Mike Goulian Aviation
Pro Tip of the Month by CSIP Prassuna Budlong

If you BUG me enough, I may be of help!

Not everyone uses the HDG and ALT bug efficiently enough to boost situational awareness, and that is one resource wasted in the flight deck. Here's how we can change that!

HDG Bug

Bugging your runway heading before entering the traffic pattern is one way to improve situational awareness and determine traffic pattern entry. The trick is to compare your current heading to the runway heading bugged on your HSI while heading inbound to your destination.

If the bug is in front of you, it's a straight in or base entry. Is it to the left? Then left base entry. Is it to the right? Then right base!

If the bug is behind you, it's a downwind entry. Is it to the left? Then left downwind entry. Is it to the right? Then right downwind!

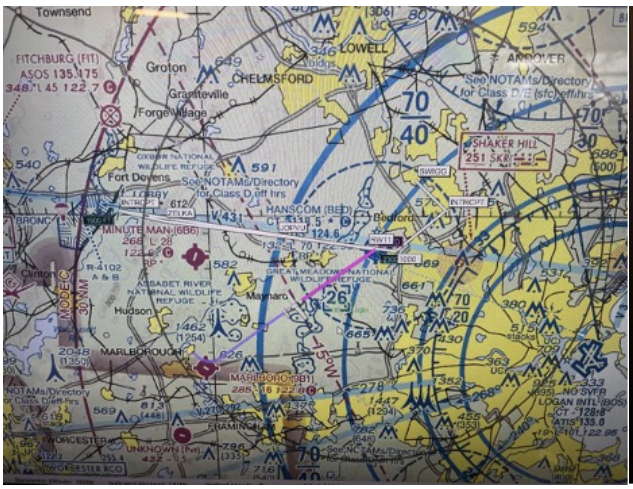
Once you've determined the entry procedure, use this to create a mental picture of your next few steps - Which direction will you turn first to enter the traffic pattern? How many aircraft are currently in the pattern? What would your sequence be?

Consider the following examples:

Example 1

You are off to the southwest of KBED and runway 11 is in use. The white course on the map here is the ILS 11 (for you folks well versed with approaches) just to give you an extended centerline.

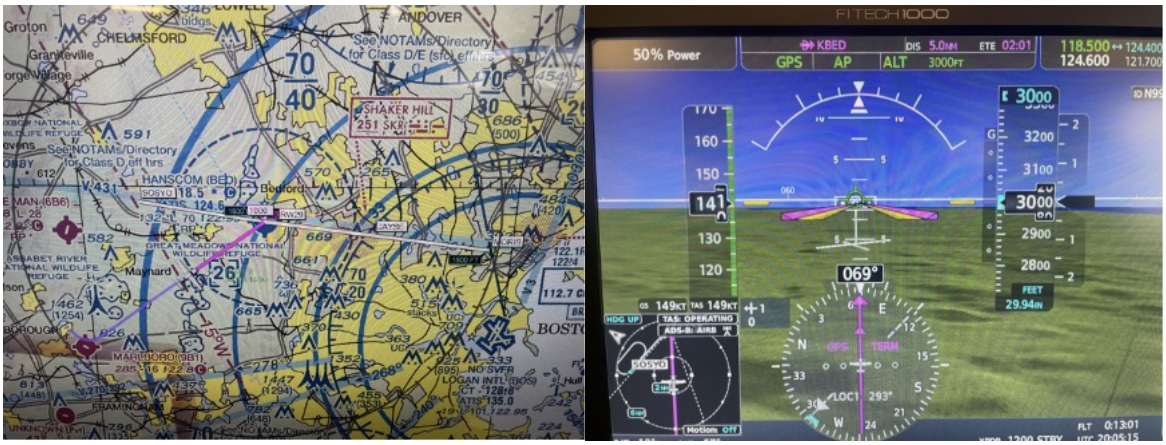
You're heading 069º inbound to KBED and have runway heading bugged to 110º which is to the TOP RIGHT corner of the HSI. So, it's a RIGHT BASE entry.



Example 2

You are off to the southwest of KBED and runway 29 is in use.

You're heading 069º inbound to KBED and runway heading bugged to 290º which is to the BOTTOM LEFT corner of the HSI. So, it's a LEFT DOWNWIND entry.



For you **Instrument rated** folks, this trick is also helpful on **Circle-to-Land** approaches! Just bug your intended runway to land, compare it with your final approach course and you now have a secondary reminder of which way to turn in minimum visibility once runway is in sight.

ALT Bug

I got something for you Vision Jet pilots too!

Did you know you can use VNAV for your climbs on the Garmin Perspective Touch? So, for departure procedures like the good 'ol RUUDY 6 out of everyone's favorite airport KTEB - bug 2000 (top altitude) in your ALT SEL and activate VNV and FLC.

The VNV will capture 1500, level off and continue climb after passing that fix with this very important crossing restriction. This will give you time to monitor your speed for noise abatement procedures and keep our friendly NYC controllers happy.