

Snelflight Hoverfly

What about the Umbilical?

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The Hoverfly operates at all times on a thin umbilical, called the Command Line. The downside to this is obvious; however, the command line is thin (0.7mm) and unobtrusive, and has several major advantages.

Firstly, you can fly continuously, which is great for learning. More generally, direct mains power means that there is almost no preparation required before a session, so if you have a spare five minutes, you can spend it flying. Conventional models are not like this; you have transmitter, receiver, glo-starter, engine starter or flight battery packs to charge up and maintain, as well as travel to and from a flying field in order to get a flight.

Secondly, the absence of batteries saves a lot of weight, which makes the Hoverfly much less prone to breaking when it crashes (Hoverfly weighs under 70g). The motors run cool and last a long time, unlike those on standard electric helicopters in which the main drive motor has to work so hard it seems ready to melt. Also, you are saved the cost of several flight packs and a fast charger.

The Command Line supplied as standard is 3.5m (about 12 ft) in length. This lets you reach the corners of a fairly large room. A 6m (20 ft) upgrade line is available if needed. Despite being so thin, the wire is amazingly robust. As spares, we have sold very few indeed.

Outside, the umbilical is somewhat restrictive (the sky is just so *big!*); however, the Hoverfly is not intended to fly outdoors, since it is too light to cope with more than the slightest wind, and too small to see from any distance. Because the Hoverfly is never more than a few feet away from you, we have avoided radio communication entirely. The transmitter connects to the Hoverfly's control system by means of the buddy box socket instead. This method extends the transmitter's battery life greatly, and eliminates worries about frequencies and interference.