

# Frequently Asked Questions

---

## **What should I do if the weather is looking bad?**

Please note that although we cannot jump if it is raining or low cloud cover the weather forecasts are rarely accurate. It is also not uncommon for it to be raining and then sunny and jumpable an hour later, or for it to be raining hard in Barrie but jumpable at PST. If you are concerned about the weather then please call us *on the day of your jump* prior coming up. Only then will we be able to give you an accurate assessment of the weather and what your options will be. Please also note that if you are doing the First Jump Course then it runs rain or shine - so you can come up for the course and if the weather is still unjumpable for the rest of the day you can return within 60 days and frequently jump immediately.

## **What should I wear?**

Wear comfortable clothing appropriate for the weather. Footwear should be casual fit, roomy, and athletic with ample ankle support (no boots, sandals, or speed-lace hooks permitted). On warm sunny days shorts and a t-shirt are acceptable; however note that even though it is warm on the ground it may be quite cold up at jump altitude. On cooler days, long pants and a sweatshirt may be more appropriate. We do provide jumpsuits in case you need them. If you have any jewellery or piercings please note that you may need to take them out prior to jumping. If you have glasses or contacts you can jump with them without any problem. If you have long hair bring some hair elastics. Parachute School of Toronto will provide everything else you need to enjoy your skydive!

## **What else should I bring?**

Feel free to bring friends along to watch and pass the time with while you are waiting to jump. We have a nice large grassy area with picnic tables and couches indoors. There is a diner on-site that provides a variety of food and snacks plus we have pop and snack machines. Many times people will just lie on the grass and socialize or soak up some sun while waiting (we have sunscreen or you can bring your own), plus if you are interested in sticking around all weekend we have a tenting area, indoor bathrooms and showers, and bonfires and evening festivities almost every weekend!

## **How long should I expect to be there?**

This is a hard question to answer and it depends heavily on the weather and how busy we are at the time that you arrive. If you are doing a tandem you should plan on being here for at least a few hours; First Jump Course students should plan on being here from 9am until at least 5pm.

## **What type of payment can I use?**

Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Debit or Cash. Unfortunately we cannot accept Diners Club, Cheques or bits of string.

## **What happens if I need to cancel or reschedule?**

We understand that unexpected things occur and you may not be able to make it on the day of your jump. We request that you give us 48 hours notice in case of any cancellations and we will gladly reschedule your jump for a later time!

## **Is Skydiving a safe sport?**

The answer to this question is not easy, but the short answer is **yes**. There are statistics that show that skydiving is actually much safer than many other more common sports and other normal activities that we do every day but never question. For example you are more likely to get into an accident while driving than during a skydive itself!

In 2006 there were more than 148,000 skydives made in Canada and around 6.1 million skydives made around the world. There are more than 3,000 members of the Canadian Sport Parachuting Association (CSPA) and 30,000 members of the USPA. Not to use a cliché, but if skydiving wasn't safe then there wouldn't be that many people doing it.

However skydiving is not without its risks. At PST we operate with the safest methods possible, and most of the risk has been eliminated. There are backups to every system and highly trained and qualified instructors to ensure that everything runs smoothly.

There are no guarantees in skydiving. Even though this is now our **36th** year in operation accidents can happen.

You must be aware that skydiving is a sport in which you could be seriously or fatally injured. The risk is extremely low, but it is present.

## **Is PST a safe Dropzone?**

Parachute School of Toronto is a member of and adheres to the strict regulations of both the [Canadian Sport Parachuting Association \(CSPA\)](#) and the [United States Parachuting Association \(USPA\)](#).

In Canada skydiving is a self-regulated sport, and the CSPA has been our main governing body since 1956. At PST we are proud to maintain our association with the CSPA since we started operations, and all of our Instructors and Coaches are CSPA rated.

Parachute School of Toronto operates with an emphasis on "Safety First." We train more than a thousand first time skydivers every year, and in the all of the years that we have been in operation we have had very few accidents. In fact most of the accidents happen to experienced jumpers who are trying new things.

## Why skydive at PST?

At Parachute School of Toronto we are proud to say that we have the **Highest Altitude** and **Fastest Plane** available in Canada! We also have an impeccable safety record and are one of the oldest clubs in Canada. As a club we have had more than **200,000** jumps and more than **47,000** first time jumpers - higher than any other club in the area. We are also closest to the GTA, extremely friendly and have a great location. We understand how thrilling this jump is to you and strive to make sure that you have the best experience possible! Our amenities are also great compared to other dropzones - indoor washrooms and showers, on-site diner serving a variety of food and snacks, drink and snack machines, ample parking, picnic tables and lounge areas and plenty of experienced jump masters, tandem masters, and regular skydivers who will thrill you with their landings!

## Is PST open every day?

PST is open 5 days a week, Thursdays through Mondays, every week from May to October, and Fridays-Sundays between November and April. Please note however that the Solo First Jump course is only offered Saturdays, Sundays and on holidays.

## Will I be scared?

This varies from person to person, but it is common (and perfectly natural) to feel uneasy about jumping out of a plane! In fact many experienced jumpers still get butterflies in their stomach on each and every jump, but that's part of the exhilaration, and you can take pride in conquering that fear!

In reality there is very little to be afraid of. Also keep in mind that we have all been there, so we know how you feel. We remember our first jump, what we felt, and because of that we know how to teach you and what methods to use to minimize the fear. So when the airplane door opens up, and you feel your heart in your throat, just breathe deeply and proudly tell yourself, "This is why I came here, to get the thrill of a lifetime, and I am meeting my challenge!" You will definitely feel a surge of adrenaline and nervous anticipation like nothing you have ever felt before. This is a normal part of the experience. Most first time jumpers say, without any question, "Skydiving is the most exciting thing I have ever done!"

Oddly enough it's surprising how many experienced skydivers started out afraid of heights. The truth is that very few people who are afraid of heights have any problems with skydiving. Really it is just like "jumping out onto a map". You're so high up that everything just looks flat and the phobia doesn't kick in. By the time you're under canopy you're so pumped full of adrenaline that nothing can scare you! Not surprisingly many students tell us that they are **less afraid** of heights after doing a jump than before.

## What happens if the parachute does not open?

This is a common concern, but it is extremely rare to have happen. Even if it does happen every skydiving rig contains two parachutes: a main and a reserve. A malfunction of the main canopy

is extremely rare, and even if it happens it is not a big deal. **We have never had an incident at our dropzone where there has been a complete failure on both canopies.** All reserve parachutes must be inspected and packed by specially trained riggers after every use, and also every 6 months even if they haven't been used, so you know that they're extremely safe and reliable. All of our student rigs also contain an automatic activation device that will deploy the reserve parachute for you automatically in case of any problems.

### **What type of jump should I do?**

This really depends on what you are hoping to get out of the jump. The Tandem Skydive remains one of our most popular jumps - you get the full experience including freefall and canopy ride and everything is controlled by one of our highly experienced tandem masters (most of whom have thousands of jumps)! If, however, you are one who likes to control everything yourself then the solo first jump is the jump for you! You will jump out and your parachute is deployed automatically then you get to fly yourself around the sky and safely to the ground under the guidance of an instructor giving you directions over radio. Either way you will have the best experience of your life!

### **What altitude do I jump from and how long is the freefall?**

At Parachute School of Toronto we are proud to say that we have the **Highest Altitude** and **Fastest Plane** available in Canada! For Tandem jumps you will exit the aircraft at 13,500ft above ground level (or about 14,200ft above sea level) and experience about a minute of free fall before your instructor deploys your parachute for a gentle opening. You will then have about 4-5 minutes of canopy flight where you will be able to talk with your instructor and enjoy the scenery before coming in for a smooth landing.

If you are doing a Solo First Jump then you will exit the aircraft between 3,000-5,000ft above ground level where your parachute is automatically deployed for you and you will have between 3-5 minutes of self-controlled parachute flight prior to a tip-toe soft landing!

### **How hard is the parachute opening?**

The parachutes are actually designed to be very soft in their opening. A common misconception from watching videos is that you actually go "up" as the parachute opens. This is not true as in these videos the videographer is still falling at full speed and the opening of the parachute just slows you down so you appear to go up (relative to the videographer). In reality the parachute slows you from about 200km/h (freefall speed) to a leisurely 20km/h speed over the course of about 5 seconds - or about as fast as you normally apply the brakes in your car.

### **How many jumps until I get a license?**

If you are doing the Solo progression you can expect 6-8 jumps on the static line then an additional 8-10 jumps at increasing altitudes before you will be signed off for your license. These numbers are averages, some people take less, and some people take more.

## **How much does it cost?**

Although it may seem like a lot it is not very much for the awesome experience that you will get! Please check out our [prices page](#) for full details.

## **Can I go naked?**

Although there is nothing really stopping you from doing a naked skydive keep in mind that it is cold up at altitude and you will be falling at speeds of 200km/h. Also do you really want everyone seeing you naked once you get to the ground? :)

## **What is included in a video?**

The videos that we produce are professional quality and are about 10 minutes in length. They include a short introduction and interview with yourself, some shots gearing up, heading to the plane, a pre-boarding interview, and some shots in the plane, an in-flight interview, then the entire exit, and freefall portion of your jump. The videographer will then meet you on the ground and film your landing and your reactions immediately after the jump! Overall it is a great way to remember your jump and show it off to all your friends!

## **What is included with the pictures?**

The videographer will usually get some pictures of you on the ground while gearing up, heading to the plane, in the plane, and about 40-50 pictures in freefall, plus a few more once you're on the ground. They are all high quality digital stills provided on a CD and suitable for printing up to 11x17!

## **Why is there so little difference between video or stills and both?**

The biggest cost associated with either video or stills is because there is another person jumping out of the aircraft at the same time as you and falling with you through the sky. Because of the cost of doing that adding on an additional service is proportionally little since they are already there.

## **Can I bring my own camera with me on the jump?**

Unfortunately not. For safety reasons it is not possible to bring your own equipment with you on the jump.

## **Can I bring a friend to watch?**

Absolutely! Bring as many friends as you like. We have a large grassy area, picnic tables, diner, snacks, drinks, couches and plenty to do while you are waiting to jump. Plus if you manage to convince any of them to jump as well then you can get referral credit towards another jump!

### **What discounts are offered?**

If you are a student or military then you are eligible for a discount on your jump. If you are coming in a group of at least 4 people then you can also get a discount for each member of the group, or pool the discounts together and apply it towards only one jumper.

### **I don't have a car, is it possible to make it via transit in time for the solo class?**

Yes! We have many people who take transit up to the dropzone, or alternately depending on where you live you may be able to grab a ride up with some of our regulars. The only downside to transit for the solo class is that you pretty much need to be on the first available busses and expect about 2-3 hours of time to get here, depending on where you live. Please note, however, that public transit can only get you into Sutton. You will need to call the dropzone to get a ride from Sutton to Baldwin.

### **Do I have to book in advance, and how far ahead should I book?**

Although booking in advance is not required it is advisable since walk-ins are only accepted on a limited basis and are subject to availability. By booking ahead we can make sure to have all staff required available for you when you arrive. Generally booking at least one week in advance is advised, a little more around holidays. The further ahead you book the more likely you are to get the time that you want.

### **Are there any age or weight restrictions?**

Manufacturer regulations state that you must be at least 18 years of age on the day of your jump and generally no more than 225 lbs - however there is some flexibility up to 250 lbs depending on how fit you are. Unfortunately we cannot accommodate anyone greater than 250 lbs or younger than 18 years of age.

### **I have prescription glasses/contacts; can I wear them during the jump?**

Absolutely! We provide goggles that can fit over top of glasses which hold them snugly to your face. The goggles also protect your eyes in case you wear contacts.