The "1" Rule - To file an IFR flight plan to a destination airport, the forecast predominant weather at your ETA through 1 hour after ETA must be equal to or greater than the military weather planning minimums for the approach you intend to fly at that destination. Helicopters may reduce visibility requirements by 50% but not less than ¼ mile or 1200 RVR. Visibility requirements may not be reduced on COPTER ONLY procedures. In the example below, you would need 400 - ¾ at ETA through one hour after ETA predominant weather in order to file an IFR flight plan to this airport.

The "3" Rule - An alternate airfield is required IF ...

1. Radar is required for the approach to be flown. 
   (The easiest way to make this determination is to look your approach over and see if you can fly the entire procedure without the aid of radar approach control. Some approach plates will designate RADAR REQUIRED but this may not be the case in all situations that may require radar.)

2. The approach navigational aids are unmonitored.
   (See the airport's NAVAIDS section in the IFR Supplement or A/FD)

3. The forecast predominant weather at ETA through 1 hour after ETA, is less than 400 - 1 above the military planning minimums for the approach to be flown.
   (Per example above - (400 - ¾) + (400 - 1) = 800 - ¾ at ETA through one hour after ETA predominant weather, otherwise an alternate must be designated.)

The "6" Rule - An airfield may not be used as an alternate IF ...

1. Radar is required for the approach to be flown. 
   (The easiest way to make this determination is to look your approach over and see if you can fly the entire procedure without the aid of radar approach control. Some approach plates will designate RADAR REQUIRED but this may not be the case in all situations that may require radar)

2. The approach navigational aids are unmonitored.
   (See the airport's NAVAIDS section in the IFR Supplement or A/FD)

3. The approach procedure is labeled as A/NA. (See remarks section of approach plate)

4. If Class B, C, D, or E surface airspace does not exist or is not in effect at the airport to be used. (See operating hours in IFR Supplement)

5. If the global positioning system (GPS) is required for the approach.

6. The forecast worst weather (at ETA through 1 hour after ETA) is less than 400 - 1 above the military planning minimums for the approach to be flown.

"VFR Exception Rule" (AR 95-1 paragraphs 5-2e(4) and 5-2f(1)(b))

Both the 3 and the 6 rules may be overridden by the VFR exception which says that an alternate is not required and / or an airfield may be used as an alternate (even if any of the above conditions exist) if the descent, the approach, and the landing can be made in VFR conditions from the minimum altitude for IFR operations.

\[
\begin{align*}
1800 & \text{ MIA (Minimum IFR Altitude)} \\
- \quad 349 & \text{ Airfield Elevation} \\
= \quad 1451 & \text{ Aircraft AGL Altitude} \\
+ \quad 500 & \text{ VFR Cloud Clearance Below Clouds based on class of airspace} \\
= \quad 1951 & \text{ Cloud height in AGL} \\
\text{Ans} \quad 2000 / 3\text{sm} & \text{ Round cloud height to the nearest hundreds and apply VFR visibility requirements.}
\end{align*}
\]

Example: Minimum en-route IFR altitude. Terminal Area Forecasts are Given in AGL so the MIA must be converted to AGL and also add VFR cloud clearance and visibility requirements for the type of airspace in which you are flying.

The final result is the VFR cloud and visibility requirement which must be compared to the Terminal Area Forecast at ETA through 1 hour after ETA predominant/worst weather depending on whether you are determining if you need an alternate or if you are selecting an alternate.
**DESTINATION WX REQUIREMENTS**

1. Destination Weather Planning Minimums: 

   Ceiling _____  _  Visibility _____

---

**DO I NEED AN ALTERNATE?**

1. Can I do an approach without the aid of RADAR?  
   YES or NO

2. Are the NAVAIDs for the approach monitored?  
   YES or NO

3. Do I have 400’ and 1 mile visibility above planning minimums (predominant weather)  
   YES or NO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination Weather Planning Minimums:</th>
<th>Ceiling</th>
<th>Visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>400 feet and 1 statute mile visibility above Wx planning minimums</td>
<td>+ 400 ft</td>
<td>+ 1 mi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Destination WX Forecast at ETA + 1 Hour Predominant Wx | = | = |

Remember, there is a VFR exception that overrides determining if an alternate is required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum enroute IFR altitude</th>
<th>Altitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternate Airfield Field Elevation</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIA AGL Altitude</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VFR Cloud Clearance Requirement below clouds</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equals</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Round Answer to nearest hundreds of feet sm

**MAY I USE THIS AIRFIELD AS AN ALTERNATE?**

1. Can I do the approach without the aid of radar?  
   YES or NO

2. Are NAVAIDs monitored?  
   YES or NO

3. Does Class B, C, D, or E surface airspace exist?  
   YES or NO

4. Is the airfield authorized for use as an alternate? (No A/NA)  
   YES or NO

5. Can I do the approach without the aid of GPS?  
   YES or NO

6. Do I have 400’ and 1 mile visibility above planning minimums? (Worst Wx)  
   YES or NO

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<th>Visibility</th>
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<tr>
<td>400 feet and 1 statute mile visibility above Wx planning minimums</td>
<td>+ 400 ft</td>
<td>+ 1 mi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Destination WX Forecast at ETA + 1 Hour Worst Wx | = | = |

Remember, there is a VFR exception that if met, allows you to use an airfield as an alternate even if any one of the first five items above were answered NO.

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<td>Visibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Round Answer to nearest hundreds of feet sm

At ETA through 1 hour after ETA PREDOMINANT weather

At ETA through 1 hour after ETA WORST weather