

Tips, Tricks & Recommendations for FS2004

Part XI

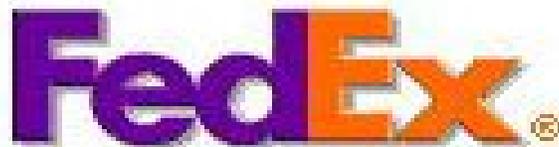
Compiled by David “Opa” Marshall
May 25, 2005

Disclaimer: These may or may not work for you – they do work well on my FS2004 setup. All recommendations are my personal preferences – I find them to be very useful – you may disagree. This is in no way meant to be a comprehensive listing – just a few tips, tricks and recommendations that I have come across. Hopefully you will find something of use, be you a newbie or a long time simmer.

This is Part XI – see “T and T info.txt” (enclosed in the zip file) for a listing of the previous files. All may be found at **Avsim.com**.

Test Your Perception

Pilots must be aware of their surroundings at all times. To see if you are as “aware” as you think you are, take a moment and look carefully at the following FedEx logos. Jot down what you see. At the end of this document you will find a short explanation of what you possibly missed. I guarantee that after you try this, you will never “see” a FedEx logo the same way again!



Step Saver

If you know that you want to disable (not delete) a particular scenery entry (or entries) before you start up FS2004, you can save a little bit of time by using the following tip.

Open your scenery.cfg file using notepad. The scenery.cfg file is located in your main Flight Simulator 9 directory. I keep a shortcut to it on my desktop.

Using the Edit – Find dialogue, go to the entry you wish to disable. Change the Active=TRUE line to read Active=FALSE and save the file.

Now, when you start FS2004, the program will create new indexes and the entry will be disabled.

You have just saved the usual steps of starting FS2004, unchecking the entry in the scenery library, exiting FS2004 and restarting FS once again.

Do **not** attempt to delete entries using this method – it's too easy to corrupt your scenery.cfg file by doing so.

How does this work?

There are actually two scenery.cfg files; one resides in the main FS directory (the one we just worked on) and the other is located in C:\Documents and Settings\Your User Name\Application Data\Microsoft\FS9. Do **not** make any changes in this one!

When you start FS2004, the program apparently compares the two scenery.cfg files and if it detects a difference (such as a change in the Active= line), the program creates new indexes for all related files. Then a new copy of each scenery.cfg file is written to the two folders.

Obviously this step saver can be used to “activate” any previously disabled entries also – just change the Active=FALSE line(s) to Active=TRUE.

It's all magic anyhow!

A Virtual Cockpit – Just What Is It?

FS2004 (I believe this may have started with FS2002) gives you two options to see your cockpit.

One is the fixed panel with all gauges and above it about 1/3 of "out of the window" look. By using the keypad you can look out the right and left sides and down using fixed views but not much else.

The other one is the VC (virtual cockpit) where you see both panel and window as they are. If you have a yoke or joystick with a hat button you can "move" around the cockpit and even see your pedals or what is behind your back, such as the cockpit door of the DC-3. If your aircraft has a cabin view as part of the VC, you can even flirt with the stewardess.

Many new add-on aircraft provide a virtual cockpit, and if you have your Settings/Display/Aircraft set to VC high quality, the cockpit looks very realistic indeed.

If you have a two monitor setup (one large and one medium), you can use the large one as a VC and the smaller one for the normal panel. While flying you always have the gauges available on the smaller one and can move your eyes in all directions on the other one with the hat switch.

Is Your Monitor Stu.....tt.....er.....ing?

If you have a high end video card and are experiencing occasional stuttering from your display, here is an interesting item. It is a utility to set PCI Latency and possibly prevent game stutter and/or improve FPS.

Apparently, newer high-end video cards hog PCI latency for reasons that are not clearly understood. This makes other components wait for access and causes stutters and thus lowers frame rates. If you adjust the latency, there is often a noticeable improvement. I don't have a "high-end" video card so can't provide personal experience but many users at their forum are reporting good results.

You can download this small utility program that allows you set your PCI latency from

<http://downloads.guru3d.com/download.php?det=951>

Adjust the PCI latency from 248 to 64 for example, and there's a very good chance of stutter free performance & sound.

This excellent tip was provided by **W. L. M. Holterbosch**. Thanks Wil!

Anti-aliasing, Trilinear and Other Strange Words

As many of us have no clue what these words, which are found on your Settings/Display/Hardware dialogue, really mean, I have been searching for some data – in plain English – that I could share with you. I find there is little or no easy to understand documentation available. However the following resources may be of help.

As suggested in the very first Tips and Tricks, the download from **Avsim.com** named “**reality_xp_fs2k4_tweaker.zip**” offers images of the Hardware settings dialogue with comments about each option. This is excellent material.

For a more “in depth” review of anti-aliasing and other items, follow this link: <http://www.tweakguides.com>. Look under System Guides.

Here you will also find tips and tweaks for many popular games (sorry, nothing for FS2004), video card tweaks and other useful resources.

In Case You Missed It Department

For those of you that have the Columbia River Gorge enhancement installed, there is a wonderful update to it by **Holger Sandmann** and **Larry Silsbee** which adds several of the areas landmarks; Multnomah Falls, Bridal Veil Falls, the Bridge of the Gods and Crown Point just to name just a few.

Having grown up in this area, I was very pleased to see this update become available as it adds a great deal of realism. The filename is “**crg_upd1.zip**” and it’s available at **Avsim.com**.



This is the Crown Point Observation area. Oops, I almost forgot; there is a sternwheeler plying the Columbia River as part of this package also.



AI Sounds 101

If you are a faithful reader of this series, you know I like to take a break now and then and just sit at an airport and watch the AI traffic. It can be quite a show. However it was not until a reader sent me an e-mail asking about AI sounds that I realized I had never really “heard” the AI traffic I was watching. So I did a little investigation and here are the results.

Before continuing, let us define some terms. AI (or artificial intelligence) traffic are those aircraft which FS2004 flies according to set traffic plans to create the illusion of real world traffic at airports and in the skies.

The default aircraft which come with FS2004 can be used as “flyable” aircraft or as AI aircraft. In fact almost all aircraft “can” be used for AI traffic.

Dedicated AI aircraft, such as those available from AI Ardvark or Project AI are intended to be used **only** for AI traffic i.e. not to be flown by the user. These aircraft will have far less levels of detail in order to make them more frame rate friendly; a major consideration if you have a lot of traffic loaded.

If you take a look at a typical “dedicated AI” aircraft folder, you will find it does not have a panel subfolder and should not have a sound subfolder. These two subfolders, while required in a “flyable” aircraft are not needed for AI planes.

The lack of a panel should be obvious (you don’t fly it, so no panel is seen or needed). I had been under the impression that AI sound was “aliased” from some other default aircraft but have since been informed that dedicated AI aircraft get their sounds from special sound files which are located in your sound folder. More about that shortly.

Tip: If you are **sure** you will never be flying such dedicated AI aircraft yourself, you can safely remove any panel and sound subfolders that might be in the aircrafts folder (some authors include them not realizing they are not required). FS2004 will then not try to load something that cannot be used and this should help improve frame rates and/or stuttering.

So, if AI aircraft get their sounds from special sound files (.wav) what’s the problem?

The basic problem is that the .wav files provided by Microsoft are **far too quiet** and don't really capture the type of sound you expect to hear. Even with your engines(s) turned off and the "environment" slider (found in Options/Settings/Sound) set to maximum, you can barely hear AI aircraft from the cockpit or from Spot view.

The solution is really fairly simple and can be easily implemented by anyone. (You won't believe the difference a few changes will make).

AI sound files come in three types – all found in your FS2004 sound directory.

There are 13 files which start with "ai" – these are AI sounds you hear when in cockpit view i.e. inside of your aircraft.

There are 13 files which start with "xai" – these are AI sounds you hear when in Tower or Spot view i.e. outside of your aircraft.

There are 1 or more files that start with "imp" – these are AI sounds heard upon touchdown i.e. thrust reverser being engaged. Note: you may or may not have any files beginning with "imp" – I am not sure if mine was a default file or had been added during an AI installation.

The first step is to go to your FS2004/sounds folder and backup the files just mentioned. I made a temporary folder within the sounds folder and named it Original AI Sounds Backup. Then I copied the files and pasted them into this new folder.

Once you have done this, download "**aisound_1.0.zip**" from **Avsim.com** and "**aisnz.zip**" from **Flightsim.com**. These two files contain replacement .wav files as well as replacement touchdown effects files needed to make your AI aircraft (of all types) come to life. Complete instructions are included with the files; read and follow them carefully.

New replacement AI sounds come online from time to time so don't be afraid to experiment with other similar downloads you may find.

Replacing the .wav files takes mere moments.

Additional time will be required to alter the aircraft.cfg files of any dedicated AI aircraft you may have so they can use the replacement touchdown effect. **Tip:** A careful reading of the instructions reveals a “quick and dirty” method to try first.

This is a nice project for a rainy Sunday afternoon that will make listening to your AI aircraft **far** more realistic. Just make sure you are making changes to “dedicated” AI aircraft, and **not** to those which can be flown by you and as always, backup any files you are about to work on before you start.

A very special “thank you” to **Tom Gibson**, chief honcho at the California Classics website (<http://www.calclassic.com/>) for his gracious assistance and responses to my questions regarding AI sound.

Thanks also to **Christian Neuburg** of the Airport Chat Developer Team and **Aaron R. Swindle** of Skysong Soundworks for their excellent replacements.

By the way, the original e-mail was from **Mal Walker** and he asked if he should be hearing anything when in Slew mode. The answer is no, all sound is automatically turned off while you are slewing.

Before we leave this subject here are a couple of other important things to keep in mind regarding AI traffic.

FS2004 permits multiple Traffic files. Previously, all AI traffic information was stored in a file named **Traffic030528.bgl** which is located in your Scenery/World/Scenery folder.

The default setup for FS2004 still uses this Traffic030528.bgl file and the aircraft used in the plans for both General Aviation and Airlines are the default aircraft – which are not necessarily frame rate friendly and most likely have airline names you may not wish to use.

If you use addon AI packages such as those provided by Project AI, a separate traffic file is created – in this case named **Traffic_PA1.bgl**. On my setup, I have removed the default Traffic file (placed it in a safe location) and use only the PAI file plus a few other regional traffic files.

You can have as many traffic files as you wish; they **must** start with the word Traffic and can have other identifying words or letters as part of the name. Example: Traffic_ships_sandiego.bgl.

So the bottom line is this; if you create your own traffic plans, they do **not** have to be added to the default Traffic030528.bgl file – they can be placed in a traffic file of your own choosing.

Another AI Tip

Go to the fs9.cfg file and scroll down until you see the heading [AContain].

The options under it are for AI aircraft labels and by adding a 1 or a 0 after each option you can alter what you see in Flight Sim eg: Heading, Airspeed, Flight plan, Airline, Flight number etc of any AI Aircraft you may have.

A 1 = yes and a 0 (zero) = no.

```
[AContain]
ShowLabels=0
ShowUserLabel=0
ShowLabelManufacturer=1
ShowLabelModel=1
ShowLabelTailNumber=0
ShowLabelDistance=1
ShowLabelAltitude=1
ShowLabelAirline=0
ShowLabelAirlineAndFlightNumber=0
ShowLabelFlightPlan=0
ShowLabelContainerId=0
ShowLabelAirspeed=0
ShowLabelHeading=0
LabelDelay=1000
LabelColor=FFFF0000
```

Of course you will need to have “show aircraft labels” enabled for these items to be displayed on your screen. This dialogue can be found under Settings/Traffic. Most of the above options can be set from this dialogue also.

This tip came from **Stephen Lubrandt** from Johannesburg, South Africa.

One More AI Idea

I am not in the habit of recommending enhancements that I have not thoroughly tested first, so the following is somewhat of an exception. I do have it installed but have not used it very long so cannot say it is totally bug free – so far it works “as advertised” on my setup. At least I have not been “run over” by an AI 747 while on a short final recently!

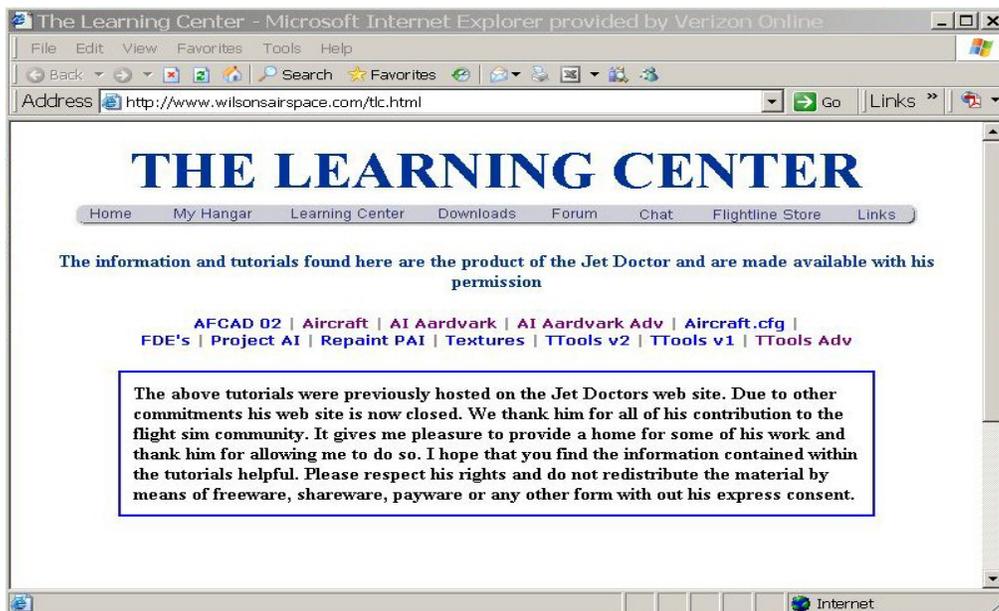
This little program which runs outside of FS2004, monitors your AI traffic and will instruct such aircraft to perform holding patterns if they are too close to each other on approach, rather than the usual “go around”. In addition, if an AI aircraft is on a course which places it too close to the aircraft which you are flying on an approach, the program will instruct the AI plane to perform a holding maneuver as well. The program was written by **Michael Sagner** and is available at **Avsim.com** as “**aismooth_v100.zip**”.

Give it a try and see what you think.

Want To Know (and understand) More?

The following link will take you to a website that has a number of helpful and informative Tutorials. <http://www.wilsonsairspace.com/tlc.html>

This is the screen you will see.



There are twelve Tutorials you can select that originally resided on the Jet Doctors website. That site has closed and this valuable data is now found at this location. A lot of good stuff here!

The Fleet is In Town!

If you are the least bit familiar with San Diego, California, you know that the U.S. Navy has an enormous facility located there. **Phil Crowther** has recently released “**sandiego_philcrowther123.zip**” which adds this facility and many piers where ships can be berthed. His instructions will tell you which ships to download so they can be seen “in action” using his AI flight plans which are included in the package. The file, a wonderful addition to San Diego, is available from **Avsim.com**. I highly recommend it.



A Useful Windows Utility

This is a free Windows toolbar utility that can be easily adapted to virtually any situation where you want to have quick access to folders you often use.

Type or copy and paste **find.pcworld.com/47126** into your browsers search bar to download this nifty utility.

I use it to have quick access to my FS2004 files from an icon on the desktop. It also adds this capability to your normal Windows Explorer menu.

Tip: When you set up the preferences, have it point to a folder with shortcuts to FS2004 or whatever you wish rather than the default “My Documents”.

It is easy to experiment and change the setup until you find what works best for you. In addition to my FS2004 folders, I also have the folders where I compile Tips and Tricks included on the toolbar.

All of the various normal explorer type functions can be accessed from this toolbar and the toolbar itself can be visible or hidden. This utility works in Windows 98, 2002, XP and ME. Give it a try – you will likely find many other uses I have not thought about.

A Sound Enhancement for Helicopters

Alejandro Villa has put together a nice package which allows you to add a gauge with an on/off switch that when on, provides a dynamic rotor sound that changes with the helicopter engines output so you can hear acceleration and deceleration in helicopter engines, instead of that constant plain sound. The gauge was originally created for FS98 by **Brian Kostick** but it works well in FS2002 and FS2004.

Alejandro has packaged the gauge together with a reduced panel for the default bell 206b which provides a greatly expanded view.

Look for “**chpsnd04.zip**” at **Flightsim.com**. Mr. Villa has also created a number of other nice enhancements for aircraft of all types. Do a search at Flightsim using his name. You just may find something you can really use.

Keeping in Shape



While this tip does not deal directly with Flight Simulator, keeping your Windows XP installation “in shape” will allow FS to run more efficiently.

The following link will take you to an excellent forum posting regarding the routine maintenance of XP – be sure to read the responses also as they update a few of the recommended program links.

http://forums.avsim.net/dcboard.php?az=show_mesg&forum=197&topic_id=2504&mesg_id=2504&page=

Once you get to this page, I strongly recommend you “save” it for future reference. Use the “save as” command and select “web page, complete”. There are just too many good ideas to be seen here in one visit!

Setting up and following a regular “maintenance” schedule is not as difficult as you might think and will pay substantial dividends in terms of reliability and efficiency for FS and everything else you use your computer to do.

Autogen Problem?

In the last issue of Tips and Tricks (10) I mentioned a replacement file for the “default.xml” that was supposed to help increase frame rates. It did nothing for my system but I have found something that does make a noticeable difference for me. You may wish to give it a try.

Navigate to your Autogen folder and rename the “default.xml” file as default.xml.bak. This way FS2004 will not attempt to load it at all.

Now open your FS9.cfg file and verify that the following is what you have;

```
TERRAIN_USE_VECTOR_OBJECTS=1
```

If not, change whatever value you have to a 1.

Making these changes should allow you to set your Autogen Scenery slider at Dense or Extremely Dense and still have good frame rates with no slowdowns or stutters, even on long flights or when slewing. That slider is located on the Settings/Display dialogue.

Note: The “default.xml” file controls the display of such items as fast food joints, strip malls and shopping centers so you won’t see these anymore. I think that is a fair tradeoff though for better frame rates. Besides, think of the money you will save if you can’t go to them!

Sound Stu.....tt.....er.....ing?

Question: How can I stop sound stutters in FS2004?

Answer: On your desktop, click on START and then RUN.

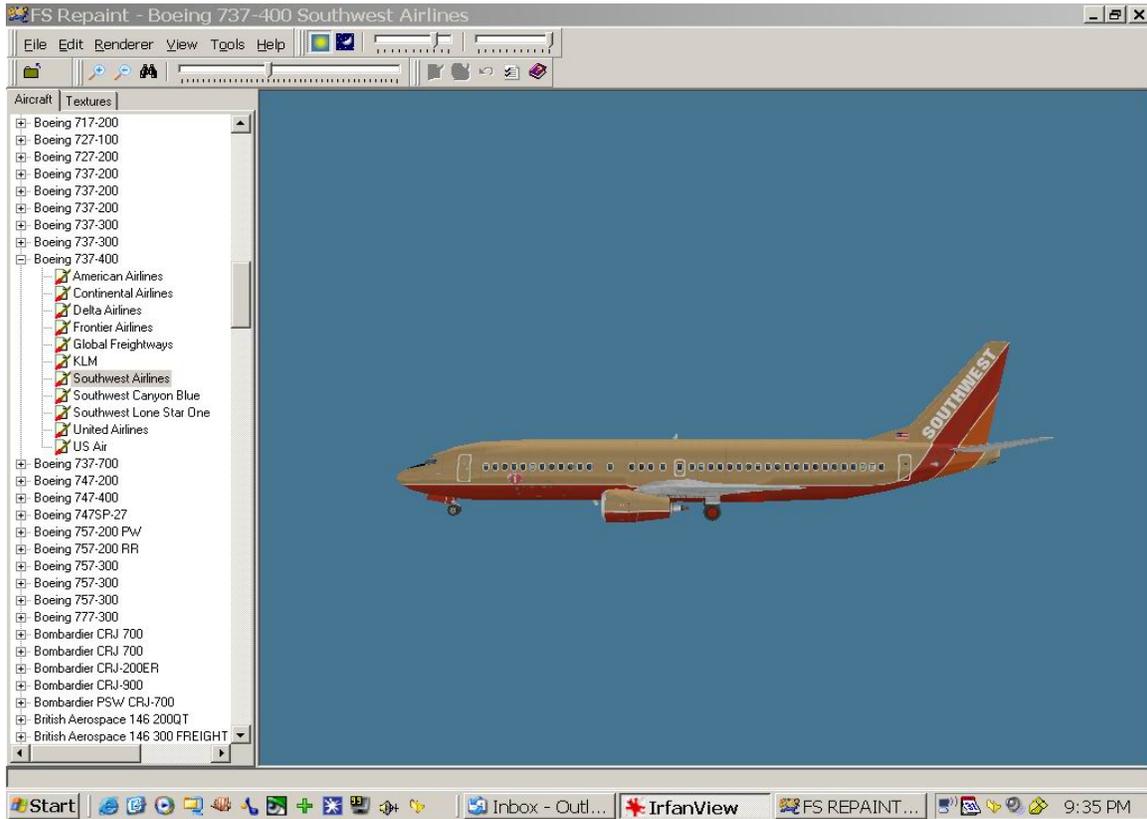
Type in "DXDIAG" (no quotes).

On the page which will be displayed look for the SOUND page. Then note the position of the slider for “Sound Acceleration”.

Just move it to the left from “High” to “Basic” and this will most likely solve the problem.

A Great “Demo” Program

It’s the Abacus FSR (Flight Simulator Repaint) demonstration program. It has the ability to show all of your installed aircraft and their textures (repaints) without having FS2004 up and running.



This is very useful if you wish to check an installation you have just made as it will show the aircraft in question and all associated textures. One of the features I really like is being able to view the nighttime textures and lighting of the selected aircraft. It's also perfect for AI previews after adding textures, especially if your AI aircraft are “hidden” on your normal “select aircraft” menu. Refer to Tips and Tricks Number IV (4) for a detailed explanation regarding how to “hide” your AI aircraft.

Note: If you are interested in trying your hand at repainting, I’m told this is a fine program to use but for the moment we are only using the free “demo” portion of it which allows us to display day and nighttime textures.

All of your installed aircraft are indexed first by ui_manufacturer, then by ui_type and finally by ui_variation. Clicking on an aircraft variation displays that texture (livery) just as you would see it on the “select aircraft” screen in FS2004. The screenshot above shows the main selection and display screen.

Tips: You will get an error message when you first start the program but that is only because it needs to find out where your aircraft are installed. After that, if you have a great many aircraft installed in may take a few moments to load so be patient.

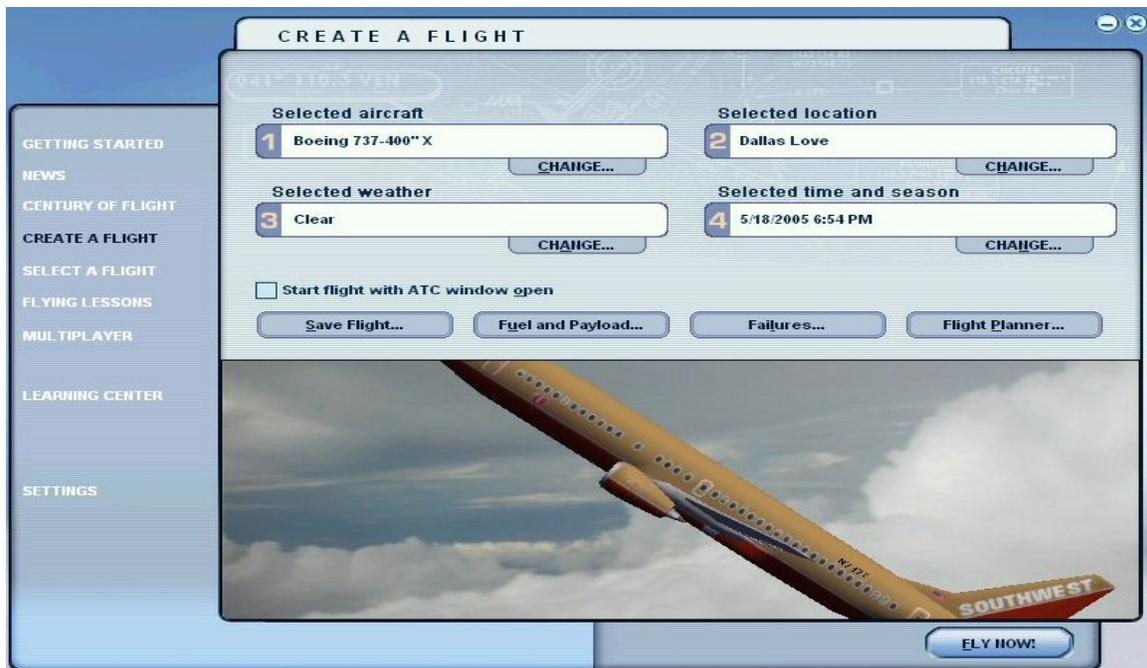
This is the link to the program.

<http://www.flightsimdownloads.com/pub/AbacusFSRepaintDemo.exe>

Tip: You can also “manipulate” the picture of the aircraft just as you can on the FS2004 “select aircraft” screen by left clicking on the aircraft and holding the mouse button while you rotate the aircraft any way you wish.

You did know you could do that, didn't you?

Here is a screen shot taken from the normal FS2004 “select aircraft” screen illustrating how you can manipulate the image. The aircraft would normally be displayed horizontally.



The Abacus FSR program is also very useful as a means of easily checking to see if you already have an aircraft or livery that you are contemplating downloading.

Test Your Knowledge

UTC (Universal Coordinated Time)

The official time used in air navigation. Also known as Zulu time, or Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). UTC is based on the 24-hour clock; for example, 6 P.M. is 1800 hours. Departure and arrival times, air traffic control clearances, the valid time of weather reports and forecasts, and other time-sensitive information in aviation is expressed in UTC.

Another “goodie” from the FS2004 Glossary.

Try a Real Life Scenario

Heath Wells has created a scenario which you may want to try as it will test your flying skills in what could be a real life situation.

Download and install “**urewera_forest_fire.zip**” from **Avsim.com**.

This will create a day long forest fire in the Urewera National Park (approx location Kairaka Range) in New Zealand on the 10th of January each year.

Quoting Heath; “As there are many fine freeware addon aircraft with fire fighting capabilities I thought it would be nice to have an actual fire to use with these planes. Unfortunately dropping water or retardant won't actually put out the fire but its sure fun to line up, drop your load, fly through the smoke and come round again etc... Balancing fuel needs against water and weight can be great fun”.

Select your fire fighting aircraft of choice (search AVSIM for some nice ones) and then takeoff from several reasonably close-by airports (Gisborne, Taupo, Rotorua, or Whakatane) and go fight that fire! Even if you can't put out the fire, you will have a chance to explore a scenic part of the world which you may never have visited before – New Zealand.

If you have trouble locating the fire, fly to approx S38 31.01 E177 13.55 and you will be on top of it. Remember to make sure you are flying on the correct day of the year too!



I used the Air Tractor 802-F Fire tanker by **Brian Gladden** during my testing of this package. It's not too difficult and great fun. This aircraft is available from **Avsim.com** as "at-802a_fire.zip".

If you are a helicopter buff, there are also a number of helicopters available which are suitable for such a mission.

A "**Must Have**" on Your Favorite Web Site List

This is the official FAA Web site which is operated by the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) and is updated by them each day.

<http://www.faa.gov/>.

This Site provides access to current NOTAM information derived from the United States Consolidated NOTAM Office at the FAA Air Traffic Control Systems Command Center, Herndon VA.

There is a great deal of important and useful information on this site for the real world flier as well as for the rest of us – especially if you want to add realism to your flight sim experience. Here you will find weather and airport conditions, ICAO codes for every airport, data and statistics, aircraft safety alerts, maintenance directives and much, much more. Take your time and explore the site – it will be time well invested.

Before you fly anywhere, get in the habit of checking this site for the most current weather and airport conditions and current NOTAMS.

What is a NOTAM? A NOTAM is a **NOTICE TO AIRMEN**.

Want To see Better Detail on Your Aircraft?

Go to Options/Settings/Display/Hardware, and set the global max texture size to "Massive" – all the way to the right. This change should improve the look of your aircraft textures but remember the old saying; “you can’t make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear”.

Lost Your Voice?

In case you experience any problems with the ATC sound in *Microsoft Flight Simulator 2004: A Century of Flight* you can restore the original voicepack file from your *Microsoft Flight Simulator 2004: A Century of Flight* CD number 2.

Assuming a default “full” installation in English, first check your Sound directory to see if you have the following files; **USEnglishBig.gvp** and **USEnglishASOS.gvp**. You must have both files for ATC to work properly.

You may see a file named **USEnglishSmall.gvp**. It is used for the compact installation only.

If you need to replace and/or restore the needed files, they are inside the file named "MSGame5.cab" for the 10 voice (full) setup, and inside the file named "MSGame4.cab" file for the three voice (compact) setup.

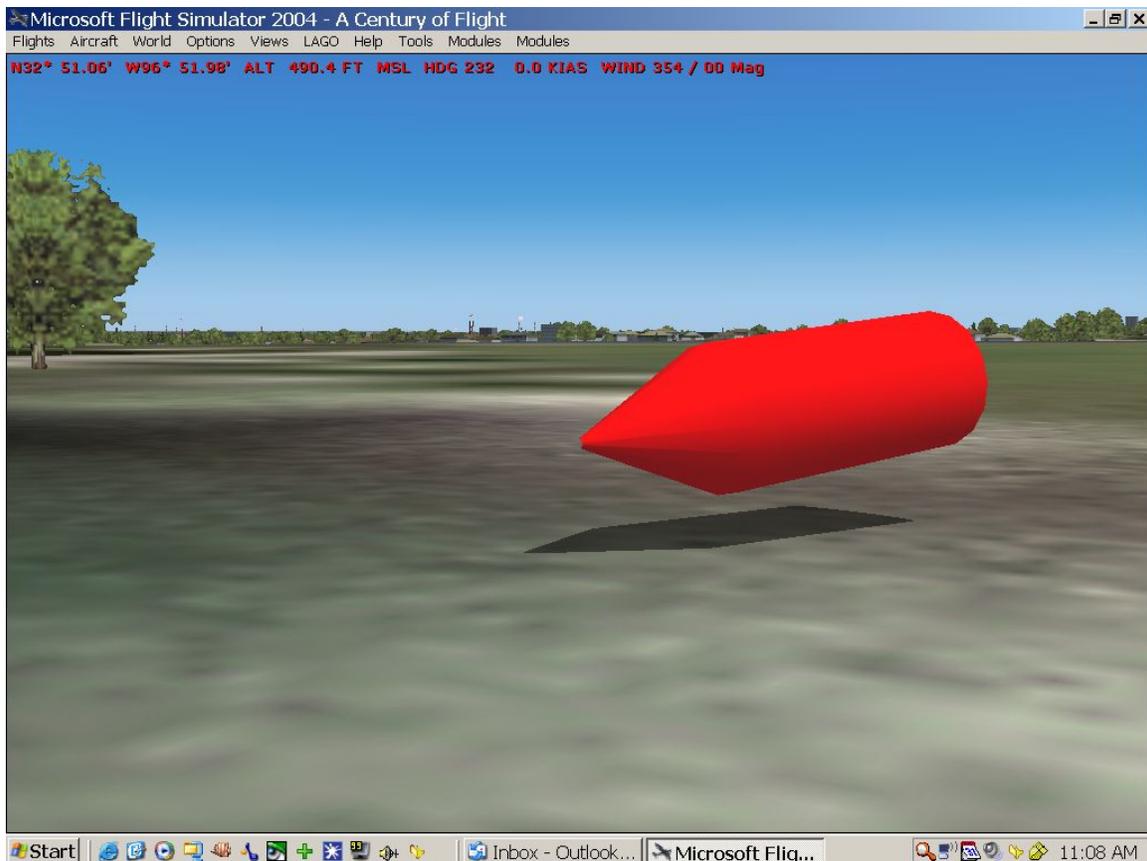
Copy one of these files - **USEnglishBig.gvp** or **USEnglishSmall.gvp** (do not copy both) to the Sound directory under your Flight Simulator directory and you should get your “voice” back.

A “Heads Up” for Scenery Designers and/or Enhancers

Larry Silsbee has created a great little tool for use when placing objects with precision using such enhancement programs as RWY12.

The file name is “**scenery_pointer.zip**” and it can be found at **Avsim.com**.

The pointer installs just like any other “aircraft” and will show as Scenery Pointer in your aircraft selection menu. To use it select Slew mode and Spot or Top Down view. Thanks Larry!



What's In a Name?

Nantucket - KACK, Martha's Vineyard - KMVY, Hyannis Airport – KHYA.

Do these airports, all of which are in Massachusetts, conjure up visions of the ultra wealthy and their “playgrounds”? They should, as this is the area where the Kennedys and many other elites have residences. **William Shea** has enhanced all of these airports and the work is exceptional. His latest release is Hyannis Airport, filename “**khya.zip**” at **Avsim.com**.



Hyannis is the 3rd busiest airport in Mass, after Boston and Nantucket. Thanks William, for providing this outstanding group of enhancements.

Better Late Than Never

Whoopie!! I just ventured beyond the world of propeller driven GA aircraft and jet propelled airliners and took my first ride in a Fighter Aircraft.

WOW! This was “something else”. I may never become a “Top Gun” but at least I was able to land it fairly decently on the first attempt.

The aircraft was the superb F18 by **Team FS KBT**. If you have not tried your hand at such aircraft, run; do not walk, to your **Avsim.com** page and download “**fa18esh3_138105.zip**” and the update which is “**fa18e231.zip**”.



The F-18 aircraft is beautiful to see, a joy to fly (but hold on to your hat) and features many very realistic effects. Check it out.

Note: The main file is 31,213KB and the update which improves the flight dynamics is 5,745KB so it is not a small download but well worth the time.

You will get the Basic F-18 with many variations to choose from. There are additional paints available also if you don't find a paint that suits you in the base file. The update is very simple to install; just copy and paste the new FA-18E_SuperHornet folder over the original and you are good to go.

As much as I enjoy flying “slow and low” there is something to be said for flying “high and fast” - - - hmmm.....doesn't rhyme does it.

From One Extreme to Another

Ok, we have gone “high and fast”. Now for those who like to go “slow and low”, try this neat little ultra light aircraft by **Bryon Warwick**. It’s great for investigating scenery, airports and your neighbor’s back yard. I had the opportunity to fly one of these a few years ago and it is quite a rush!



The file is “**kolb_firefly_1.zip**” at **Avsim.com**. You will also need the file named “**kfg.zip**” which contains some missing gauges. I almost forgot to add that this package will give you land **and** water versions in several paints.

Meet the Compiler

In response to several e-mails, I am including this brief summary outlining who your compiler is and my background. The picture was taken several years ago so doesn’t show me at my current stage in life.

Needless to say, I’m much more distinguished looking now.



I am retired but drive a school bus every day to stay busy and avoid too many honey-do's. In March of this year I celebrated my 70th birthday and in a few months my bride and I will celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary. To date we have 14 grandchildren and one great grandchild – we have been truly blessed.

The nickname “Opa” comes from the German (and several other languages) word for Grandfather. My second son married a German girl and all our grandchildren refer to us as Oma (Grandmother) and Opa.

During most of my working life I was involved with the design, sale, and installation and servicing of Pipe Organs in churches and schools throughout the entire United States.

Prior to discovering the world of Flight Simulator my hobbies included woodworking and model railroading. I even operated a BBS (Bulletin Board System) before the advent of the Internet closed most BBS operations. I still do a bit of woodworking in between “flights” to far away destinations.

I started with Flight Simulator a number of years ago when scenery consisted of a few green sticks for buildings – it may have been on an old Commodore system or a rudimentary 286 system.

In any case, I could not get the hang of it and did not try simming again until I was given FS2002 as a birthday present approximately two years ago. Needless to say, that did the trick and I was hooked.

I'm not a programmer or scenery designer and I have no special Flight Simulator expertise. I am simply one who likes to see how things work and I expect things to work “as advertised”. It has been a trial and error process for me, along with a tremendous amount of help from the flight sim community at large. The Tips and Tricks series has been a way for me to give back just a little to the hobby/addiction I so enjoy.

Perception Test Answer

No, it is not the fact that there are three sets of the logo or that they are all different sizes.

Did you spot the right pointing “**arrow**”? It is formed by the placement of the E and x of FedEx. Look again and it should become obvious now. I am told that a test similar to this is given all prospective employees of FedEx. I assume they get hired if they perceive the arrow; perhaps those that don’t see it end up at UPS.

Over the years I have seen the FedEx logo in many locations and on various vehicles, billboards and posters but had never noticed the arrow until I saw this test. Now I see it everywhere!

Still Looking for Help

As I mentioned in Tips and Tricks Number 10, if anyone has begun an Index (preferably in Excel format) of the Tips and Tricks series and would be willing to share their work, I am sure many readers would appreciate having such an index. Please e-mail me.

Thanks

Thanks once again to all the readers who have sent suggestions for items to be included in this series. You know who you are if I have failed to mention you by name.

That’s All Folks

That about does it for this issue. This will be the **last** issue before summer arrives but I expect to resume the series in the Fall. So if you have a tip or trick you have found useful, or anything else you want to share, feel free to send it to me and I will be happy to consider including it in the next Tips and Tricks.

Link to My Uploads

To see a complete listing of projects I have uploaded to Avsim.com, just follow this link.

<http://library.avsim.net/esearch.php?CatID=fs2004&Name=&FileName=&Author=David+Marshall&DLID=&Sort=Added&ScanMode=0&Go=Change+View>

Final Thought:

If you find a particularly fine aircraft, airport or any other useful addition, take the time to drop the author an e-mail and let them know that you appreciate their work. Countless hours are involved in the creation of these additions and an encouraging word now and then is always welcomed.

Questions and/or Constructive Comments regarding “Tips and Tricks” may be directed to:

opaflightsimaddict@verizon.net

It's not a hobby -- it's a bloody addiction!

