

Models and Differences

The Cessna 172 had a number of type variants during its production history. Additionally there are a number of modifications provided for the airframe, instruments/avionics equipment and electrics.

Speeds often vary between models by one or two knots, sometimes more for significant type variants. For simplification the speeds have been provided for the C172 Skyhawk, which was produced in the largest numbers. All speeds have been converted to knots and rounded up to the nearest 5kts. Generally multiple provision of figures can lead to confusion for memory items and this application is safer for practical use during conversion training.

Whenever maximum performance is required, as speeds also vary with weight, and density altitude the Aircraft Operating Handbook must be consulted for the correct figure.

During practical training reference should be made to the flight manual of the aeroplane you will be flying to ensure that the limitations applicable for that aeroplane are adhered to. Likewise when flying different models it should always be remembered that MAUW, flap limitations, engine limitations and speeds may vary from model to model.

Before flying different models, the Aircraft Operating Handbook should be consulted to verify differences.

Main Differences in year of manufacturing

The following modification of Cessna 172 were made during years of production of the aircraft:

- The 1957 model has a 145hp Continental engine;
- Model's after 1960 have a swept tail;
- In 1963 a rear window appeared as well as a single piece windshield and longer elevator;
- 1964 model were equipped with electric flaps instead of the "Johnson Bar";
- 1968 models switched to Lycoming 150hp engines.
- In 1971 the spring steel main landing gear was changed to tubular steel.
- In 1981 Cessna switched to a 160-hp engine and gross weight of 2400lbs but reduced flap travel of 30 degrees.
- 1996 and later models feature the Lycoming IO-360-L2A four cylinder, fuel injected engine, an annunciator panel or optional Garmin G1000 EFIS avionics suit.

A more comprehensive summary combined with serial numbers and model numbers is contained in the table on the following pages.

Naming Terminology

The C172 series manufactured by Cessna in Wichita, like most Cessna models, started with the C172 followed by the C172A and continued sequentially up until the C172 R and S, with the exception of the models J and O which never completed certification. Each new model release superseding the previous, with the exception of model variants (such as the 172RG and R172K).

Model Variants

Some models carried an alternate prefix or suffix to designate a specific difference, or model variant as detailed below.

Reims 172

The F172 for models D through M, was made by Reims in France, and according to Cessna there are no significant differences apart from the engines on models prior to 1971 (F172K and earlier), however there are some differences in manufacturing processes.

Cessna 175 Certified Aircraft

Although marketed as a C172, the P172D, F172/FR172 and C172RG were all designated under the C175 type data certification sheet by the FAA.

The P172D, where the 'P' indicated the geared engine referred to as "Powermatic" by Cessna. The different type designator also reflected a larger distinction, the aircraft is nearly identical to the C175C and treated as such for certification, it has little in common with the C172D except the year of manufacture (1963).

The C172 RG – where the 'RG' designated a retractable Cessna as with other models of Cessna. Produced between 1981 and 1985, the RG option was not reintroduced when production commenced in 1996.

The prefix 'R' was originally given to the 210hp military version C172, made specifically for the US Air Force, and should not be confused with the Reims ('F') models or the retractable ('RG') models. The original military R172 was produced for models R172E through to R172H, between 1964 and 1973, called by the USAF a T41-B, C or D, depending on options (the C172H, originally made for the USAF was called the T41-A). Most models retired into USAF aeroclubs, a few are in civilian use, and some still remain in US and other air force operations. These models led to the development of a civilian version, the R172K given the name Hawk XP and the FR172K, Reims Hawk XP or Reims Rocket, with the same engine de-rated to 195hp, produced between 1977 and 1981.

Model History Table

The table below summarises the model history versus serial number compiled from the type data certification summaries (TDC) and from the technical information in the Cessna maintenance manuals.

Model	Name	Year	Serial Numbers	Significant Changes and Features
C172		1956	28000-29174	The first model C172, which was basically a Cessna 170B with tricycle gear, distinctive straight windowless back, square vertical tail, and manual flap, the Continental 6 cylinder O-300-A or B engine producing 145hp at 2700rpm, 42USG fuel tank (37USG usable), maximum weight of 2200lbs for the land plane, the seaplane was increased to 2220lbs where it remained through the C172 model history.
		1957	29175-29999, 36000-36215	
		1958	36216-36965	
		1959	36966-36999, 46001-46754	Engine cowling changed for improved cooling, instrument panel modified, moving main flight control instruments from central to left side of panel, in a more direct line of sight of the pilot.
C172A		1960	46755 - 47746	The same as the basic 172 with a swept vertical tail, and the first float plane version was available. The O-300 Continental engine was available as a C or D type.
C172B	C172 in standard version and Skyhawk or Skyhawk II for luxury version.	1961	17247747-17248734	A deeper fuselage (shorter undercarriage), new windshield, revised cowling and pointed propeller spinner as well as external baggage door and another new instrument panel was introduced with the artificial horizon centrally located. Usable fuel 39USG.
C172C		1962	17248735-17249544	Maximum weight increased to 2250lbs, optional key starter on deluxe version (replaces standard pull starter), auxiliary child seat available. Usable fuel 36 USG.
C172D		1963	17249545-17250572	Cut-down rear fuselage and "Omnivision" rear windows replaced the original 'straight-back' look, landplane weight increased to 2300lbs, and new full rudder and brake pedals fitted.

Model	Name	Year	Serial Numbers	Significant Changes and Features
F172D	Reims or French 172	1963	F1720001- F1720018	Made by Reims in France, some differences in manufacturing. Continental O-300-D engine manufactured by Rolls Royce.
C172E		1964	17250573- 17251822	Electrical fuses were replaced by circuit breakers.
F172E	Reims or French 172	1964	F1720019- F1720085	Made by Reims in France, some differences in manufacturing.
C172F		1965	17251823- 17253392	Electric flaps were introduced, with a three position toggle switch. This model, along with the C172H was also produced by the USAF as a T41-A.
F172F	Reims or French 172		F172-0086- F172-0179	Made by Reims in France, some differences in manufacturing.
C172G		1966	17253393- 17254892	Minor modifications to propeller shaft and spinner.
F172G	Reims or French 172	1966	F1720180- F1720319	Made by Reims in France, some differences in manufacturing.
C172H		1967	17254893- 17256512	Nose strut shortened for reduced drag and appearance. A modified engine cowling and mountings reduced noise in the cockpit and cowl cracking. The generator is replaced with an alternator for electrical power supply. This model was also produced by the USAF as a T41-A.
F172H	Reims French 172	1967	F1720320- F1720446	Made by Reims in France, some differences in manufacturing.
F172H	Reims or French 172	1968	F17200655- F17200754	Made by Reims in France, some differences in manufacturing.
<p>Note: The type certifier "F172" designates a Reims C172, that is if the type indicator has F in the front, it was built in Reims factory in France. Reims built C172s, between 1963 and 1976. They are reported by Cessna maintenance manuals, for maintenance purposes as being nearly identical to the C172 produced in Wichita except for the engines on some models.</p>				

Model	Name	Year	Serial Numbers	Significant Changes and Features
C172I		1968	17256513- 17257161	Engine changed to 150hp Lycoming O-320 E2D ("Blue Streak") with higher 2000 hour overhaul time, 38USG usable fuel.
C172K		1969	17257162- 17258486	Rear side windows enlarged, redesigned fin, optional 52USG tanks. Split bus bar now on all models.
F172K	Reims or French 172		F17200755- F17200804	Made by Reims in France, some differences in manufacturing.
C172K		1970	17258487- 17259223	Fiberglass drooping wing-tip
C172L		1971	17259224- 17259903	Landing light shifted from wing to nose. Flat steel replaced by tubular steel undercarriage.
		1972	17259904- 17260758	
F172L	Reims or French 172	1972	F17200805- F17200904	Continental Rolls Royce engine changed to standard C172 Lycoming O-320-E2D engine.
C172M		1973	17260759- 17261898	Drooped leading edge wing introduced for better low speed handling. Seaplane flap reduced to 30 degrees.
F172M	Reims or French 172	1973	F17200905- F17201034	
C172M		1974	17261899- 17263458	Baggage compartment increased in size
			F17201035- F17201234	
C172M		1975	17263459- 17265684	
			F17201235- F17201384	

Model	Name	Year	Serial Numbers	Significant Changes and Features
C172M		1976	17265685-17267584	Airspeed changed from miles to knots, instrument panel redesigned to include more avionics, engine and fuel gauges shifted to the more ergonomic position on the left side of the instrument panel above the master switch.
F172M		1976	F17201385 on	This was the last standard model F172 made by Reims, see also FR172 under Type Variants.
C172N		1977	17261445, 17267585-17269309	160hp Lycoming O-320-H2AD engine* Flap selector changed to the safer and more ergonomic 'preselector' arm (replacing the 3 position toggle switch). Adjustable rudder trim available, notched lever. Usable fuel 40USG, optional 54USG long range fuel tanks (50USG useable).
		1978	17261578, 17269310-17270049 17270051-17271034	14V electrical system changed to 28V. Air conditioning now available as an option. HIGH VOLTAGE warning light changed to LOW VOLTAGE, with sensors incorporated in alternator control unit.
		1979	17271035-17272884	Limiting speed on first 10 degrees of flap increased from 85kts to 110kts.
		1980	17270050, 17272885-17274009	
<p>*This engine was the first engine (excluding the 210hp military version) designed to operate on 100/130 Octane fuel, previous engines were designed for 80/87 Octane. Most aircraft engines have now been modified to operate on 100/130 or 100 Low Lead Aviation Gasoline (Avgas 100 and Avgas 100LL) with 80/87 (Avgas 80) now having only very limited availability.</p>				
C172P	Skyhawk	1981	17274010-17275034	Lycoming O-320 engine changed from H2AD to D2J to address some design issues. Flap reduced from 40 degrees to 30 degrees. Landplane weight increased from 2300 to 2400lbs. Optional 66USG, 62USG usable long range tanks with wet wing available.
		1982	17275035-17275759	
		1983	17275760-17276079	
		1984	17276080-17276259	

Model	Name	Year	Serial Numbers	Significant Changes and Features
		1985	17276260-17276516	From 1982, landing lights shifted from cowl back to wing with standard dual light fitting.
		1986	17276517-17276654	
C172Q	Cutlass	1983	17275869-17276054	Lycoming O-360 engine, developing 180hp at 2700rpm, maximum gross weight 2550lbs. Although marketed as a Cutlass, having the same engine is just about the only the resemblance this models shares with the C172RG.
		1984	17276101-17276211	
C172R	Skyhawk	1996	17280001 on	160hp Lycoming fuel injected IO360 engine, optional G1000 avionics, maximum weight increased to 2450lbs, optional 2550 maximum weight kit, 53USG usable fuel.
C172S	Skyhawk SP		172S8001 on	Engine power increased to 180hp with maximum rpm increasing from 2400 to 2700 rpm, maximum weight 2550lbs.

At the time of publication, only the C172S is still in production.

Type Variants

The following aircraft, although marketed as Cessna 172s, are all certified under the FAA Type Data Certificate of the Cessna 175. All contain significant differences in power available, and airframe.

Model	Name	Year	Serial Numbers	Significant Changes
P172D				
P172D	Powermatic	1963	P17257120-P17257188	175hp Continental GO-300-E Powermatic geared engine and revised cowling with dorsal gearbox fairing. This model was essentially a C175 Sklark, renamed in a failed attempt to fix poor sales performance of the C175.
FP172D	French or Reims Powermatic	1963	FP1720001 FP1720003	Reims version of P172D, made in France , some differences in manufacturing.

Note – many Cessna types have adopted the prefix of 'P' for a pressurised aircraft, this model demonstrates one of the common exceptions.

Model	Name	Year	Serial Numbers	Significant Changes
US Air Force Models				
R172E	USAF T41B,C,D	1964	R1720001- R1720335	Fitted with Continental IO360 engine, producing 210hp at 2800rpm, maximum weight 2500lbs, Certified on C175 type certification sheet.
R172F	USAF T41B,C,D		R1720336- R1720409	
R172G	USAF T41B,C,D		R1720336- R1720409	2550 maximum weight
R172H	USAF T41B,C,D	1971	R1720445- R1720494	
		1972	R1720495- R1720546	
		1973	R1720547- R1720620	
Retractable Gear Model				
C172RG	Cutlass RG	1980	172RG0001 172RG0570	Retractable undercarriage, Lycoming O-360 engine developing 180hp, with three blade constant speed propeller, gross weight 2650lbs. Total usable fuel 62USG. Mainly popular with flight schools as a complex trainer. Certified on C175 type certification sheet.
		1981	172RG0571 172RG0890	
		1982	172RG0891 172RG1099	
		1983	172RG1100 172RG1144	
		1984	172RG1145 172RG1177	
		1985	172RG1178 172RG1191	
R172K - Hawk XP Models				
R172K	Hawk XP	1977	R1722000- R172272	1977 had 14V electrical system, otherwise similar to other Hawk XP's described below.
		1978	R1722725 R1722929	Called the Hawk XP with a Continental IO-360K fuel injected engine and constant speed propeller, de-rated to 195hp at 2600rpm. Maximum weight
		1979	R1720680,R 1722930 R1723199	

Model	Name	Year	Serial Numbers	Significant Changes
		1980	R1723200 R1723399 (except R1723398)	increased to 2550lbs. Also certified as C175. 1978 models on had 28V electrical system. Certified on C175 type certification sheet.
		1981	R1723400 R1723454	Flap reduced from 40 to 30 degrees as with other models of C172.
FR172K	Reims Hawk XP	1977	FR1720591 FR1720620	The Hawk XP model made by Reims in France, some differences in manufacturing.
		1978	FR1720621 FR1720630	
		1979	FR1720631 FR1720655	
		1980	FR1720656 FR1720665	
		1981	FR1720666 FR1720675	