Aircraft sale preparation checklist

For a private aircraft sale recorded on the FAA's own bill of sale (AC Form 8050-2) and the buyer's registration application (AC Form 8050-1). This is a preparation list, not a bill of sale: the FAA forms are the documents.

BEFORE YOU SIGN

- [ ] The aircraft identifiers (N-number, manufacturer, model, serial number) agree across the bill of sale and the FAA aircraft records.
- [ ] The buyer's legal name matches the name on the intended registration application. A sole proprietor's trade name needs the individual's name as well; an LLC or corporation is registered in its own name only.
- [ ] The seller's ownership and authority to sign are supported by the records; any intervening transfers are documented back to the last registered owner.
- [ ] Recorded liens and the releases needed have been reviewed. The Registry does not run title searches; review the records yourself or use a title-search company or attorney.
- [ ] Both parties have agreed how payment, included equipment and handover will be recorded, and keep that record with the sale papers.
- [ ] Everyone who must sign can sign, and any local acknowledgment requirement has been checked. Read the seller's printed title warranty on the form: this is not an as-is condition form.

PAPERS TO PREPARE, IN ORDER

- [ ] Confirm the owner and the aircraft from the records and resolve missing transfer documents or lien releases first.
- [ ] Complete AC 8050-2 (current edition 12/24 on the check date) from the records and prepare the duplicate copies the form instructs.
- [ ] Arrange the signatures the FAA way: ink signatures, or a digital signature that meets the FAA's requirements. Typing a name into a field is not a compliant digital signature.
- [ ] Prepare the buyer's AC 8050-1 registration application in the owner's legal name, with evidence of ownership and the registration fee the FAA lists ($5 on the check date); some ownership arrangements need more documents.
- [ ] Choose the submission route before signing (Registry mail or delivery instructions, or the FAA's digital submission guidance) and keep copies of everything sent. A saved PDF is not a filed application.

AFTER THE SALE

- [ ] Buyer: keep the bill of sale with the registration application, payment evidence, lien releases and the FAA's acknowledgment; answer any request for missing documents.
- [ ] Seller: keep a signed copy and report the ownership change. Under 14 CFR 47.41 the old registration ends on transfer; within 21 days return the paper certificate with its reverse completed, or give the required notice for an electronic certificate.
- [ ] If the aircraft carries a 406 MHz emergency locator transmitter, update the beacon registration when ownership changes.
- [ ] The signed bill of sale alone does not establish permission to fly the aircraft; check registration and operating requirements before flight.

Sources: FAA AC 8050-2 form page; Register an Aircraft (AC 8050-1, fee, ownership evidence); Aircraft Registry delivery and digital-signature pages; Clear Title guidance; 14 CFR 47.41. Checked October 14, 2026 (BS34).

General checklist, not legal advice. It does not replace your state's or agency's own forms and instructions.