

AIRFRAME & POWERPLANT MECHANICS

POWERPLANT HANDBOOK

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CORRECTION LOG

About these corrections: Aircraft Technical Book Company, along with a team of Part 147 instructors, has reviewed the content of this Handbook as published by the FAA. This page lists errors from the original publication that have been corrected in this ATB edition. We do recognize that we may not have caught all the errors. If you find an additional error, discrepancy, or contradiction in this book, please contact us at info@actechbooks.com so that we may review your finding and make the appropriate correction.

- 2-10 Figure 2-12; label's arrow for carburetor venturi section extended into actual venturi area.
- 2-19 Figure 2-28; color coding in diagram adjusted to better display areas of metered and unmetered fuel flow.
- 5-7 Figure 5-11; split confusing label into two sections and corrected spelling error in label.
- 5-8 Figure 5-12; added label showing position of starter motor.
- 6-6 Figure 6-6; corrected red arrows depicting direction of oil flow in the gear-type oil pump.
- 6-13 Figure 6-16; incorrect image replaced to show proper schematic of a wet sump system from a Lycoming O-480 manual.
- 6-14 Figure 6-19; replaced an incoherent drawing with photo of Lycoming lower sump area and oil drain plug.
- 6-36 Clarified caption for Figure 6-56.
- 9-9 Clarified text; *When the fire switch is activated, the fire extinguishing system is armed.*
- 9-17 Figure 9-25; added label showing the position of the Slug.
- 10-22 Figure 10-36; replaced with clear image of fuel and oil pressure indicators.
- 10-22 Releted incorrect figure reference.
- 10-23 Figure 10-38; replaced poor image with another depicting both analog and digital tachometers and the readout locations.
- 10-43 Figure 10-55; drawing showed temperature probe at cylinder barrel. Corrected to point at Cylinder head.
- 11-16 Corrected tolerance of hours permissible between scheduled inspections.
- 11-17 Figure 11-28; corrected labeling. A screw does not insert in a vent port.
- 11-19 Figure 11-30; corrected labeling of carburetor components.

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Chapter 11

Light-Sport Aircraft Engines

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retains the surplus oil above the ring on the upward piston stroke, and this oil is returned to the crankcase by the oil control rings on the downward stroke.

Cylinders

The portion of the engine in which the power is developed is called the cylinder. [Figure 1-16] The cylinder provides a combustion chamber where the burning and expansion of gases take place, and it houses the piston and the connecting rod. There are four major factors that need to be considered in the design and construction of the cylinder assembly. It must:

1. Be strong enough to withstand the internal pressures developed during engine operation.
2. Be constructed of a lightweight metal to keep down engine weight.
3. Have good heat-conducting properties for efficient cooling.
4. Be comparatively easy and inexpensive to manufacture, inspect, and maintain.

The cylinder head of an air cooled engine is generally made of aluminum alloy because aluminum alloy is a good conductor of heat and its light weight reduces the overall engine weight. Cylinder heads are forged or die-cast for greater strength. The inner shape of a cylinder head is generally semispherical. The semispherical shape is stronger than conventionalist



Figure 1-16. An example of an engine cylinder.

design and aids in a more rapid and thorough scavenging of the exhaust gases.

The cylinder used in the air cooled engine is the overhead valve type. [Figure 1-17] Each cylinder is an assembly of two major parts: cylinder head and cylinder barrel. At assembly, the cylinder head is expanded by heating and then screwed down on the cylinder barrel, which has been chilled. When the head cools and contracts and the barrel warms up and expands, a gastight joint results. The majority of the cylinders used are constructed in this manner using an aluminum head and a steel barrel. [Figure 1-18]

Cylinder Heads

The purpose of the cylinder head is to provide a place for combustion of the air-fuel mixture and to give the cylinder more heat conductivity for adequate cooling. The air-fuel mixture is ignited by the spark in the combustion chamber and commences burning as the piston travels toward top dead center (top of its travel) on the compression stroke. The ignited charge is rapidly expanding at this time, and pressure is increasing so that, as the piston travels through the top dead center position, it is driven downward on the power stroke.

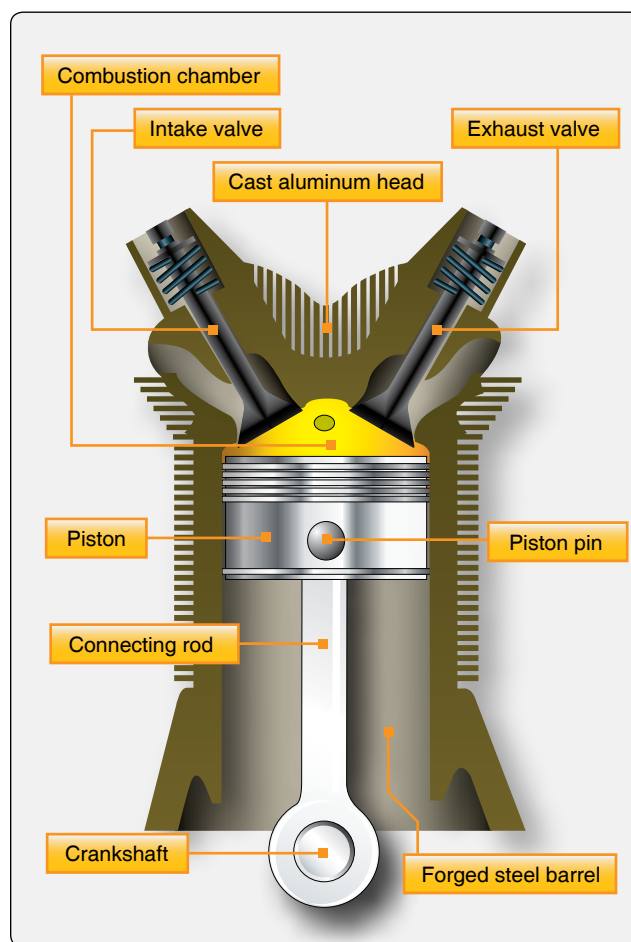


Figure 1-17. Cutaway view of the cylinder assembly.

The intake and exhaust valve ports are located in the cylinder head along with the spark plugs and the intake and exhaust valve actuating mechanisms.

After the cylinder head is cast, the spark plug bushings, valve guides, rocker arm bushings, and valve seats are installed in the cylinder head. Spark plug openings may be fitted with bronze or steel bushings that are shrunk and screwed into the openings. Stainless steel Heli-Coil spark plug inserts are used in many engines currently manufactured. Bronze or steel valve guides are usually shrunk or screwed into drilled openings in the cylinder head to provide guides for the valve stems. These are generally located at an angle to the center line of the cylinder. The valve seats are circular rings of hardened metal that protect the relatively soft metal of the cylinder head from the hammering action of the valves (as they open and close) and from the exhaust gases.

The cylinder heads of air cooled engines are subjected to extreme temperatures; it is therefore necessary to provide adequate cooling fin area and to use metals that conduct heat rapidly. Cylinder heads of air cooled engines are usually cast or forged. Aluminum alloy is used in the construction for a number of reasons. It is well adapted for casting or for the machining of deep, closely spaced fins, and it is more resistant than most metals to the corrosive attack of tetraethyl lead in gasoline. The greatest improvement in air cooling has resulted from reducing the thickness of the fins and increasing their depth. In this way, the fin area has been increased in modern engines. Cooling fins taper from 0.090" at the base to 0.060" at the tip end. Because of the difference in temperature in the various sections of the cylinder head, it is necessary to provide more cooling-fin area on some sections than on others. The exhaust valve region is the hottest part of the internal surface; therefore, more fin area is provided around the outside of the cylinder in this section.



Figure 1-18. *The aluminum head and steel barrel of a cylinder.*

Cylinder Barrels

The cylinder barrel in which the piston operates must be made of a high-strength material, usually steel. It must be as light as possible yet have the proper characteristics for operating under high temperatures. It must be made of a good bearing material and have high tensile strength. The cylinder barrel is made of a steel alloy forging with the inner surface hardened to resist wear of the piston and the piston rings which bear against it. This hardening is usually done by exposing the steel to ammonia or cyanide gas while the steel is very hot. The steel soaks up nitrogen from the gas, which forms iron nitrides on the exposed surface. As a result of this process, the metal is said to be nitrided. This nitriding only penetrates into the barrel surface a few thousands of an inch. As the cylinder barrels wear due to use, they can be repaired by chroming. This is a process that plates chromium on the surface of the cylinder barrel and brings it back to new standard dimensions. Chromium-plated cylinders should use cast iron rings. Honing the cylinder walls is a process that brings it to the correct dimensions and provides crosshatch pattern for seating the piston rings during engine break-in. Some engine cylinder barrels are choked at the top, or they are smaller in diameter to allow for heat expansion and wear.

In some instances, the barrel has threads on the outside surface at one end so that it can be screwed into the cylinder head. The cooling fins are machined as an integral part of the barrel and have limits on repair and service.

Cylinder Numbering

Occasionally, it is necessary to refer to the left or right side of the engine or to a particular cylinder. Therefore, it is necessary to know the engine directions and how cylinders of an engine are numbered. The propeller shaft end of the engine is always the front end, and the accessory end is the rear end, regardless of how the engine is mounted in an aircraft. When referring to the right side or left side of an engine, always assume the view is from the rear or accessory end. As seen from this position, crankshaft rotation is referred to as either clockwise or counterclockwise.

Inline and V-type engine cylinders are usually numbered from the rear. In V-engines, the cylinder banks are known as the right bank and the left bank, as viewed from the accessory end. [Figure 1-19] The cylinder numbering of the opposed engine shown begins with the right rear as No. 1 and the left rear as No. 2. The one forward of No. 1 is No. 3; the one forward of No. 2 is No. 4, and so on. The numbering of opposed engine cylinders is by no means standard. Some manufacturers number their cylinders from the rear and others from the front of the engine. Always refer to the appropriate engine manual to determine the numbering system used by that manufacturer.

Single-row radial engine cylinders are numbered clockwise when viewed from the rear. Cylinder No. 1 is the top cylinder. In double-row engines, the same system is used. The No. 1 cylinder is the top one in the rear row. No. 2 cylinder is the first one clockwise from No. 1, but No. 2 is in the front row. No. 3 cylinder is the next one clockwise to No. 2 but is in the rear row. Thus, all odd-numbered cylinders are in the rear row, and all even-numbered cylinders are in the front row.

Firing Order

The firing order of an engine is the sequence in which the power event occurs in the different cylinders. The firing order is designed to provide for balance and to eliminate vibration to the greatest extent possible. In radial engines, the firing order must follow a special pattern since the firing impulses must follow the motion of the crank throw during its rotation. In inline engines, the firing orders may vary somewhat, yet most orders are arranged so that the firing of cylinders is evenly distributed along the crankshaft. Six-cylinder inline engines generally have a firing order of 1-5-3-6-2-4. Cylinder firing order in opposed engines can usually be listed in pairs of cylinders, as each pair fires across the center main bearing. The firing order of six-cylinder opposed engines is 1-4-5-2-3-6. The firing order of one model four-cylinder opposed engine is 1-4-2-3, but on another model, it is 1-3-2-4.

Single-Row Radial Engines

On a single-row radial engine, all the odd-numbered cylinders fire in numerical succession; then, the even numbered cylinders fire in numerical succession. On a five-cylinder radial engine, for example, the firing order is 1-3-5-2-4, and on a seven-cylinder radial engine it is 1-3-5-7-2-4-6. The firing order of a nine-cylinder radial engine is 1-3-5-7-9-2-4-6-8.

Double-Row Radial Engines

On a double-row radial engine, the firing order is somewhat complicated. The firing order is arranged with the firing impulse occurring in a cylinder in one row and then in a cylinder in the other row; therefore, two cylinders in the same row never fire in succession.

An easy method for computing the firing order of a 14-cylinder, double-row radial engine is to start with any number from 1 to 14 and add 9 or subtract 5 (these are called the firing order numbers), whichever gives an answer between 1 and 14, inclusive. For example, starting with 8, 9 cannot be added since the answer would then be more than 14; therefore, subtract 5 from 8 to get 3, add 9 to 3 to get 12, subtract 5 from 12 to get 7, subtract 5 from 7 to get 2, and so on.

The firing order numbers of an 18-cylinder, double-row radial engine are 11 and 7; that is, begin with any number from 1 to 18 and add 11 or subtract 7. For example, beginning with 1, add 11 to get 12; 11 cannot be added to 12 because the total would be more than 18, so subtract 7 to get 5, add 11 to 5 to get 16, subtract 7 from 16 to get 9, subtract 7 from 9 to get 2, add 11 to 2 to get 13, and continue this process for 18 cylinders.

Valves

The air-fuel mixture enters the cylinders through the intake valve ports, and burned gases are expelled through the exhaust valve ports. The head of each valve opens and closes these cylinder ports. The valves used in aircraft engines are the conventional poppet type. The valves are also typed by their shape and are called either mushroom or tulip because of their resemblance to the shape of these plants. *Figure 1-20* illustrates various shapes and types of these valves.

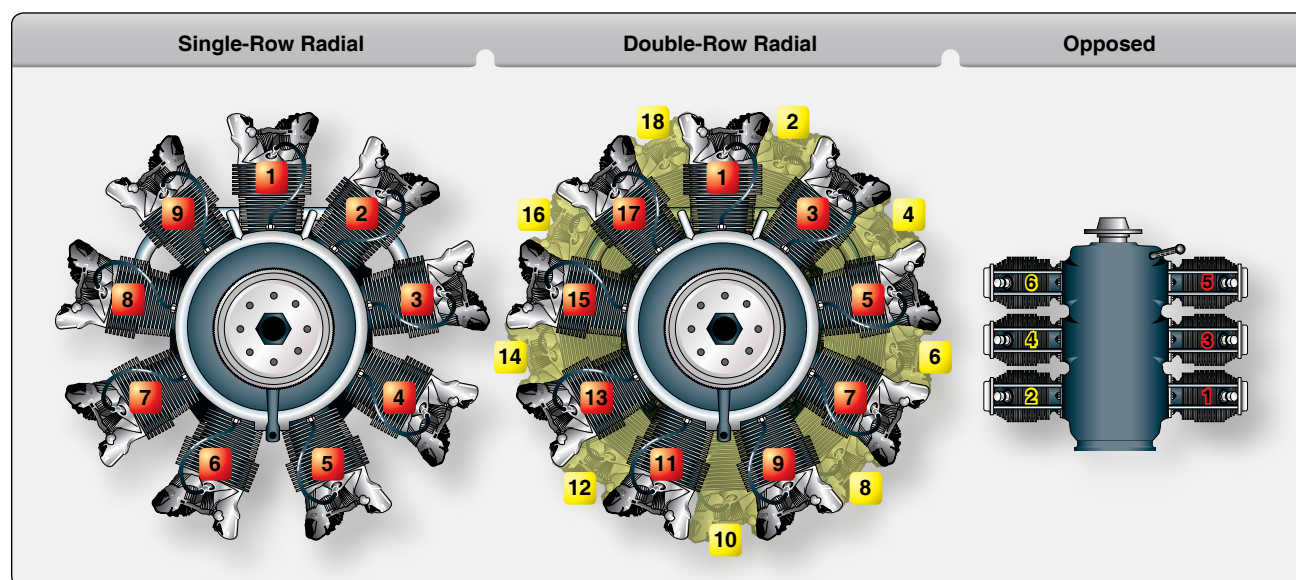


Figure 1-19. Numbering of engine cylinders.

Valve Construction

The valves in the cylinders of an aircraft engine are subjected to high temperatures, corrosion, and operating stresses; thus, the metal alloy in the valves must be able to resist all these factors. Because intake valves operate at lower temperatures than exhaust valves, they can be made of chromic-nickel steel. Exhaust valves are usually made of nichrome, silchrome, or cobalt-chromium steel because these materials are much more heat resistant.

The valve head has a ground face that forms a seal against the ground valve seat in the cylinder head when the valve is closed. The face of the valve is usually ground to an angle of either 30° or 45°. In some engines, the intake-valve face is ground to an angle of 30°, and the exhaust-valve face is ground to a 45° angle. Valve faces are often made more durable by the application of a material called stellite. About $\frac{1}{16}$ inch of this alloy is welded to the valve face and ground to the correct angle. Stellite is resistant to high-temperature corrosion and also withstands the shock and wear associated with valve operation. Some engine manufacturers use a nichrome facing on the valves. This serves the same purpose as the stellite material.

The valve stem acts as a pilot for the valve head and rides in

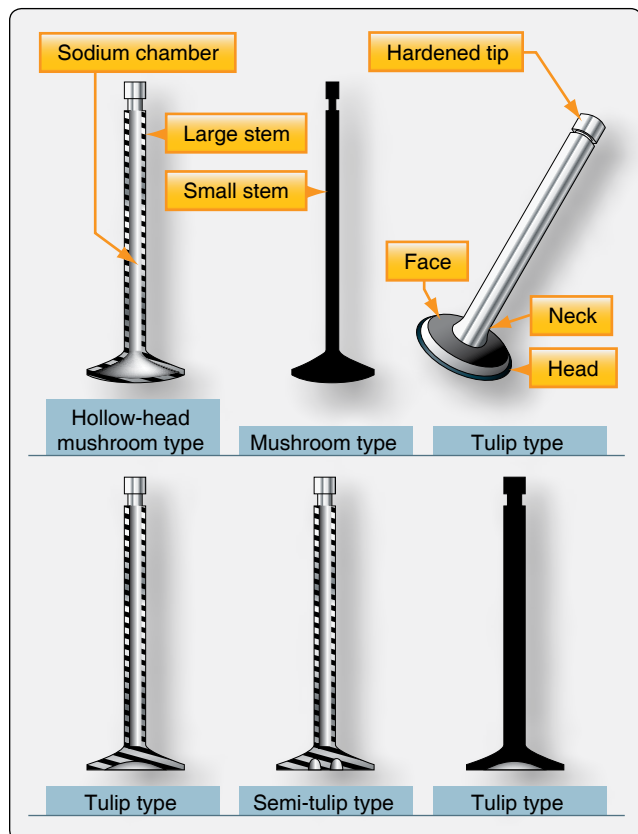


Figure 1-20. Various valve types.

the valve guide installed in the cylinder head for this purpose. [Figure 1-21] The valve stem is surface hardened to resist wear. The neck is the part that forms the junction between the head and the stem. The tip of the valve is hardened to withstand the hammering of the valve rocker arm as it opens the valve. A machined groove on the stem near the tip receives the split-ring stem keys. These stem keys form a lock ring to hold the valve spring retaining washer in place. [Figure 1-22]

Some intake and exhaust valve stems are hollow and partially filled with metallic sodium. This material is used because it is an excellent heat conductor. The sodium melts at approximately 208 °F and the reciprocating motion of the valve circulates the liquid sodium, allowing it to carry away heat from the valve head to the valve stem where it is dissipated through the valve guide to the cylinder head and the cooling fins. Thus, the operating temperature of the valve may be reduced as much as 300° to 400 °F. Under no circumstances should a sodium-filled valve be cut open



Figure 1-21. View of valve guide installed on a cylinder head.



Figure 1-22. Stem keys forming a lock ring to hold valve spring retaining washers in place.