

Topic of the month: January 2026

Winter Flying

With the colder days over the winter period there are several things to consider when preparing to fly and flying:

Preparation for Flight

- Leave the glider in sunshine to wait until any ice or frost on the wings has thawed.
- Don't try to scrape off frost or ice, as it will quickly refreeze on the wings. Wait until the frost or ice is thawed.
- Remember to take the hot water bottles and canopy blankets to the launchpoint.
- Keep the canopy and cockpit warm using blankets and hot water bottles. Put the hot water bottle on top of the instrument panel. Both front and back for 2 seaters. Make sure it's not moving when closing the canopy.

Visibility

- A big problem is canopy misting due to cold weather and high humidity.
- Keep the canopy open until everything is ready to get hooked up.
- Wing runner, launch controller, winch driver: make sure there is no delay once the pilot has closed the canopy.
- If the canopy starts misting up, abort the launch, open the canopy and wait until it is clear again.
- The sun is low during the winter months. This means visibility is reduced when flying straight into the sun and landing in westerly direction in the afternoon.



Cold

- Make sure you are warm. Wear warm clothing and gloves.
- As you are not moving much during a flight it can be difficult to stay warm on longer flights.
- If you are getting too cold land.

A few bullet points to remember

- Let frost or ice on wings and fuselage thaw before flying
- Keep canopy covered between flights
- Keep canopy open until hooking up
- Stop the launch if canopy starts to mist up
- Wear warm clothing

A Happy New Year and great, safe flights in 2026

The SGU Safety Team