

Glider Launch Procedure

When launching a glider please remember the tow pilot is watching you in small mirrors so make signals in a BOLD fashion so the tow pilot can clearly see what is required. As we do not use signaling paddles at TBSS consider holding your hat in your signaling hand to make the signal clearer.

1. Move the glider onto the runway and turn it into line behind the tow plane then put the left wing down on the runway (do not lift the wing until step 6). Gliders with skids may launch from the grass. All other gliders must launch from the runway unless under the supervision of a CFGI and for training or proficiency purposes only.
2. Remove the glider tail dolly if necessary.
3. Request the glider pilot to lock spoilers and flaps.
4. Attach the tow line.
5. Stand at the left wing tip and signal the tow plane to take up the slack line - make it a challenge to stop the towplane just as the line becomes taut.
6. When the glider pilot gives the thumbs up signal lift the left wing.
7. Wait until the tow pilot and the glider pilot have signaled by wagging their rudders that they are prepared to take off. **THIS IS A REQUIRED SIGNAL BY BOTH PILOTS.** Then, when you are satisfied the launch can be made in a safe manner, give the take off signal and launch the glider.

Throughout the period the glider is on the runway the wing runner must be aware of any other activities on the airfield which may affect the launch and be satisfied the launch can be made in a safe manner. This must be done both visually and through monitoring radio messages.

The golf cart used to tow the glider onto the runway should be kept close by until the launch is complete in case the launch has to be aborted and the runway cleared as soon as possible.

Keeping The Runway Clear

CLEAR OF THE RUNWAY means behind the 200' flag line.

CLEAR ONTO THE GRASS means completely in the buffer zone between the edge of the runway and the 200' flag line.

1. Aircraft, equipment and people not involved in a glider launch must be "clear of the runway" behind the 200' line.
2. A glider that has landed must be immediately be moved "clear onto the grass" and shortly following this should be moved "clear of the runway" behind the 200' line
3. A glider and equipment on the runway involved in an aborted launch for whatever reason must immediately be moved "clear onto the grass" but not necessarily "clear of the runway" behind the 200' line if the glider is to be returned to the runway.
4. A glider that is to be re-launched following a landing, for example when flying patterns, must still be immediately moved to "clear onto the grass" following a landing unless the pilot is in communication with the tow pilot, has confirmed that conditions are clear for re-launch, and the tow plane is on or taxiing onto the runway for launch and has made the requisite "staging for launch" radio call for other traffic to hear. In this case the launch team should be prepared for expeditious hook-up and launch. If there is any doubt about preparedness of the glider pilot, tow pilot, or launch crew for an immediate or expeditious launch, the glider must NOT stay on the runway.

There are circumstances, especially in the winter when both the jump school and our club is busy. In these circumstances it may well be necessary to immediately move all equipment "clear onto the grass".

On take off when we have a towplane and glider aligned on the runway and the towplane has announced a launch the jump plane should probably wait. In the situation where we are taxiing out the towplane and glider to the runway when a jump plane is ready to go then we should probably move back "clear onto the grass" to allow the jump plane to pass. It will be the responsibility of the tow pilot to maintain communications with the jump plane pilot and based upon the launch status decide if we should move "clear onto the grass" to let the jump plane pass.

In order for this to work, the wing runner must carry a radio at all times.