

PIF 10-09

Subject: Closing Aircraft Doors

Aircraft doors are made of aluminum and because of weight restrictions do not contain the support material normally found on car doors. Because of this aircraft doors are more susceptible to deformation from abuse, including repeated slamming while closing.

For this reason, closing aircraft doors should be done firmly but gently. A good practice is to open the window, grab the door at the bottom of the window frame, and with the door resting against the frame and gently but firmly pull the door shut. Someone else near the door should not be able to hear anything louder than a mechanical click as the door seats. Then rotate the locking arm from inside the aircraft and visually check to see that the door is properly in place.

When locking doors from the outside, pilots should follow a similar procedure. Close the door to the point where the door rests next to the frame. Then gently push against a reinforced part of the door. Then insert the key and turn to lock the door. No force should be required to lock the door. Applying excessive force to turn the lock may damage the locking mechanism or bend the key. One aircraft, N61954, requires the pilot to lean against the door to shut it. Again, do not slam the door in an attempt to get it to close. If you have difficulty, ask one of the instructors who will show you how to get the door closed.