



Secraft Radio Transmitter Tray

Part of the draw of this hobby, and for that matter ANY hobby, is the challenge to improve. Most of us enjoy the feeling of accomplishment that comes from being able to do something that was previously beyond the scope of our abilities. The sheer variety of genres that exist within the radio control hobby, coupled with the impressive technological advances of the last few decades, has managed to keep me both smitten and passionately engaged for most of my adult life. One area in which I have always found myself lacking is helicopters. Though I have owned both nitro and electric helis through the years, I have never sufficiently focused my attention on developing my heli proficiency to any respectable level. About a year ago, I decided that it was high time to address that deficiency and made a decided and determined effort to start logging regular, daily flights. On top of that, I have recently found myself extremely attracted to and affected by the multirotor rage. My interests in them are mostly related to the fact that they are truly a game changer when it comes to being able to shoot near-Hollywood quality aerial photography and videography on a budget. There are many differences and similarities to flying helis and multirotor aircraft but in the end, flying both of them led me to the realization that it was time to make some wholesale changes in the way that I have approached my flying for the last three decades.



The age-old, burning question when it comes to RC flying styles is: thumbs or pinchers? For my entire life of RC flight, I have been solidly rooted in the former... two thumbs perched atop the radio sticks while the rest of my fingers hold the transmitter. The other style of flying involves pinching the radio sticks between your thumbs and forefingers. And I stuck with

my method for all of these years mainly because it just felt right for me. I read every article in Fly RC magazine each month, mainly because I am still hungry to learn and I quite often glean new tips and techniques from my peers and the experiences of others. A few months back, I read an article where Dave Scott, touted as the world's most experienced RC flight instructor, summarily said that one of the first things that he teaches his students is the non-negotiable need to pinch the sticks. He avers that this method, unlike the all-thumbs approach, is more precise and controlled and assuredly leads to overall better piloting skills. Since Dave's credentials as the chief instructor and owner of the 1st US

» NEED TO KNOW

MANUFACTURER: Secraft
DISTRIBUTOR: Esprit Model
PRICE: \$92.00; Accessory prices vary



Flight School are undeniably impressive, his words caused me to pause and rethink my long-held approach. And since my ultimate goal has always been to improve my flying skills, I decided to make the switch. Switching to this method, however, has been fairly challenging. My two forefingers have been the anchor members of my radio transmitter support crew for thirty-plus years! Moving them to the sticks resulted in me feeling like I was always about one second away from flat-out dropping my transmitter. Determined to stick with my effort to refine my methods, I decided that perhaps a radio tray would be the answer. I had previously noticed that Esprit Model carried a unique and varied selection of fine looking aluminum radio trays and accessories from Secraft. With a fresh discount coupon in an email from Esprit in my inbox, I ordered up a tray. Esprit carries two different sizes of this radio tray and it is available



in black, blue or red. The determining factor as to which size you will need is determined by the dimensions of the transmitter on which you want to use it. It is all clearly explained on the Esprit website. There are also more than a few matching transmitter and tray accessories available from Esprit. My tray flew all the way from Florida to California in record time, thanks to Esprit's use of USPS Priority shipping. The tray and its associated hardware are all contained in a compartmented plastic bag. No assembly instructions are included but Esprit provides ample close-up photos of the tray from a variety of angles on their comprehensive website. Using these photos, I had the tray assembled in a few minutes. I was duly impressed with how feathery-light the anodized blue tray felt in my hands. My primary rotary winged model transmitter is a Futaba 14SG. I like to use its built-in telemetry feature to receive real time in-flight data from some of my multirotor aircraft. It is not by any means a small transmitter dimensionally; and I was cursed to receive my momma's little hands! Slipping the 14SG into the Secraft tray is easy and it locks firmly into place, with no fears that it could ever come out of the tray on its own. My first flight using the tray had me instantly wondering why and how I ever flew without it. The tray bears the full weight of the radio and the fingers that I previously tasked with holding my transmitter have since been relieved of duty. Using a tray makes



the pinch method of stick control much easier. The tray even allows me to completely remove my hands from the sticks while in flight, allowing me to easily access telemetry data on my radio or just give them a breather. I have since accessorized my Esprit tray even further, adding the optional hand rests, the LCD FPV monitor holder and the four-point harness strap. The hand rests are especially fantastic. I feel like my hands are now relaxing in a pair of La-Z-Boy recliners when I am flying. The hand rests completely support your hands in a most natural position possible and at the perfect elevation. I did have to slightly modify the LCD display holder to properly accommodate my particular monitor, but I love having the FPV display right there above my transmitter. The angle of the LCD can be easily adjusted using a pair of anodized quick-release levers. The four-point harness strap does a great job of properly distributing the weight across your back and really contributes to the entire ensemble hanging comfortably and in the right position. My wife chuckles every time she sees her favorite nerd wearing what she refers to as his "flight controller command station" but this tray has been pivotal to this nerd making good on his determination to switch to the pinch style of radio control. The anodized-aluminum Secraft trays are lightweight, the machining and hardware are first-rate and enough customization options and color choices exist to allow each pilot to outfit their tray until it feels and looks just right to them. Though I used to think radio trays were only used by European pilots and old timers (and I am well on my way to being the latter), I have tasted what they can do and it is truly amazing. Good luck trying to pry this game changing transmitter tray out of my pinch grips. ☺

CONTACT
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For more information, please see our source guide on page xx.