

Three Feet Positions

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Note: This is critical for Cirrus SR-20/22s and many other planes with a similar rudder pedal design.

The Problem

Pilots who perform takeoffs and landings with their heels on the floor inadvertently apply the brakes when giving rudder inputs during takeoffs and landings. This is particularly common during crosswind procedures and for pilots with a shoe size larger than a men's size 8.

The Solution

Recognize that it is not sufficient to teach pilots to put their heels on the floor. Instead, instructors should be teaching three different feet positions.

Position 1: Feet on brakes. This is the full brake position (i.e. Engine start, run-up, and the far end of the landing roll).

Position 2: Heels on the floor. This is the flight position (i.e. Airwork maneuvers).

Position 3: Heels back / Toes down. Pilots with larger feet (about men's size 8 and larger) must be taught to bend their knees, pull their heels back, and ensure the balls of their feet are on the bottom of the rudder pedals (i.e. Takeoffs and landings).

- For touch-and-go landings, the feet must remain in this position throughout the entire ground roll.
- For full-stop landings, the feet are carefully moved up to position 1 when it is time to apply the brakes.

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