

**Yosemite Hang Gliding Association**  
**Glacier Point / Yosemite Site Guide**

Revision: Feb 28, 2023

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Hang gliding in Yosemite National Park is permitted with a recreational Commercial Use Authorization (CUA) issued to the Yosemite Hang Gliding Association (YHGA) annually.

Our flying season is June 15<sup>th</sup> through October 15<sup>th</sup> (start and end dates may vary), and you must have a YHGA approved Site Monitor present to fly as a condition of our CUA. We make every effort to have Site Monitors available to accommodate the weekend of your choice but ask that you be flexible with your schedule.

You must be a current member of the USHPA and have an advanced H4 rating. Visiting pilots outside the United States must contact YHGA two weeks prior to your scheduled flying date(s). We are unable to issue temporary USHPA memberships at Yosemite Park. You must provide proof of your USHPA credentials for the Site Monitor prior to setting up your glider.

The launch window is 8 AM to 9 AM, and the maximum number of pilots per day is 17 (including the Site Monitor).

Please arrive at Glacier Point early enough so you are set up with pre-flight complete, and ready to fly by 7:45 AM.

Make sure all your gear is in good working order and familiarize yourself with the launch (Glacier Point), flight path, and landing zone (Leidig Meadow).

In case of emergency, each pilot shall have Yosemite Park Dispatch, (209) 379-1992, in their phone contacts list.

Any pilot signed up to fly Yosemite wishing to become a member of YHGA may pay the club \$20, which will entitle that pilot to a seasonal membership.

Please contact us if you have any questions.

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## Site Skill Requirements, Conditions, and Hazards

**Rating Required:** H4

**Wind Strength at Launch:**

Min (mph)	Ideal (mph)	Max (mph)	Gust (mph)
0	0	15	5

Note, in addition to launch conditions, strong or gusty winds make it very challenging to get a glider to launch.

**Wind Direction at Launch:**

Wind Direction (Degrees) from pilots' perspective on launch		
	From Left	From Right
Ideal	0	10
OK	20	45

Caution, trees immediately to the left of launch can cause rotors if the wind direction is from the left.

**Launch Altitude:** 7,200' MSL

**Landing Altitude:** 3,950' MSL

**Launch type:** Steep Rock Slab

**Minimum Glide Ratio to LZ:** 4.1:1

**Launch Considerations:**

Strong launch skills are mandatory for safely flying at the site. The launch is a high-altitude, steep rock slab. The slab allows for approximately 4 steps before you must be airborne. Directly below launch is a rock shelf followed by progressively larger cliffs. A strong run and nose-down glider attitude is a must.

Zero wind, or a slight trickle up, is the ideal launch conditions. Be particularly cautious of any left cross wind as nearby trees can create a rotor on launch. The wind tends to shift from the west (over the back) by late morning. Be cautious of this as the launch itself may be sheltered from this wind and give a false impression of good launch conditions. You should not launch if the prevailing wind is over the back.

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**Flight Considerations:**

The flight within the Yosemite Valley is typically easy and smooth. Due to the early launch, you can generally expect a 10-minute glide to landing. There may be mild turbulence close to terrain as the sun heats up Yosemite Valley. Be cautious flying close to cliffs as it can be hard to accurately judge your distance from the rocks. Like any site, more extreme conditions are possible. Use good judgment when deciding if to fly.

**Landing Considerations:**

The Leidig Meadow landing zone is a large field surrounded by tall trees. Typically, winds are light or non-existent at the time we land. There are several aspects to be aware of when landing at Yosemite.

- ✓ **Location:** There are several meadows within Yosemite Valley that look similar from the air. Be sure you have reviewed the location of the LZ, including aerial photos, with the Site Monitor before flying. Landing anywhere other than the designated LZ is prohibited by the Park Service.
- ✓ **Altitude:** The LZ is at 4,000' MSL. Expect high ground speeds on your landing approach. Be ready for a strong flare and to run if necessary. Shoes with ankle support are highly recommended.
- ✓ **Tall Grass:** The LZ may have tall grass throughout. Be prepared to flare above the grass with a larger than usual drop.
- ✓ **Trees:** The LZ is surrounded by tall pine trees on all sides. The LZ is large enough that your entire landing approach can be set up within the boundary of the meadow. If there is any wind in the Yosemite Valley, expect significant turbulence at and below tree top level.
- ✓ **Water:** Depending on time of year and river levels there can be standing water in portions of the LZ. Inspect the LZ before flying and be aware that water levels will be highest in the mornings. The water can be deep in places. Do not fly if there is not adequate dry land in the LZ.



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## Site Maps and Use Zones:

