

# Flying to the US from Canada

Revised: Saturday, November 26, 2005

## Before you go:

1. Purchase a \$25.00 US Customs decal and put it by the door on the aircraft for the current year. Go to the web site below to order it. If you don't have one when you get to the US, they'll sell you one. But not having it in advance will slow down the whole clearance procedure.  
[http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/pleasure\\_boats/user\\_fee\\_decal.xml](http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/pleasure_boats/user_fee_decal.xml)
2. Get US Sectional maps for area of travel. Canadian VNC's are ok too. All US maps have to be up-to-date, it's the law over there.
3. Get an Airport/Facility Directory for area of travel. Seven volumes cover the US, revised every 56 days. Owning one of these for the area you're flying into is not required by law, but boy are they highly recommended.
4. Download the *private\_flyers.doc* document using the CBP link above. In that document is a listing of the US Airports of Entry (AOE's) as well as the phone number of each Customs office.
5. Your aircraft has to be transponder equipped to be allowed across the border.

## The Day you go South:

1. Make sure you're going into an Airport of Entry. Near Kingston use Watertown as an AOE; near Chatham, use Sandusky, Ohio. See the list you downloaded earlier.
2. Call the American CBP office by phone at least two hours before your arrival. Your ETA has to be within + or - 15 minutes.
3. File a flight plan in Canada before you go - mark ADCUS in the remarks section.
4. Before you go, check TFR's along your route. I found a web site that'll do that; it's at: <http://www.tfrcheck.com>. Another solution is to call US Flight Service at 1-800-992-7433 for their latest TFR listing. You stumble into a TFR unannounced and the Americans will intercept you.
5. When in the air still over Canada, contact the nearest US ATC to let them know what you're doing before entering US airspace. Near Kingston it would be Wheeler Sack Approach at 128.25. Failure to call in advance gets you intercepted.
6. When in the States, if your going to fly through any Military Operational Areas (MOA's), call US FSS to find out if it's active or not. VFR traffic is normally allowed, while IFR normally is not.
7. Fill out form CF178 either at the US airport or ahead of time. The form is located online here: <https://forms.customs.gov/customsrf/getformharness.asp?formName=cf-178-form.xft>

## Coming back into Canada

1. Call 1-888-226-7277 to get an appointment - minimum 2 hours notice, maximum 48 hours notice.

## Flying to the US from Canada

2. Make sure you're landing in a Canadian AOE. These would include Brockville (8:00 am – 4:30 pm); Kingston (9:00 am - 4:00 pm); Windsor (8:00 am – midnight);
3. File a flight plan in the US back to Canada but don't bother with the ADCUS – it's not used by Canadian officials.
4. For current Canadian Customs information, see <http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/menu-e.html>. **Note:** This Canadian webs site changes so often, navigate from that low level menu. Look for stuff like: **Border Wait times.**

### Don't Do's while there

- You can't fly a US registered aircraft using the authority of a Canadian Pilot's license. It's not allowed.
- When flying into uncontrolled airports, don't fly over the field to join a mid-left downwind. While that may be standard procedure in Canada, it's not cool in America. Join the circuit from a 45Deg angle or straight-on from a downwind, base or final position.
- If you're flying a Club plane, you'll also need an authorization letter from the Club. A simple authorization could state: "This authorizes (name) to fly aircraft (registration mark), Model \_\_\_\_\_, in Canada (or United States) between the dates of \_\_\_\_and \_\_\_\_." It should be signed, dated and notarized.
- Americans are getting really strict about letting people cross the border via small airplanes that are not Canadian citizens or who were born in the mid east. They have two screening programs (US-VISIT, NSEERS) specifically set up that target these groups. If there's any ethnicity question at all, call the American CBP people in advance – **before you leave Canada.**