

The Five Most Common ILS Errors

Fred Simonds

Error: Unable to hold the localizer. At one mile from the runway, being **one dot** off on the localizer means you are **100 feet** off the centerline. A **dot and a half** means you are **150 feet** off the centerline - that's **FOUR wingspans!**

Many corporate flight departments and airlines call for a **MISSED APPROACH** with just a **ONE DOT** deflection! Chasing the needle is **guaranteed to fail**.

Fixes:

- When the localizer needle moves, **you move - make small changes!**
- Find a heading that holds the needle centered

Error: Unable to hold the glideslope.

Fixes:

- You failed to get pitch-stabilized on the approach.
- Use a **predetermined power setting** to pitch to a specific **airspeed**.
- Use **trim** to set your **descent rate** - about 500 FPM at 90 kt groundspeed.

Error: Arriving at the outer marker (the Final Approach Fix) unprepared.

Fixes:

- Use WRIMTM to be set for the approach well before reaching the FAF.
- Be ready with TDR at the marker: **Time** starts, **Descent/Set flaps**, **Radio call** if no tower.
- **Fly the approach as if you are going to miss**

Error: Failure to use all the radios for **something**. For example, use the second VOR as a localizer backup if you don't need it for anything else.

Fixes: Review the approach plate for all immediately useful radio aids. A common mistake is to forget the Outer Marker audio button or LOM on an ILS.

The Five Most Common Errors on the ILS:

- Failure to understand the localizer's course dimensions.
- Failure to intercept and capture the localizer outside the outer marker.
- Failure to establish stabilized power settings and trim for airspeed.
- Failure to maintain awareness of where you are before, during and after the approach if you miss.
- Failure to understand the approach, to properly brief it to yourself. If you can't explain what you are going to do, you can't fly it!