

System Minima

'System Minima' is the minimum height that the system can be deemed accurate to. These differ with types of approach and are published in the UK AIP but are reproduced below.

Precision Approach

ILS or PAR 200 feet

Non-Precision Approach

VOR/DME	250 feet
LOC	250 feet
SRA (0.5 nm)	250 feet
VOR	300 feet
NDB	300 feet
VDF	300 feet
SRA (1 nm)	300 feet
RNAV (LNAV only)	300 feet
SRA (2 nm)	350 feet

IMC Absolute Minima

Precision Approach

ILS or PAR 500 feet

Non-Precision Approach

All others 600 feet

IMC Minimum Visibility

Approach	1500 metres
Departure	1500 metres



A GUIDE TO CALCULATING IMC MINIMA

When calculating approach minima, it is recommended that an IMC rated pilot adds a safety factor of 200 feet to the IR minimum. This is a recommendation and not mandatory but should be applied for the simple reason that IMC pilots are not normally in current practice flying instrument approaches, and will only do so as a last resort after getting caught out by the weather.

Do not forget that IMC absolute minima of 500ft DH for a precision approach, and 600ft MDH for a non-precision approach IS mandatory!

IMC minima are expressed as HEIGHTS and therefore when calculating your Decision Altitude or Minimum Descent Altitude, only heights must be used, until the last stage where the addition of the runway threshold or airfield elevation converts the DH/MDH to a DA/MDA.

The common practice is to fly an instrument approach on QNH to a DA or MDA, as in the event of a missed approach, the go around will be flown to an altitude. The worst time to reset an altimeter is at low altitude whilst trying to stabilise in the climb, reconfigure the aircraft and navigate the missed approach.

When planning to fly an instrument approach, there are two main factors to consider:

*The minimum visibility below which an approach should not be commenced. These are published on each airfield chart. It should be noted that the minimum visibility for an IMC pilot is 1500M. **This is mandatory.***

Calculation is based on approach system minima, OCH (obstacle clearance height) and aircraft category.

HOW TO CALCULATE DECISION ALTITUDE & MINIMUM DESCENT ALTITUDE

