Figure 6-5) and the Weight and Balance Record (Figure 6-7). The current values should always be used. Whenever new equipment is added or any modification work is done, the mechanic responsible for the work is required to compute a new basic empty weight and C.G. position and to write these in the Aircraft Log Book and the Weight and Balance Record. The owner should make sure that it is done.

A weight and balance calculation is necessary in determining how much fuel or baggage can be boarded so as to keep within allowable limits. Check calculations prior to adding fuel to insure against improper loading.

The following pages are forms used in weighing an airplane in production and in computing basic empty weight, C.G. position, and useful load. Note that the useful load includes usable fuel, baggage, cargo and passengers. Following this is the method for computing takeoff weight and C.G.

### **6.3 AIRPLANE WEIGHING PROCEDURE**

At the time of licensing, Piper Aircraft Corporation provides each airplane with the basic empty weight and center of gravity location. This data is supplied by Figure 6-5.

The removal or addition of equipment or airplane modifications can affect the basic empty weight and center of gravity. The following is a weighing procedure to determine this basic empty weight and center of gravity location:

#### **(a) Preparation**

- (1) Be certain that all items checked in the airplane equipment list are installed in the proper location in the airplane.
- (2) Remove excessive dirt, grease, moisture, foreign items such as rags and tools from the airplane before weighing.
- (3) Defuel airplane. Then open all fuel drains until all remaining fuel is drained. Operate engine on each tank until all undrainable fuel is used and engine stops. Then add the unusable fuel (2.0 gallons total, 1.0 gallons each wing).

*CAUTION*

Whenever the fuel system is completely drained and fuel is replenished it will be necessary to run the engine for a minimum of 3 minutes at 1000 RPM on each tank to ensure no air exists in the fuel supply lines.

- (4) Fill with oil to full capacity.
- (5) Place pilot and copilot seats in fourth (4th) notch, aft of forward position. Put flaps in the fully retracted position and all control surfaces in the neutral position. Tow bar should be in the proper location and all entrance and baggage doors closed.
- (6) Weigh the airplane inside a closed building to prevent errors in scale readings due to wind.

**(b) Leveling**

- (1) With airplane on scales, block main gear oleo pistons in the fully extended position.
- (2) Level airplane (refer to Figure 6-3) deflating nose wheel tire, to center bubble on level.

**(c) Weighing - Airplane Basic Empty Weight**

- (1) With the airplane level and brakes released, record the weight shown on each scale. Deduct the tare, if any, from each reading.

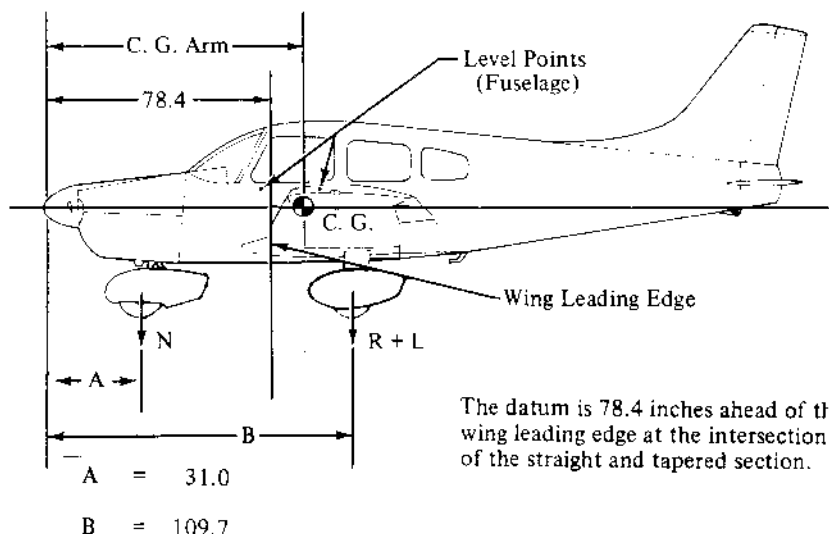
Scale Position and Symbol	Scale Reading	Tare	Net Weight
Nose Wheel (N)			
Right Main Wheel (R)			
Left Main Wheel (L)			
Basic Empty Weight, as Weighed (T)	—	—	

**WEIGHING FORM**

Figure 6-1

(d) Basic Empty Weight Center of Gravity

- (1) The following geometry applies to the PA-28-181 airplane when it is level. Refer to Leveling paragraph 6.3 (b).



**LEVELING DIAGRAM**

Figure 6-3

- (2) The basic empty weight center of gravity (as weighed including optional equipment, full oil and unusable fuel) can be determined by the following formula:

$$\text{C.G. Arm} = \frac{N (A) + (R + L) (B)}{T} \quad \text{inches}$$

$$\text{Where: } T = N + R + L$$

## 6.5 WEIGHT AND BALANCE DATA AND RECORD

The Basic Empty Weight, Center of Gravity Location and Useful Load listed in Figure 6-5 are for the airplane as licensed at the factory. These figures apply only to the specific airplane serial number and registration number shown.

The basic empty weight of the airplane as licensed at the factory has been entered in the Weight and Balance Record (Figure 6-7). This form is provided to present the current status of the airplane basic empty weight and a complete history of previous modifications. Any change to the permanently installed equipment or modification which affects weight or moment must be entered in the Weight and Balance Record.

### 6.7 WEIGHT AND BALANCE DETERMINATION FOR FLIGHT

- (a) Add the weight of all items to be loaded to the basic empty weight.
- (b) Use the Loading Graph (Figure 6-13) to determine the moment of all items to be carried in the airplane.
- (c) Add the moment of all items to be loaded to the basic empty weight moment.
- (d) Divide the total moment by the total weight to determine the C.G. location.
- (e) By using the figures of item (a) and item (d) (above), locate a point on the C.G. range and weight graph (Figure 6-15). If the point falls within the C.G. envelope, the loading meets the weight and balance requirements.

	Weight (Lbs)	Arm Aft Datum (Inches)	Moment (In-Lbs)
Basic Empty Weight	1590.0	87.5	139125
Pilot and Front Passenger	340.0	80.5	27370
Passengers (Rear Seats)*	340.0	118.1	40154
Fuel (48 Gallon Maximum)	288.0	95.0	27360
Baggage (200 Lbs. Maximum)*		142.8	
Ramp Weight (2558 Lbs. Normal, 2138 Lbs. Utility Maximum)	2558	91.5	234009
Fuel Allowance For Engine Start, Taxi and Run Up	-8	95.0	-760
Takeoff Weight (2550 Lbs. Normal, 2130 Lbs. Utility Maximum)	2550.0	91.5	233249

The center of gravity (C.G.) of this sample loading problem is at 91.5 inches aft of the datum line. Locate this point (91.5) on the C.G. range and weight graph. Since this point falls within the weight - C.G. envelope, this loading meets the weight and balance requirements.

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PILOT AND AIRCRAFT OWNER TO ENSURE THAT THE AIRPLANE IS LOADED PROPERLY.

\*Utility Category Operation - No baggage or rear passengers allowed.

#### SAMPLE LOADING PROBLEM (NORMAL CATEGORY)

Figure 6-9

**SECTION 6**  
**WEIGHT AND BALANCE**

**PIPER AIRCRAFT CORPORATION**  
**PA-28-181, ARCHER II**

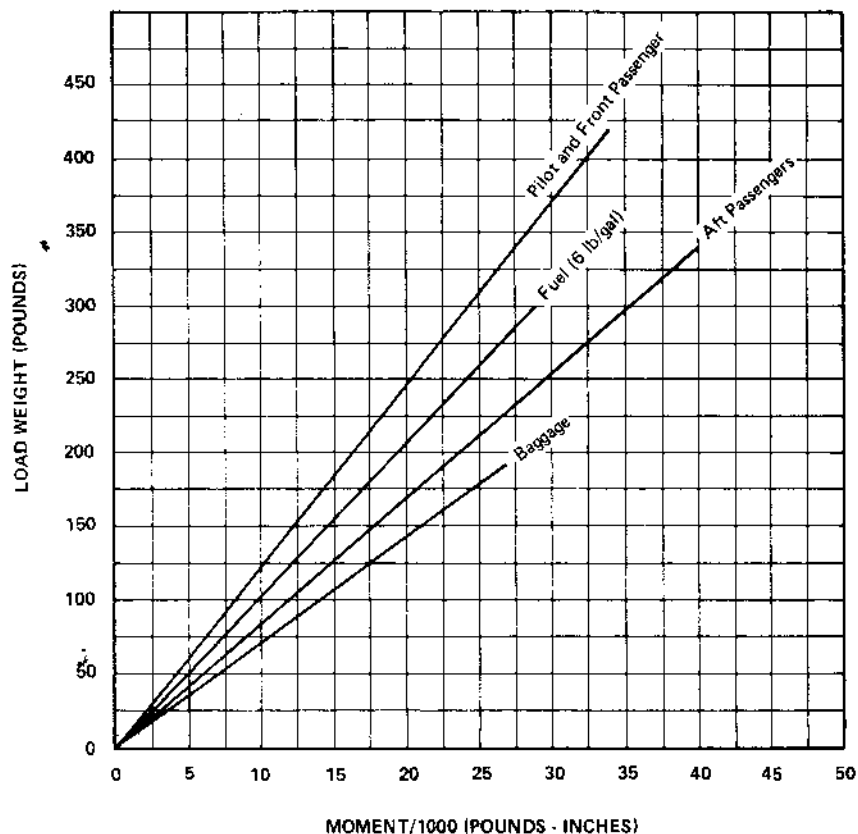
	Weight (Lbs)	Arm Aft Datum (Inches)	Moment (In-Lbs)
Basic Empty Weight			
Pilot and Front Passenger		80.5	
Passengers (Rear Seats)*		118.1	
Fuel (48 Gallon Maximum)		95.0	
Baggage (200 Lbs. Maximum)*		142.8	
Ramp Weight (2558 Lbs. Normal, 2138 Lbs. Utility Maximum)			
Fuel Allowance For Engine Start, Taxi and Run Up	-8	95.0	-760
Takeoff Weight (2550 Lbs. Normal, 2130 Lbs. Utility Maximum)			

Totals must be within approved weight and C.G. limits. It is the responsibility of the airplane owner and the pilot to insure that the airplane is loaded properly. The Basic Empty Weight C.G. is noted on the Weight and Balance Data Form (Figure 6-5). If the airplane has been altered, refer to the Weight and Balance Record for this information.

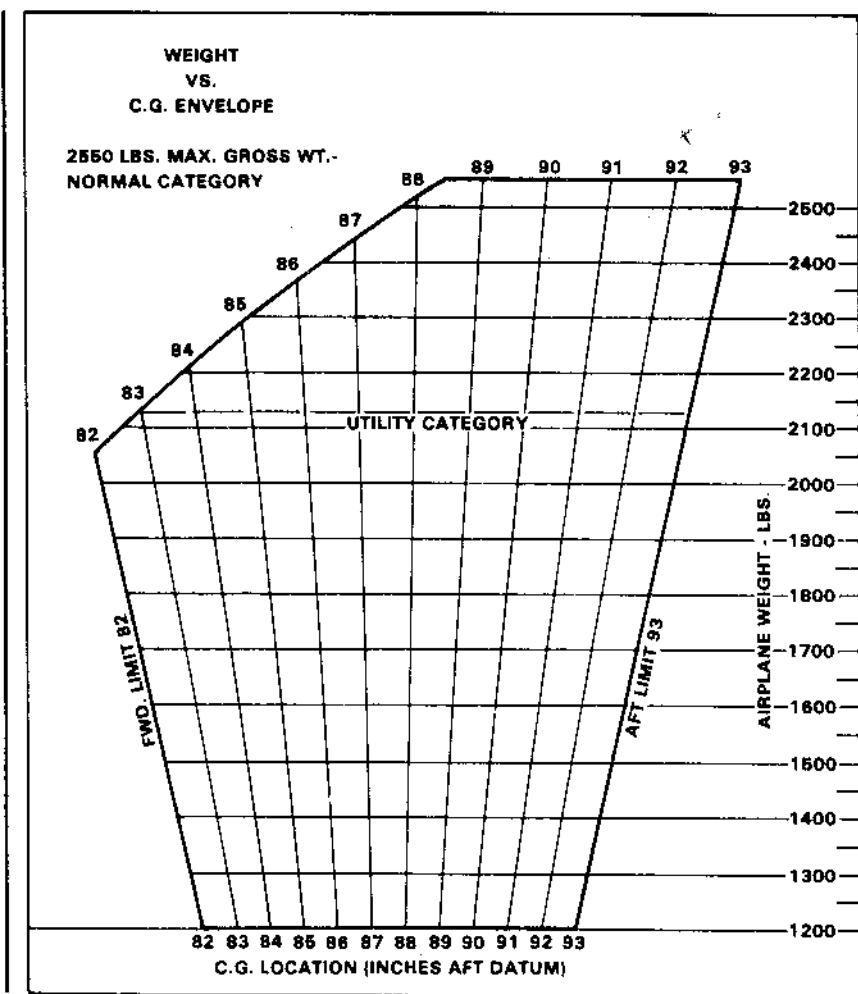
\*Utility Category Operation - No baggage or rear passengers allowed.

**WEIGHT AND BALANCE LOADING FORM**

Figure 6-11



**LOADING GRAPH**  
Figure 6-13



**C.G. RANGE AND WEIGHT**

Figure 6-15

### **6.9 INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THE WEIGHT AND BALANCE PLOTTER**

This plotter is provided to enable the pilot quickly and conveniently to:

- (a) Determine the total weight and C.G. position.
- (b) Decide how to change his load if his first loading is not within the allowable envelope.

Heat can warp or ruin the plotter if it is left in the sunlight. Replacement plotters may be purchased from Piper dealers and distributors.

The "Basic Empty Weight and Center of Gravity" location is taken from the Weight and Balance Form (Figure 6-5), the Weight and Balance Record (Figure 6-7) or the latest FAA major repair or alteration form.

The plotter enables the user to add weights and corresponding moments graphically. The effect of adding or disposing of useful load can easily be seen. The plotter does not cover the situation where cargo is loaded in locations other than on the seats or in the baggage compartments.

Brief instructions are given on the plotter itself. To use it, first plot a point on the grid to locate the basic weight and C.G. location. This can be put on more or less permanently because it will not change until airplane is modified. Next, position the zero weight end of any one of the loading slots over this point. Using a pencil, draw a line along the slot to the weight which will be carried in that location. Then position the zero weight end of the next slot over the end of this line and draw another line representing the weight which will be located in this second position. When all the loads have been drawn in this manner, the final end of the segmented line locates the total load and the C.G. position of the airplane for takeoff. If this point is not within the allowable envelope it will be necessary to remove fuel, baggage, or passengers and / or to rearrange baggage and passengers to get the final point to fall within the envelope

Fuel burn-off does not significantly affect the center of gravity.

SAMPLE PROBLEM

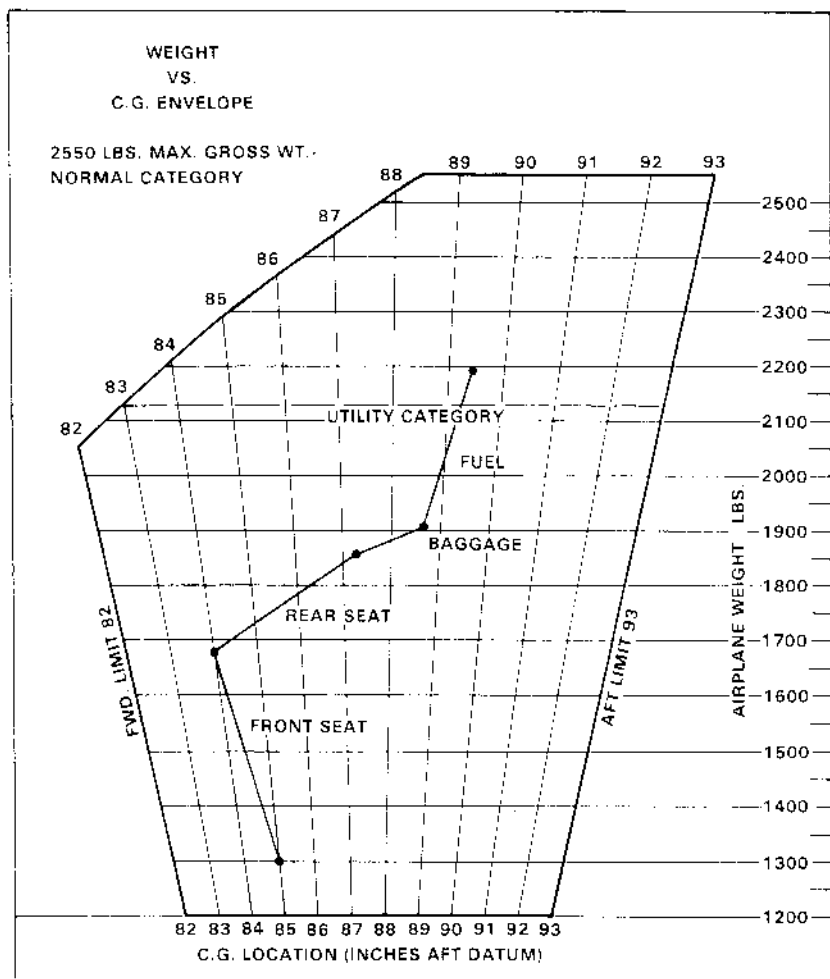
A sample problem will demonstrate the use of the weight and balance plotter.

Assume a basic weight and C.G. location of 1300 pounds at 85.00 inches respectively. We wish to carry a pilot and 3 passengers. Two men weighing 180 and 200 pounds will occupy the front seats, and two children weighing 80 and 100 pounds will ride in the rear. Two suitcases weighing 25 pounds and 20 pounds respectively, will be carried in the rear compartment. We wish to carry 48 gallons of fuel. Will we be within the safe envelope?

- (a) Place a dot on the plotter grid at 1300 pounds and 85.00 inches to represent the basic airplane. (See illustration Figure 6-17.)
- (b) Slide the slotted plastic into position so that the dot is under the slot for the forward seats, at zero weight.
- (c) Draw a line up the slot to the 380 pound position ( $180 + 200$ ) and put a dot.
- (d) Continue moving the plastic and plotting points to account for weight in the rear seats ( $80 + 100$ ), baggage compartment (45), and fuel tanks (288).
- (e) As can be seen from the illustration, the final dot shows the total weight to be 2193 pounds with the C.G. at 89.44. This is well within the envelope.

As fuel is burned off, the weight and C.G. will follow down the fuel line and stay within the envelope for landing.

SAMPLE PROBLEM



SAMPLE PROBLEM

Figure 6-17