

# Delay techniques

## VFR Holding

Air Traffic Control (ATC) may require VFR aircraft to **hold over a specific area** due to congestion or sequencing issues. The term "**ORBIT**" is used to instruct aircraft to circle a designated point until further notice. Pilots must remain in the orbit until cleared to continue.

### ATC Holding Instructions Format:

“ [Aircraft Call Sign], ORBIT [Direction] OF [Location], [Turn Direction], [Expected Duration/Number of Orbits].

Example:

“ Cessna 45X, ORBIT EAST OF CITY BRIDGE, LEFT TURNS, EXPECT FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS IN 5 MINUTES.

In this case, the aircraft must maintain left turns east of the **City Bridge** until ATC provides further instructions.

ATC Holding Instructions	English	French
N123X, orbit left.	Orbit left.	Orbitez à gauche.
N123X, orbit abeam threshold.	Orbit abeam threshold.	Orbitez au seuil de piste.
N123X, make a right 360.	Make a right three-sixty.	Effectuez un trois-six zéro à droite.

## Remaining Outside Controlled Airspace

Before entering **Class D airspace**, VFR aircraft must establish communication with ATC. Due to traffic congestion, ATC may instruct the pilot to remain **outside the controlled airspace** until further notice.

### ATC Instruction Example:

[Aircraft Call Sign], REMAIN OUTSIDE CLASS D AIRSPACE, STANDBY.

Example:

“ Skyhawk 82B, REMAIN OUTSIDE CLASS D AIRSPACE, STANDBY.

The pilot must remain clear of Class D airspace and await further instructions from ATC.

ATC Instruction	English	French
Remain outside Class D airspace.	Remain outside Class D airspace.	Restez en dehors de l’espace aérien de classe D.

## Delaying Techniques for VFR Aircraft

VFR aircraft generally operate at **lower speeds** compared to commercial traffic. To ensure efficient traffic flow, ATC may need to **create adequate spacing** between VFR and IFR arrivals. A **gap of 7 to 9 NM** is typically required between a slow VFR aircraft and faster IFR traffic on approach.

To optimize sequencing and minimize delays, ATC can employ several delaying techniques.

### Orbits (360-Degree Turns)

Orbits are used to **keep VFR traffic within a confined area** while awaiting clearance to continue. These are particularly useful when delaying traffic near the airport without significantly affecting approach sequencing.

- A standard **360-degree turn** takes approximately **2 minutes** at a standard rate of **3° per second**.

Orbit Instructions	English	French
N123X, orbit left.	Orbit left.	Orbitez à gauche.
N123X, orbit abeam threshold.	Orbit abeam threshold.	Orbitez au seuil de piste.
N123X, make a right 360.	Make a right three-sixty.	Effectuez un trois-six zéro à droite.

## Landing Sequence

If multiple aircraft are approaching the airfield, ATC may issue **landing sequence instructions** to VFR aircraft. The pilot is assigned a position in sequence and is responsible for maintaining safe spacing from the preceding aircraft.

Landing Sequence Instructions	English	French
N567P, number two, follow Boeing 737, 4 NM final, report traffic in sight.	Number two, follow Boeing 737, 4 NM final, report traffic in sight.	Numéro deux, suivez le Boeing 737, finale 4 NM, signalez le trafic en vue.
N432B, number three, follow Cessna 172 on downwind.	Number three, follow Cessna 172 on downwind.	Numéro trois, suivez le Cessna 172 en vent arrière.

## Extended Downwind

Extending downwind is another delaying technique where a VFR aircraft remains on **downwind leg** longer than usual before turning onto base and final approach.

- **This technique is useful for spacing VFR aircraft between IFR arrivals.**
- **A longer downwind leg requires larger gaps between IFR traffic.**

Extended Downwind Instructions	English	French
N123B, extend downwind.	Extend downwind.	Prolongez vent arrière.
N567X, extend downwind, I will call your base.	Extend downwind, I will call your base.	Prolongez vent arrière, j'appellerai votre base.

## Summary of ATC Delaying Techniques

Technique	Purpose	Example Instruction (English/French)
Orbits	Keep VFR traffic within a defined area.	<i>Cessna 34X, ORBIT RIGHT OVER HILLTOP. / Cessna 34X, ORBITEZ À DROITE AU-DESSUS DE LA COLLINE.</i>
Landing Sequence	Assign landing order and spacing.	<i>Cessna 34X, NUMBER TWO, FOLLOW 737, REPORT TRAFFIC IN SIGHT. / Cessna 34X, NUMÉRO DEUX, SUIVEZ 737, SIGNALEZ LE TRAFIC EN VUE.</i>
Extended Downwind	Delay VFR approach by increasing downwind length.	<i>Cessna 34X, EXTEND DOWNWIND, I WILL CALL YOUR BASE. / Cessna 34X, PROLONGEZ VENT ARRIÈRE, J'APPELLERAI VOTRE BASE.</i>