RC Helicopter: Tracking Your Blades by Javed Khan

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Whether your RC helicopter was bought used, ready to fly, almost ready to fly, or build it yourself, it is essential that you make sure that the helicopterâ€™s rotor blades are tracking in perfection and on the same plane. If your blades were unable to track on the same plane, then it would cause vibrations and shakes in your RC helicopter and causing it to not have the same pitch, which will eventually lead to your helicopter having difficulty in lifting, hovering, and will all in all, lead to flight instability.

Blade tracking per se involves making sure that both rotor blades are able to spin n the same plane without one blade being higher or lower than the other blade that it follows or succeeds. Failure of the any one of the blades to do this will cause the RC helicopter to be out of track and may lead to some problems while in flight.

If you are flying your RC helicopter on its inaugural flight, make sure that the rotor blades are balanced perfectly before moving on to checking the proper tracking of the rotor blades. If you notice a lot of vibrations and shaking in your RC helicopter while it is in flight or hovering, or it simply exhibits lesser lift, then it is highly likely that the rotor blades are having difficulty or inability to track properly (this is assuming that you are sure that the blades are already balanced to perfection). Here is a simple guide to check your RC helicopter blade tracking.

1. Put a strip of tape on the edge of each rotor blades. Remember to use different colors. This will help you identify which of the two blades are out of track easier and faster.

2. Hover the helicopter for a few feet to see the spin of the rotor blades at eye level. Alternatively, you may opt to spool the helicopter on the ground while keeping the pitch at 0 to see the spinning rotors.

3. Identify which blade might not be tracking properly. If the blades are not tracking properly you will notice that one blade will seem to bee on top of the other blade. You will notice this because of the tapes that you placed on the blades. If they are tracking properly, then you will see the tapes like a blur and they will seem to be overlapping each other.

4. If you find that your helicopter is not tracking properly, then lengthen the linkage to the blade grip of the rotor that was spinning lower. You can do this by removing the ball links and unscrewing them one turn at a time until you achieve perfect tracking.

5. If youâ€™re done adjusting the blade grips, repeat steps 1 through 3 and check for proper blade tracking.

Reminder: Check the tracking each and every time you remove or replace the main rotors. This will ensure that your helicopter will always have perfect blade tracking for use in flight.

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