

Flying under the Special Rule for Model Aircraft

The Special Rule for Model Aircraft ([P.L. 112-95, Section 336](#)) provides the definition and operating rules for flying a model aircraft. Nothing in this Rule shall be construed to limit the authority of the Administrator to pursue enforcement action against persons operating model aircraft who endanger the safety of the national airspace system.

Note: Model aircraft operators that comply with **all** of these operational requirements during flight do not have to register their UAS with the FAA. A model aircraft is defined as an unmanned aircraft that is:

- capable of sustained flight in the atmosphere
- flown within visual line of sight of the person operating the aircraft
- flown for hobby or recreational purposes.

Model aircraft operators must follow these rules to fly under this Rule:

- the aircraft is flown strictly for hobby or recreational use
- the aircraft is operated in accordance with a community-based set of safety guidelines and within the programming of a nationwide community-based organization
- the aircraft is limited to not more than 55 pounds unless otherwise certified through a design, construction, inspection, flight test, and operational safety program administered by a community-based organization
- the aircraft is operated in a manner that does not interfere with and gives way to any manned aircraft
- **when flown within 5 miles of an airport, the operator of the aircraft provides the airport operator and the airport air traffic control tower (when an air traffic facility is located at the airport) with prior notice of the operation** (model aircraft operators flying from a permanent location within 5 miles of an airport should establish a mutually-agreed upon operating procedure with the airport operator and the airport air traffic control tower [when an air traffic facility is located at the airport])

FAA Safety Guidelines

- Fly at or below 400 feet
- Be aware of airspace requirements and restrictions
- Stay away from surrounding obstacles
- Keep your UAS within sight
- Never fly near other aircraft, especially near airports
- Never fly over groups of people
- Never fly over stadiums or sports events
- Never fly near emergency response efforts such as fires
- Never fly under the influence of drugs or alcohol