

# GETTIN' THERE

## aviation information for local destinations

### Destination:

Courtenay Airpark (CAH3)

**NOTE:** Pilots flying Club aircraft must obtain permission from the CFI or designate EACH time they fly in to Courtenay Airpark.

### Why Go?

Courtenay Airpark is close to downtown Courtenay and a five minute walk to numerous amenities – hotels, restaurants, shopping, etc. There's so much you can do in the Comox Valley and Courtenay Airpark is a great

gateway. Courtenay is about an hour or so away and it's a very scenic flight. However...

Courtenay Airpark has a somewhat small runway (1,800' x 60') and some obstacles which can make it a challenge to land there, even for an experienced pilot. Departures are similar; you wouldn't want to try and fly a fully loaded C-172 out of there on a hot day. Because of these limitations, those of you flying Club aircraft will only receive CFI approval to fly into Courtenay Airpark when you have a maximum loading of 1 pilot

and two passengers. Finally, Courtenay Airpark sits "under" Comox airspace so you've got to ensure you're aware of their departure / arrival procedures.

### Getting There

There are arrival and routing procedures for VFR traffic headed to the Comox area published in the CFS. You'll want to be familiar with these procedures and have them available to you during the flight. Also, check out the website for the Courtenay Airpark (link is below) – it's really informative.



*(image from courtenayairpark.com)*

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When you're headed to Courtenay Airpark you'll depart Victoria and head north much as you would if you were going to Nanaimo, Qualicum Beach, etc. If you're in Victoria Terminal's airspace you can expect to be passed to Comox Terminal somewhere around Nanoose Bay. Whether in Terminal or not somewhere around Bowser, a town on the shoreline just south of Deep Bay / Denman Island, you'll make your initial call to Comox Tower. (Remember to listen to the Comox ATIS before you call them). Comox will likely route you along the "Highway Route" and instruct you to call them at Royston. As you continue towards Royston it's a good idea to start monitoring Courtenay's frequency (123.35 MHz at time of writing) so you've got an idea of what's happening in the area. Once you call them at Royston Comox will release you for your approach into Courtenay. Change frequencies and make your initial calls to the Courtenay Airpark traffic.

Join the circuit midfield when arriving from the south. Circuit altitude is 800 ft and you need to ensure that you remain clear of the ridge to the north for noise abatement purposes. Make your radio calls as appropriate and get yourself set up for landing. Yes, this IS a short field landing!

After landing, exit the runway and taxi to the visitor parking areas. Short Term Visitor parking

is located in front of the Pilots Lounge. Over-night parking is located in a designated grassed area south of runway 13/31 and east of the main hangar line. Don't forget to visit the Pilots Lounge!

## Local Knowledge

Flying into Courtenay can be complicated however it IS doable. Here are a few things to be aware of that you may not find written down:

- There is a footbridge on the approach path to Rwy 13 that you have to clear.
- On the charts, at the north end of Denman Island, you'll see a sand spit island named "Sandy Island". Nobody, and that includes Comox Tower, calls it Sandy Island; the locals all refer to it as "Tree Island".
- Courtenay can be a busy spot with a variety of small aircraft arriving and departing. You may hear non-standard radio procedures, unfamiliar place names and some short-cuts being taken. Pay attention, make your required radio calls, follow the appropriate procedures and you'll make out just fine.

## Weather

Comox is right next door and they have a METAR and a TAF so good weather information is available. In addition, the Courtenay Airpark website has

several webcams that will give you a visual idea of current conditions.

## Important Links & Contacts

**Courtenay Airpark Association (great site!):**  
[www.courtenayairpark.com](http://www.courtenayairpark.com)