



Saving Pennies[©]

Gary Palmer July 27 2022

Talking about saving pennies this should be a short article. Consider buying a handheld radio as a backup in case you have a loss of communications on the aircraft primary radios. Now that type of loss is rare, but if the alternator dies you are running off batteries until you run out of batteries.

A handheld has limited range compared to aircraft radios but it should be enough to talk to a tower or overhead rescue aircraft. It's a very worthwhile safety item and for approximately \$300 you have an assortment from which to choose.

So how does this save money? You want to make sure the batteries are charged right? After each pre-flight, when seated in the aircraft ready to start the engine, use the handheld to obtain the latest weather or ATIS.

Using the handheld provides a confirmation that the batteries are charged and gets you the current information. Getting and considering that information can take a few minutes, let's say 6 minutes or 0.1 hour (for easy math). That means you saved 0.1 hour of engine or rental time. See, you just saved pennies. To make it real let's consider the aircraft rents for \$175/hour, you just saved \$17.5; that's a lot of pennies (or gallons)!

After 10 flights you save \$175 and after 20 flights you save \$350. If your handheld radio was \$300 then you are now not only ahead on the costs, but you are safer with that backup radio. Of course, continuing this habit continues to save on each flight.

Little things can add up to big things and in this case you are: saving money, developing a good habit, have safety equipment can make every flight safer and checking that safety equipment for each flight (something many pilots forget)!

Blue Skies...