ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Cessna 172S Skyhawk, G-UFCG
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming IO-360-L2A piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	2003
Date & Time (UTC):	12 October 2009 at 0925 hrs
Location:	Newtownards Aerodrome, Belfast
Type of Flight:	Training
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - None Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Propeller tips, firewall damage and some distortion to cockpit floor
Commander's Licence:	Student
Commander's Age:	64 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	44 hours (of which 8 were on type) Last 90 days - 15 hours Last 28 days - 3 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

After a dual check circuit and landing, assessed by his instructor as good, the student pilot flew his first solo cross-country exercise. The weather was described as good and the wind was reported as less than 5 kt when he returned to the circuit at Newtownards. The pilot reported that, following a shorter-than-usual base leg, he was too high on finals and elected to lose height, with the engine at minimum power, rather than go-around. Following a touchdown on the main wheels and near the runway numbers, the aircraft bounced; a situation that the student had not experienced before. The aircraft was observed to start to oscillate in pitch, initially nose-down. The second, harder touchdown also resulted in a bounce. The student considered going around but elected not to due to concern about his low airspeed. Further pitch oscillations ensued before he brought the aircraft under control, slowed to a stop and then backtracked Runway 22 to the apron. His instructor, who had been watching the landing, considered that the student's initial flare had not arrested the rate of descent completely, resulting in an early touchdown and the first bounce. Once back on the apron, an inspection revealed damage to the propeller, firewall and cockpit floor.