

**Back In Time Editing Services**  
**Michelle Olsen**



February 2, 2024

Cookie Smith

Dear Cookie,

It was a pleasure to speak with you last week. I find your passion for encouraging more women to enter the aviation field infectious, and thank you again for trusting me to edit your book. Your manuscript is an informative and stimulating read about what it takes to fly small aircraft. Congratulations on your writing achievement — your style is engaging, and it reflects your wonderful sense of humour. I'm eager to help you bring your book to the public!

The theme of your book focuses on your experiences as a female student pilot in midlife, and you have requested a new title. I recommend the following: *Taking Off: My Journey to Becoming a Pilot After 50*. Your target audience is women between the ages of 40 and 75, who have little or no history as aviators, and who are interested in learning how to fly small aircraft. An additional readership is women in this same age group who are current or past student pilots, and want to read about flight school experiences. These audiences will relate to your story.

My vision for your book is as an inspirational road map (or flight plan, if you will!) for prospective student pilots to follow, so they know what to expect when they go to flight school. To this end, I will provide these services:

- Structural editing (please see below)
- Stylistic editing (to polish the writing's flow)
- Copy editing (to hone language mechanics)
- Proofreading (to check the book's final format)

## Back In Time Editing Services

Michelle Olsen



I will email you the completed edits at each phase, and you'll make the final decisions. As per our agreement, the attached proposed outline for the book is your guide to a structural rewrite of the manuscript. You'll see changes to the chapter titles, and the content is reordered to create a logical flow for your readers in terms of the timeline and the topics. Additions, deletions, and moves are colour coded for your quick reference.

Meanwhile, I suggest you connect with a hybrid publisher. This type of press assists with part of the expense, which is a bonus. A platform like Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing, for example, has a simpler process, but your book has a better chance of reaching more readers via the hybrid model. Audiences enjoy a variety of formats, so I also recommend creating an e-book and an audio book, in addition to a paperback edition.

In due course, your plan to use Facebook ads to connect to the target audience will work well. Likewise, your comfort with public speaking is a tremendous asset to promoting the book. As a result, reach out to flight schools in BC, Washington, and Arizona, and offer to give talks about the book to the students and instructors. You can also contact local television and radio stations and offer to be interviewed, because morning news programs frequently air segments promoting local writers.

I'm so pleased for you, and I'm here to support you through each editing stage. Please reach out to me anytime with any questions as you restructure the manuscript, and let's schedule a phone call or Zoom meeting over the next couple of weeks to follow up on the plan for the book. I look forward to chatting with you soon!

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Olsen".

Michelle Olsen

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## *Proposed Outline for Taking Off: My Journey to Becoming a Pilot After 50*

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This proposed outline reorders the chapters, and summarizes the focus of each installment.

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### **Disclaimer & Dedication**

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The disclaimer and dedication both work well at the start of the book.

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### **Chapter One: Pilot's Bite**

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Use portions from the original chapters: Women, Let's Fly; Test Flight

***The chapter is about what inspired you to fly.*** Talk about the seeds of your passion for flying. The airshow in Yuma and your experience as a passenger on a flight to Sechelt (from Women, Let's Fly) give you the "pilot's bite"; you research schools, and you go out on a test flight with Amelia (talk about her background here) at Boundary Bay.

**Omit:** The discussion of how you have a daunting feeling until you get a few flights under your belt, since this is an introductory chapter; that perspective can come later.

**Move:** Introduce the concept of "pilot's bite" originally mentioned in the Cohorts chapter.

**Move:** Put the following details from Women, Let's Fly down into Chapter Five: air time, tach time, wristwatches, and how planes need to be inspected every 100 hours.

**Move:** The license chart in the original Test Flight chapter works well as an appendix (see the end of this document).

**Add:** Hook your reader at the beginning of the chapter with more sensory detail about how you felt during the test flight and the Sechelt flight; explain how you left your teaching career and why you wanted a new hobby; why did the Yuma airshow inspire you?

**Add:** Your book's central argument that flying is a rewarding and life-changing hobby or career for women to take on in mid-life.

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### **Chapter Two: The Wrong Stuff?**

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This is a clever title, and the question mark is added to dispute the common perception that all pilots must fit the same mold.

Use portions from the original chapters: The Wrong Stuff; Opposite Reaction

***This chapter is about your personal history in relation to risk taking, and your awareness of the personal and financial sacrifices ahead.*** You decide to take lessons, and you tell your husband, who is skeptical. Talk about the cost of flight school (from Opposite Reaction), and the reality of facing time away from your chihuahuas. Talk about why you don't fit the typical pilot profile, and describe your flying goals (and explain why those are your aims).

**Omit:** The quote from Chris, who is unknown to the reader.

**Omit:** The parts about you wanting to try diving, in order to keep the focus on aviation.

**Omit:** The discussion of a two-and-a-half-hour solo flight, since it's out of place chronologically — the reader hasn't heard about your flying skills yet.

**Add:** A brief explanation of the types of licenses.

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### Chapter Three: Flying Myths (Thanks, Top Gun!)

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Use the original chapters: Top Gun Myths; Flights of Fancy

***Putting the myths earlier on than it appears in the original manuscript will help encourage any readers who still have doubts about their suitability for being a pilot, or who believe these myths, to realize there are fewer barriers to exploring this hobby than they think.***

**Omit:** The reference to your friends and family being reluctant to fly with you, since this is unrelated to the myths.

**Omit:** The three easy ways to maximize your training, since they are off topic here; if you prefer to keep these tips in the book, they would work better in one of the chapters which describe your lessons.

**Omit:** Your book focuses on small planes, not helicopters, so the information on helicopters (from Flights of Fancy) is out of place.

**Move:** Take the link to the guidelines for the aviation exam and use it to create a list for the reader's reference — this list will be put in an appendix.

**Add:** Concluding comments about how it's important to shatter these myths, because they kept you from flying, and with the shortage of pilots, more women need to know that such ideas from popular movies like *Top Gun* are false.

**Add:** A concluding section with the information (from Flights of Fancy) about instructor rates, the Cessnas, and your observation that other hobbies have an equivalent cost.

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## Chapter Four: Preparing for Takeoff

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Use this original chapter: The Kit

***This chapter is about your experience as a brand-new student, with explanations of your flight bag, the walkaround, and your decision to get your medical certificate before your training begins.***

Explain how the items in your flight bag will be used, in particular the kneeboard and the pilot's logbook, and describe the pre-flight walkaround, including how to check the fuel. You're worried about finding out you can't fly due to a medical condition, so you find an aviation doctor. The medical certificate arrives sooner than expected, and you're ready for the next lesson.

**Move: The part about hoping to see the reader out there, since this type of statement would work better in Chapter Ten, as parting words.**

**Add: More detail about the flight you and Amelia took after her lecture. How did the classroom lesson help you during the flight?**

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## Chapter Five: Wheels Up

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Use the original chapters: Eat Sleep Fly Repeat; Pirep

***This chapter will cover the basics of flying as you learned them in your first lessons.*** Explain the procedures needed to prepare the aircraft for flight; the importance of weight calculations; how the plane is fueled; how to steer the plane in the air (from Eat Sleep Fly Repeat).

**Omit: The advantages of flying yourself, from the original Eat Sleep Fly Repeat; these are unrelated to the chapter's theme of set-up procedures and flying mechanics.**

**Omit: The crashes at Sechelt and at Hope — the focus is on flying basics, so a discussion of accidents is tangential. Alternatively, the crashes could be moved to Chapter Six as part of a general discussion on safety.**

**Omit: The quote from the newspaper article about the repaving (in original Eat Sleep Fly Repeat).**

**Add: The details about tach time, air time, wristwatches, and plane inspection (from Women, Let's Fly).**

**Add: More description of your emotions and physical sensations during lessons.**

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## Chapter Six: Weather and Other Challenges

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Use the original chapter: Keep on Enter

*The focus of this chapter is how weather and other factors can either prevent a flight or present challenges in the air.*

Briefly describes how weather affects a flight already underway, and when weather keeps planes on the ground. Retain the passages from the original chapter which talk about all the things you might forget (your booster pillow, for example) and may delay a flight. Explain what types of defects found during inspection that might lead to a decision to get another plane.

**Omit:** The part about preferring the size of the Cessna 152s, because it's not a factor that can ground a flight.

**Add:** More explanation about weather systems and their effects on aircraft.

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## Chapter Seven: Cohorts

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*This chapter works well as it is, but a couple of changes will sharpen the focus.*

**Omit:** Andrew's skydiving stories, and also the part about him being surprised about being directed to the left seat. Doing so will create room for Evelyn's experience.

**Add:** More details about Evelyn — the rest of your text has a strong focus on female pilots, so adding this would keep in line with this theme.

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## Chapter Eight: Survivor: Arizona

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Use the original chapter: Survivor Arizona

*Most of the chapter, which is about your first solo cross-country flight, works well as it stands — it's an effective illustration of your problem-solving skills, resilience, and adaptability in the air during a disorienting situation caused by the gyro compass.*

**Add:** An introduction to George, so the reader better understands his role.

**Add:** A description of the Somerton airport.

**Add:** More description of the emotions you experienced when you were trying to find your heading.

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## Chapter Nine: A Tiny Dot on A Large Map

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Use the original chapter: Cross-border Flyer

*Few changes are needed to this chapter, which is about how but you found your determination to get in the air again after an off day felt like a setback.*

**Omit:** The passage about the Max 8 & 9 planes, because it's tangential to the chapter's topic. The issues with these planes also merit a longer technical discussion, for which this chapter lacks space.

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## Chapter Ten: Wherever the Windsock Blows

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Use the original chapter: Windsock

*This chapter will draw your story together and talk about your current aviation activities since getting your license. Also, give your readers some encouraging words about flying as a career.*

**Omit:** The section about Dave possibly leaving, because this chapter's focus is on where you are now.

**Omit:** The portion discussing migrants, in order to keep the focus on your flying experience.

**Add:** Where your flying career is at now; how it felt when you got your license, how often you fly; discuss how flying has changed you; talk about how many of your goals you've met (are you involved in animal rescue now?); future plans (with your analogy of the windsock for the potential to go in any direction). Has Pilot the chihuahua ever come on a flight?

**Add:** Concluding thoughts about women in aviation, and also restate why this is a great hobby or career for women in midlife, especially amid a pilot shortage.

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## Appendices and Glossaries

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**Add:** Appendix 1, which is the license chart found in the original chapter Test Flight.

**Add:** Appendix 2, which is the guidelines for the aviation medical exam found in the original Flying Myths chapter.

**Add:** A glossary of aviation terms.

**Add:** A list of abbreviations and acronyms.