

Top 6 Trainers for New Members

Written by Charlie Connor

We are seeing a few new younger members show some interest in the RC hobby at our club, so I thought I would compile some information regarding advice on choice of first model. This is of-course purely my personal opinion, but has come about in response to feedback I have had from other members who already own some of these models and from reviews I have read and videos I have watched online. I have chosen to avoid mentioning models without landing gear on purpose (such as the Hobbyking Bixler and the many glider models which would definitely rate high as trainer models) as I believe it is important students learn the art of landing with gear. I have also only included EPO foam models, although there are some great balsa trainers available (such as the old trusty Boomerang).

I started with the top 5 models, but then came across another one I thought was worth mentioning. So now it's the top 6!

So.....here goes.

E-flite® Maule M-7, 1.5m

This is proving to be the number one choice in our club (3 members already own one of these) as this model is very stable for learning basic flight but can very easily perform basic aerobatics. Comes standard with a AS3X® flight control system to allow progression onto more advanced manoeuvring. A tribute to a full-scale STOL-capable design with rugged tundra-style landing gear, flaps and an optional-use float set. 3S or 4S suitable and battery access is from the top hatch.

At around \$470 (BNF) this model is one of the more expensive of the trainers.



The E-flite Maule, beautifully modelled here by Jon and Albert!

Hobbyzone AeroScout S, 1.1m (NOTE: Not the Mini AeroScout)

The new HobbyZone AeroScout S makes learning how to fly a radio-controlled plane easier than ever before. In fact, this model is only really recommended to students that don't aspire to more agile models and are happy to stay with stable well-behaved aircraft. Perhaps recommended for nervous students lacking confidence to help get them in the air safely. Personally, however, having flown one myself this is probably not the best choice for learning as this thing almost flies itself.

With SAFE technology, this high wing model is exceptionally stable and easy to fly. For \$450 (RTF), this comes with a Spektrum DXS transmitter, a 2200mAh LiPo and a charger. There is even a panic button for recovery from difficult situations.



FMS Super EZ Trainer, 1.22m

HMAC members will be familiar with this one. Not sure how many hours our club FMS Super EZ has been flown but it has certainly stood the test of time and many a student's failed landings.

Regarded as a perfect beginner-friendly sport aircraft by the manufacturer. Has a large, high-wing design with ultra-low wing loading and stable flight characteristics. It gives beginner pilots great handling even at slow speeds.

At \$413 (RTF), this comes with a FlySky transmitter and a 1300mAh LiPo.



Volantex Trainstar Ascent 747-8, 1.4m

I am a bit biased when it comes to this model as it is what I have learned to fly on. I'm not saying that it's the best trainer and everyone should learn on this. In fact I don't necessarily recommend it to learn with, but it is definitely one of the cheapest options and with a basic flight stabilisation/gyro system installed in it (such as a HobbyEagle A3 V2) this model handles windy conditions with ease, meaning more stick time for learners.

A high-wing setup, blow-moulded rugged fuselage and large wheels for grass take-offs and landings. The flimsy landing gear needs replacing with a sturdier one. Can easily take a 3200mAh 3S LiPo or bigger.

About \$350 for the PNF version or \$290 for the kit version.



TOP RC Riot Pro, 1.4m

This model is getting great reviews, but I have no first-hand experience of it. Was mentioned to me by Peter Ralph as one to look at.

The manufacturer states the following about it. "The incredible new TopRC Riot is the perfect all-rounder. With reduced control throws it's smooth, stable and remarkably easy to fly for the novice or beginner. Increase those throws and the Riot more than lives up to its name thrilling the most ambitious aerobatic pilot. It's ideal for operating from "less than perfect" flying strips, resisting hangar rash and those inevitable bumps."

\$400 (RTF), including a 3S 2200mAh LiPo



Freewing Pandora 4 in 1, 1.42m

This one certainly looks interesting and again I have no first-hand experience with it, but rates very highly in online reviews.

This is a 4-in-1 model allowing the student to start with high-wing with tricycle gear and allowing the student to progress onto a sportier tail dragger low-wing model.

\$429 for the PNF version.

