

Tips, Tricks & Recommendations for FS2004

Part XV

Compiled by David “Opa” Marshall

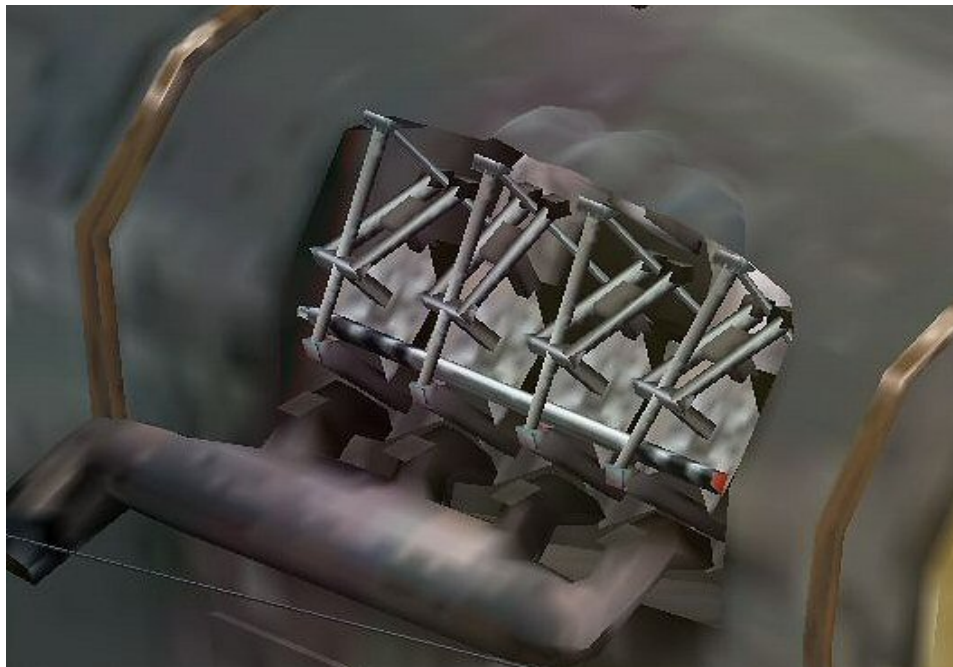
October 15, 2005

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 XV (15) – 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** and **Flightsim.com**.

What Is It?

Lets start off with a little quiz. Do you know what this is?



I will give you a couple of hints; it is a close-up of an airplane engine that is found in FS2004. Do you know which one it is and why I consider it to be “special”?

The answer can be found at the end of this document.

Lets Hear It for the Lady!

You think you have a tough job? Take a look at what this lady does to earn a living!



Yes, she has made a career out of “wing-walking” – as part of a company which puts on airshows all over Europe. Her act is reminiscent of the 1930’s when wing-walking was a highlight of any barnstorming air show.

Her name is Peggy Krainz and you can learn more about her chosen career by logging unto <http://www.wing-walkers.com>. The site is in German but hopefully the English pages which were under construction the last time I logged on are now functional.

Here is another screenshot of her in action.



She makes it look simple doesn't she!

There is a very nice repaint available of the plane she uses in the show – the Stearman Kaydet. The FS2004 Stearman package was reviewed in Tips and Tricks Number 9.

The repaint by **Manfred D.Saliger** is named “**stear_pk.zip**”. It can be downloaded from **Avsim.com**. Perhaps some enterprising modeler will see fit to place a likeness of Peggy on the aircraft in the foreseeable future.

Stay In Control!

Suddenly lose control of your aircraft? No joystick response?

Did you accidentally hit **Control K**? That toggles your joystick on and off.

It happened to me a week or so ago and I didn't figure out the problem until after I had made a very unprofessional looking water "landing"!
(I'm sorry to report there were no survivors)

What's On the CD's?

The following listing may be useful for anyone searching for a file on the FS2004 CD's.

Disk 1

msgame1.cab -folders-
1033,aircraft,autogen,charts,config,effects,flights,fonts
msgame2.cab -folders- fsweb.

Disk 2

msgame3.cab -folders-
gauges,indeo,lessons,messages,modules,script,texture,uires,weather
msgame4.cab -folders- sound/usenglishsmall.gvp
msgame5.cab -folders- sound/usenglishbig.gvp
msgame6.cab -folders- sound.

Disk 3

msgame7.cab -folders- scenery/cities/newyork,seattle
msgame8.cab -folders-
scenery/base,eure,eurw,generic,namc,name,namw,props,vehicles
msgame9.cab -folders- scenery/cities/dallas,denver,oshkosh,stmaarten.

Disk 4

compact - scenery.cfg
complete - scenery.cfg
scenery/cities/ remaining from disk3
scenery/afri,asia,aust,ocen,same,world.

A .cab file is simply a type of ZIP file and the contents can be viewed using Winzip. The files within a cab may also be extracted this utility.

Video Feedback

Dean Paulauskas, a regular reader of this series, recently sent me this note of appreciation for a Tip he tried which worked well for him.

“I had just recently installed a new 256mb video card on my computer. When I went in to use FS2004, I was disappointed that the video card wasn't doing what I expected. Thereto, FS2004 was doing all sorts of strange things as well. I tried manipulating all the card settings and FS2004 settings to get the performance and imagery I wanted, but nothing worked as I expected.

I then found and read your article 'Time to rebuild' in Tips and Tricks 13 - in relation to deleting and re-installing FS9.cfg. When I did this, the video card kicked in with the brilliance I was after. Now while using FS2004, the graphics and performance levels are excellent, and no more problems with FS9.” Thanks for the useful feedback Dean.

Christmas will be upon us before we know it and many of you may receive a new video card or purchase one during the holidays. If you are able to upgrade your Video Card, I strongly recommend that you do as Dean did and rebuild your FS9.cfg file as detailed in Tips and Tricks Number 13. If you don't, FS likely will not know you have a new Video Card and you will not see much, if any, difference in your display.

Happy Birthday!

This year (2005) marks the 70th Anniversary of the introduction of the DC3 aircraft!

Not all of these venerable old planes are in museums. Some are still flying in many parts of the world – an achievement perhaps unmatched by any other aircraft.



Sidney Starkey, from Amsterdam, The Netherlands, has designed a fine splash screen to commemorate this anniversary and has graciously allowed me to include it in this issue as a “bonus” file. Complete instructions for installing this screen are included. Just check the Bonus file folder.

Thanks Sid.

Home, Sweet Home

Frédéric Picci has created an exceptionally fine model of the Cany-Barville Castle which is located in the beautiful Durdent valley of France.



The castle still recalls to memory the severe splendour of the Louis XIII era. Constructed on the request of Pierre le Marinier by François Mansard, the uncle of the builder of Versailles, between 1640 and 1646, this beautiful residence never since left the family.

Mr. Picci has included such nice touches as chimneys that smoke during the cold months of the year and swans that only appear during the warm months.

To add this to your setup download “**barville.zip**” from **Avsim.com**.

I was so impressed with this scenery that I created a small Afcad for it which allows the Castle location to be seen on your Map view and in your GoTo Airport Menu. An AFD was also added to the Afcad so you can tune your AFD radio to 255.0 to assist in locating the Castle.

That file (also at Avsim) is named “**Castle_Afcad.zip**”.

Arches Feedback

If you read Tips and Tricks Number 13 you may remember a picture of a small aircraft flying through a natural arch and my comment suggesting this would be something a scenery designer might want to tackle.

One of my readers, **Alan Trussell**, quickly reminded me that there are a couple of such “arch” add-ons by **Ron Ezra** available. Both were created for FS2002 but work fine in FS2004

Rainbow Bridge Nat Monument In Lake Powell, Utah, it is a rainbow-shaped bridge of pink sandstone 290 ft (88 m) above a creek that winds toward the Colorado River. The bridge is the world's largest natural bridge. Embedded among canyons, it is accessible only on foot, by horseback, or by boat on Lake Powell. Look for “**rainbow.zip**” at **Flightsim.com**.

Arches National Park. also by **Ron Ezra**. This is a depiction of Landscape Arch and Delicate Arch in Arches National Park, Utah. You can find this at **Flightsim.com** also – “**arches-1.zip**”.



This is a screenshot of me flying through the Rainbow Bridge arch. A little tricky to do but lots of fun.

Make an **Executive** Decision!

From reader **Roy McHeyligers** comes one of the most useful Tips to cross my desk in quite some time. I believe you will find this valuable also.

Roy advised me that it is very easy to have multiple configurations of FS2004 available to choose from when you start up the program. Rather than make a number of changes to the weather, location, aircraft and/or a host of other variables, including any special scenery vertex settings, each time you start FS2004, you can have these **pre-determined** in a configuration that you select from your desktop. Here is how it is accomplished.

- a. Make a **copy** of your FS9.exe file. It is located in your Main FS folder.
- b. **Rename** this copy to anything you wish – example: **FS9_Setup1.exe**. Be sure to use underscores if there are multiple words.
- c. Now make a **copy** of your FS9.cfg file. Tips and Tricks Number 3 gives complete details about finding this file, which is “hidden” by default, and making it accessible .
- d. **Rename** this copy – using the exact name you used in step 2 – except it will keep its .cfg extension. Example: **FS9_Setup1.cfg**. Note the use of underscores again. Be sure you use the same exact spelling.
- e. Create a shortcut on your desktop to your new **FS9_Setup1.exe** file.

When you click on your new shortcut, FS2004 will start as usual. Make any changes you wish on the various dialogues and exit the program. Those changes will be saved in your newly created CFG file. If desirable, you can now edit your new .cfg file and make changes such as setting a specific scenery vertex level.

Now you should have two options (shortcuts on your desktop) for starting FS2004 – the “normal” one and the one you just created. You can do this as many times as you wish. Just be sure each EXE file has a unique name and has a corresponding CFG file.

For testing purposes I made several copies of my exe and cfg files and named them FS9_Opa_test_1.exe – FS9_Opa_test_2.exe and so on.

To make it easier to remember what each shortcut to FS2004 does, just right click on the shortcut and select properties.

At the bottom of the properties display - see screenshot - you can add a comment to any shortcut, describing what it does.

This comment will be shown when you pass your cursor over the shortcut on your desktop and you will then have an idea just what this shortcut does.

Currently I have five different FS2004 configurations available via shortcuts and I put them in a folder on my desktop which I named FS Startup. This just helps avoid desktop clutter.



Note: This concept will work using the default FS9.exe file which came with your setup and with the “no CD required” patched FS9.exe file which many simmers have installed.

Note: If you should forget to create a copy of your base cfg file with a new name, FS will create it for you when you click on your newly named exe file. FS will start and a new cfg file (properly named to match your new exe file) will be created. FS will start up just as it did when you first installed it – i.e. you will start at the welcome screen. Just set it up the way you want it and exit. All changes will be written to the new cfg file by FS.

Just so there is no misunderstanding, your aircraft and scenery additions are **not** disturbed in any way by using multiple configurations as described above. You are only creating optional startup settings. As an example, Roy has a special configuration he uses that invokes a favorite aircraft at his favorite airport and uses the “real weather” option.

Experiment with this idea and you will find it is not difficult to make an “**ex**ecutive decision at all! Thanks once again Roy, for a really great Tip!

Touring with John

My good friend **John Burford** – who does such a fine job creating and updating the T and T indexes – has a unique web-site you should visit.

<http://users.chariot.net.au/~theburfs/INDEX.html>

John has put together several “tours” he has flown and shares not only the day to day flight plans and pictures of the scenery along the way, but has thoughtfully listed the many scenery add-ons that he has used as well. This will allow you to obtain the add-ons to enhance your experience too.

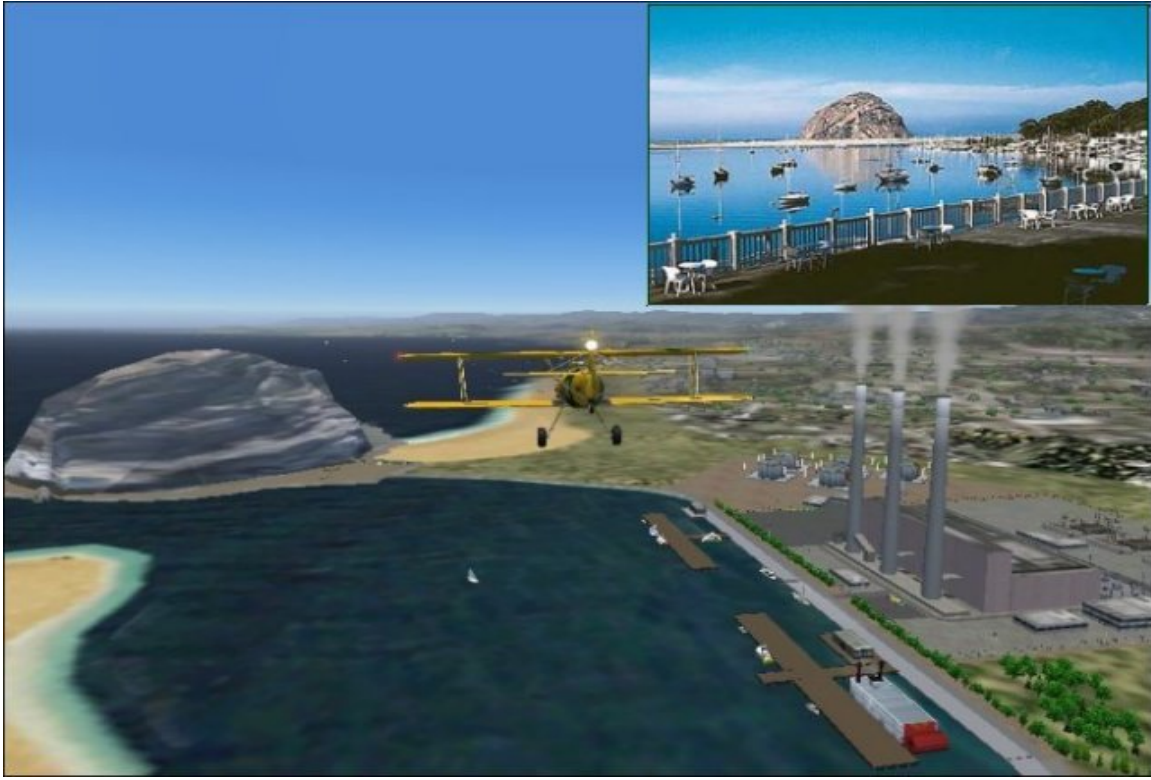
I recently visited the site and while reviewing his West Coast (USA) tour and list of sceneries, realized that I had missed the following excellent package by **Al Wheeler**.

It is the California Coast enhancement - “**cccoastf.zip**” which you can find at **Avsim.com**. The package includes the magnificent Hearst Castle and much much more! It should be used with the Socal Mesh by **Justin Tyme**.



That is a screenshot of the Hearst Castle.

The following is a screenshot of the Moro Bay area.



There is much more to discover in this outstanding work by **Al Wheeler** and friends. Check it out!

Tip: Be sure to also get the California Lighthouse package by **Larry Silsbee** named “**ca_lighthouse.zip**” (**Avsim.com**) which compliments this scenery.

From the E-Mail Bag Department

I received the following question from several readers.

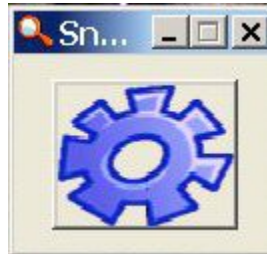
Opa, what do you use to make screenshots while running FS2004?



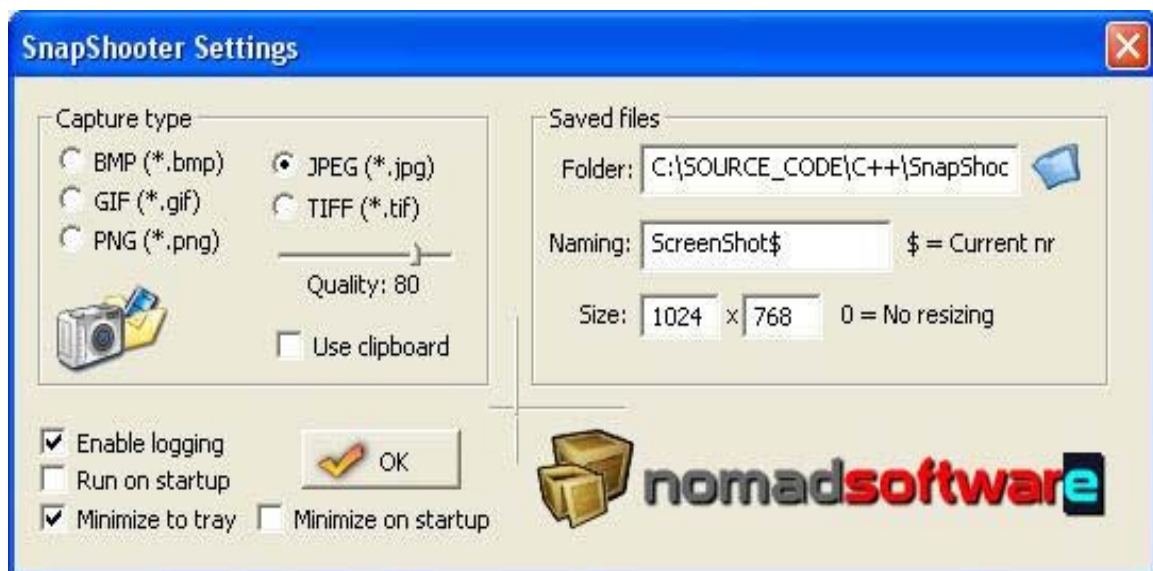
There are actually two programs I use – and both are free – which makes it even better.

For regular screenshots I like the program which is called Snapshooter. It is easy to setup and can save shots in several formats to any folder I specify. There is a small bug in the program – it makes two shots every time but this is just a small glitch in an otherwise fine little program by **Johan Johanson**. You can find it as “**s211final_setup.zip**” at **Avsim.com**.

This is a screenshot of the interface.



Clicking on the center of the disk will bring up the settings dialogue.



There is also another free program that many simmers use named FSScreen.

It does essentially the same things as Snapshooter. The program is by **Matthias Holzer** and can be found at **Avsim.com** also. Look for “**fscreen.zip**”.

For those times when it is desirable to use a screenshot which **captures my cursor**, such as an illustration for a Tutorial, I use what may be the “best kept secret” on the Internet – a **superb**, free graphics program by **Irfan Skiljan** named **Irfanview**.

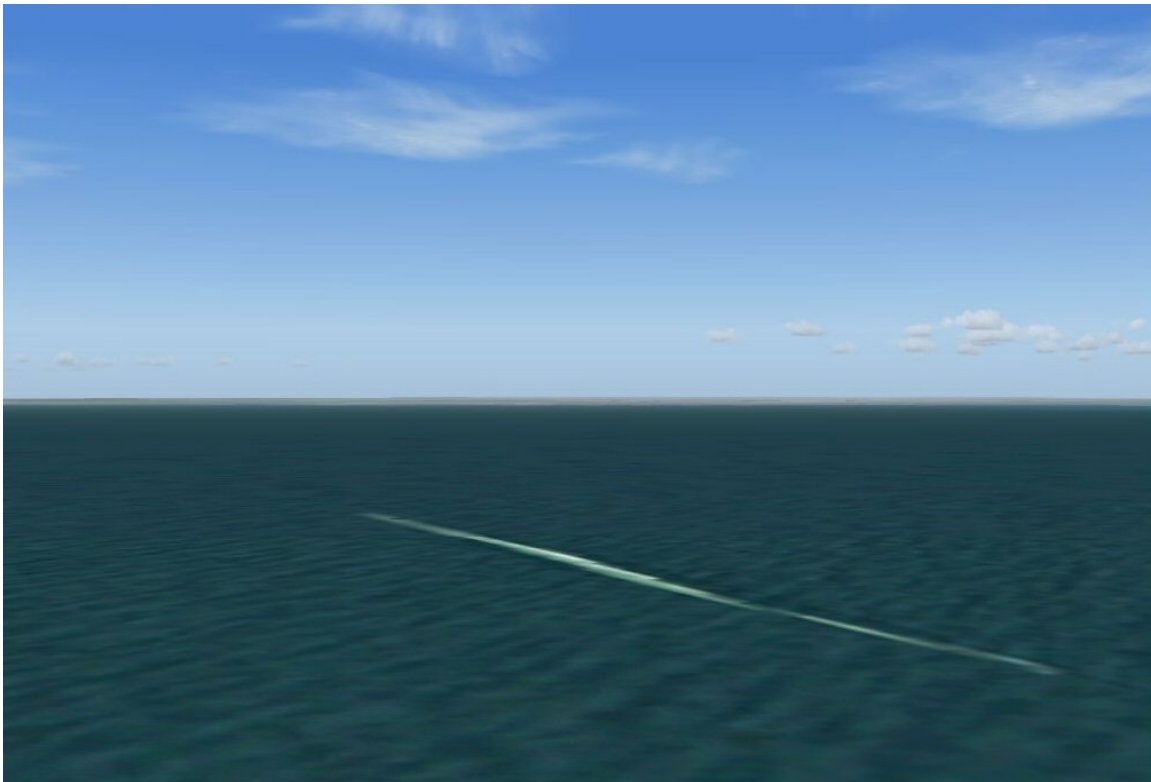
This is a **full featured graphic program** – which includes many options normally only found in expensive, pay-ware programs.

You can get your copy by logging unto <http://www.irfanview.com>

As of this writing the current version is 3.97. Be sure to download and install the free plug-in package as well, so you will have access to all of the great features of the program. I highly recommend this program!

Note: The above described programs all allow you to capture shots “on the fly” without pausing FS2004 – or any other program for that matter.

Now Who Put That There?



If you fly from Buffalo, New York to Toronto, Ontario, Canada at a fairly low altitude - 5 to 8 thousand feet - you may have noticed some strange shorelines out in the middle of Lake Ontario.

From a distance they almost look like runways but on closer inspection you will discover they are sandbars. If these bother you as they did me, just download and install “**grt_lks_sndbr_fix.zip**” by **Garvin Barnicoat**.

This will remove these misplaced or orphan coastlines (sandbars) - specifically at the mouth of the Niagara River where it empties into Lake Ontario and the mouth of the Detroit River where it empties into Lake Erie.

An Inviting Vacation Destination

Just East of Phoenix is Roosevelt Lake, Arizona, a very popular destination for tourists and vacationers. **Robert Palmer** has created a very fine scenery of the area which includes Roosevelt Dam, the Grapevine Airstrip (51AZ), Roosevelt Lake Resort, and also the Visitors Center and Marina. There is also a camp ground on the beach near the northern end of the lake.

Look for “**rsvlt_lk.zip**” at **Avsim.com**. This scenery works well without any mesh add-on but for best effect, follow the author’s recommendation and install **Eddie Denney’s** Arizona mesh. It can be found at **Flightsim.com** as “**aznmmesh.zip**”.



Now you may wonder why there is no water spilling over the dam. It is not an error on the part of the author.

Roosevelt Dam, one of the oldest in the United States, was raised about ten feet some ten or twelve years ago following recommendations by the Army Corps of Engineers. Since that time the annual rainfall has actually decreased and thus the water level of the lake is now lower than before. Lower water level equals no water over the spillways - duh.

Just another example of **our tax dollars at work!**

Are You Lonely?

No, this is not a pitch for an on-line dating service. It is a recommendation to visit <http://www.ultimatega.com/>.

This is the home of the Ultimate GA team. Here you will find details regarding a group of General Aviation AI packages that will populate the skies with very frame rate friendly aircraft.

What sets these offerings apart from others that are available is the care the Ultimate GA team has put into these aircraft and flightplans so they reflect **real world activity**. Believe me, it's a thrill to go either to a familiar airfield, or to one new to you, and see GA aircraft which really fly there, instead of nothing but bland default schemes!

As of this writing they have released five packages so far;

Ultimate Citation 550

Ultimate Cessna 402

Ultimate Boeing BBJ (Boeing Business Jets)

Ultimate Learjet 40

Ultimate Gulfstream (a very large package in four segments)

A great package of Afcads is available also but use extreme caution when selecting which of these to use – you do **not** want to have any duplicate afcads for any of your airports.

Most of the packages also include Voicepacks so ATC can properly call the aircraft in question. This is the most comprehensive approach to AI traffic that I have seen. Check them out and never be lonely when flying again.

Note: If downloading, you will be redirected to **Avsim.com**.

Historic Aircraft

Bob Peach, a faithful reader of this series, recently sent me the following information regarding a German website that has an exceptionally fine model of the Junkers aircraft. Quoting Bob; “There is no autopilot & it is a real fliers aircraft but a delight & I would recommend it/them to anyone”.

You can check it out by logging unto
<http://www.junkers-52.de/downloads.html>.

You are seeking “**junkers_52_v1.5.exe**”. There is also a fine rendition of a Jungmeister available here that you may wish to audition also.

Please note: When installing this aircraft, the automatic installer has an **incorrect** default path to your aircraft folder. Either correct it or install to a temporary folder elsewhere and manually move the files where they should go.



The gauges are Metric and in German so the aircraft is as authentic as it can possibly be.

Bob also provided the following addresses if you wish to learn more about the history of this aircraft.

1. <http://www.ju52-3m.ch/about.htm>
2. <http://www.constable.ca/ju52.htm>
3. <http://www.fantasyofflight.com/aircraftpages/jungmann.htm>

I particularly enjoyed visiting the last site as this is the website of the **Fantasy of Flight Aviation Museum** that has many vintage aircraft on display. The museum is located midway between Tampa and Orlando in Polk City, Florida. Fantasy of Flight is an aviation-themed attraction that takes visitors back to Early Flight, World War I, World War II and beyond.

When you are finished reading about the Jungmann, click on the Back icon. This will take you to their index where you can read about each of the aircraft they have on display. Some great pictures at this site also.

Yet Another Breakthrough

Sometimes I may sound like a “shill” for Bill and Lynn Lyons but I am just reporting their continued wizardry when it comes to innovation.

This time it is his Piper PA22 Tri-Pacer for FS2004 – the filename at **Avsim.com** is “**cc13p22f.zip**”.

The Tri-Pacer is a remarkable aircraft with performance that matches or exceeds that of its contemporary all metal Cessna 172. It is a full seven feet shorter in length than a 172 and takes off in a shorter distance with a higher cruise speed.

What caught my eye however was the new type of Virtual Cockpit included in this package. Quoting their documentation;

“Virtual Cockpit Operation: The virtual cockpit concept has been expanded to include a complete virtual aircraft! This we call **Virtual Plus** or **V+**. This means that by using the hotspots and Active Camera **or** the included VP Movement Arrows you can open the door, do the complete walk around preflight, open the cowling, check the oil, drain fuel sumps, remove tie downs etc thus further enhancing flight simming !

Use the "Hot Spots" assignments as shown (in the documentation) and you will have a new and fun experience! Be sure to call out "Contact" of course when starting the engine!

If you don't have Active Camera you can still do some limited movement using the "move eye point" key assignments or the Movement Arrows as shown in the pictures! (included in the documentation)

When you have moved outside of the aircraft in VC mode click on the service aircraft hotspot beneath the cowling to get started! In some of the included flights the fuel tanks are only partly filled requiring you to fuel the aircraft before flying!"



Check out what the normal door opening commands E 1 and 2 do!

Truly remarkable work in my humble opinion. Highly recommended!

Simply Elegant!

I know of no other aircraft that I can just watch for extended periods of time from spot view and marvel at the sheer beauty of it – I am speaking of Erick Cantu's 727-200 of course.

Peter Liddell, Gaby Carlson, and Erick Cantu have recently released their Eastern Airlines 727-200 Mega-Pack. You can find it at **Avsim.com** as “**eastern_727-200_package.zip**”.



There are 14 paints of Eastern aircraft in the “standard” and “ADV” versions in this excellent package.

The planes are as easy to fly as they are beautiful to watch. I think you will agree if you audition this offering.

Hurricane Hunter

Unless you have been visiting Mars in recent weeks, undoubtedly you are aware of the devastation which hurricanes Katrina and Rita have visited upon the Gulf Coast areas of the United States.

Daisuke Yamamoto and **Hiroaki Kubota** (with friends) have recently released the Lockheed WP-3D "Hurricane Hunter", a highly sophisticated aircraft which is used to track the course of such hurricanes. You can download this fine rendition from **Avsim.com**. Look for “**wp3dvol6.zip**”.



Quoting from the file description;

“Two of the world's premier research aircraft, the renowned NOAA WP-3D Orions, participate in a wide variety of national and international meteorological, oceanographic and environmental research programs in addition to their widely known use in hurricane research and reconnaissance.

These versatile turboprop aircraft are equipped with an unprecedented variety of scientific instrumentation, radars and recording systems for both in-situ and remote sensing measurements of the atmosphere, the earth and its environment.

Obtained as new aircraft from the Lockheed production line in the mid-70's, these robust and well maintained aircraft have led NOAA's continuing effort to monitor and study hurricanes and other severe storms, the quality of the atmosphere, the state of the ocean and its fish population, and climate trends”.

One of the innovative features of this aircraft model is the linking of the landing lights to the position of the flaps and landing gear. The lights, if they are in the “on” position, automatically turn on during a landing approach.

[How cool is that?](#)

Very fine work by this talented team of designers.

I am Seeking Investors! (Just a little humor)

Since the sales of my “any key” keyboard (see Tips and Tricks Number 13) are not going well at all – I wonder why – I have decided to venture into the arena of Navigation Systems.

The system I have devised is named **A**rea **N**avigation **S**ystem (or Another Navigation System – take your pick) and a description of how it works is included in the Bonus Files folder which accompanied this document. Just look for ANS.doc.

If you think I am on to something and are interested in investing in this “cutting edge” technology – which I am sure the Pentagon will just love – then drop me an e-mail and I will forward a prospectus. Note: The prospectus will be as easy to understand as the ANS.doc. is – guaranteed!

Bay Area Bridges Updated!

Bay Area Bridges version 2.0 by **Mike Mahat** is now available at **Avsim.com**. This is an updated version which replaces the default Golden Gate Bridge, and San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge with more detailed gmax versions. This version updates the scenery and also adds the San Mateo-Hayward Bridge, and Dumbarton bridges. The filename is “**bay_area_bridges.zip**”.

I just replaced my earlier version of the Bridge enhancement and can report that this update is exceptionally well done. Thanks Mike!



SLEW Down!

That's not a misspelling of slow down. It is just a reminder that anytime you want to slow down the slew rate, you can do so the same way we slow down the simulation rate – by using the R key and the minus key (-).

This can be very useful if you are trying to position an aircraft “just right” when placing an object with a program such as RWY12.

Of course to increase the simulation and/or slew rate you just use your R key and the plus key (+).

My thanks to **Lou Frost** for jogging my memory on this.

Genealogy and Flying?

Many of us that enjoy flying also find great satisfaction in pursuing Genealogy – the documentation of our ancestors.

I don't think it too much of a stretch to suggest that you can use FS2004 to enhance your Genealogy experience.

As an example, I have a number of ancestors who came to Canada from Scotland in the early 1800's. When I recently saw the Prestwick Airport in Scotland - EGPK - by **Iain Gallacher**, I immediately downloaded and installed it.

Granted, this airport was not even a “twinkle in someone's eye” back in the 1700's but it has given me a base from which to fly while exploring the beautiful countryside where some of my ancestors once lived and loved.

You can find the Prestwick Airport package at **Flightsim.com**. Look for “**pik2004.zip**”. There is also a small patch you will need – it is named “**pikpatch.zip**”.

Consider where your roots are and take the time to explore those areas. It may give you a whole new appreciation of the lives of your ancestors.

The Flyers Prayer

**Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If before I wake, I should die,
I pray the Lord will give me wings,
So I Can Fly!**

Thanks to **John E. Kelley** for submitting this little prayer he composed.

Dangling Extensions

You are often advised to “backup” files or folders before installing an enhancement of one kind or another. Excellent advice, but were you aware that FS may still try to use the “original” file if you backup files simply by renaming them and leave the extension “dangling”? It does not happen often, but when it does, there can be some very strange results!

The following are a few procedures which I use to help assure that FS will not accidentally attempt to use my backup instead of the replacement file or folder.

For example:

I recently installed an addon which told me to backup file called HP957190.bgl before installing a replacement for it.

If I had simply done a “copy and paste” in the folder where this file resides, I would have had a file named Copy of HP957190.bgl. Even though the name had changed, the extension remained the same.

It is possible for FS to try to process that BGL file even though it is not the one that should be processed.

To assure this does not happen there are at least two approaches you can use;

a. move the original file into a new, temporary folder. If you do this, you can also add a short text file that has a note to yourself saying where the file came from and/or why you placed it here – i.e. what scenery addition required that it replaced. I often do this as my memory is not what it used to be.

b. rename the files using a different extension such as .original. Using the example above, the file would then be called HP957190.bgl.original. FS will not attempt to process this as there is no legitimate extension called “original”. You could use XXX as the extension if this is easier for you.

The same concept applies to circumstances where you are asked to backup a panel.cfg or aircraft.cfg file. If you rename it, change the extension – do not leave the .cfg extension “dangling”.

If I am asked to backup a folder, such as a panel folder, before I replace it with a new panel I wish to audition, I make a copy of the original panel and place it in a new, temporary folder with a note to myself. Then I delete the original panel folder before pasting in a replacement. This may seem redundant but I do not wish to have any trace of the original folder before I add a replacement.

The bottom line – **never** take it for granted that FS will see what you have done and interpret your actions correctly. “Undangle” those extensions and place copies in new, temporary folders.

Cloning Aircraft

Making a copy of an existing aircraft folder is something you might do if you wanted to make some modifications to an aircraft or panel and do not wish to be working on your existing one.

However, it is **not** enough to give this “cloned” folder a new name!

You must also make a change to the **title=** line **and** the **ui_manufacturer=** line in your aircraft.cfg file – this must be done for **each** “paint” of the aircraft.

You are probably asking why you need to do this.

FS looks at two criteria when displaying an aircraft - the **ui_manufacturer=** line and the **title=** line of each variation of an aircraft. These lines are found in the aircraft.cfg file that is a part of every aircraft folder.

The **ui_manufacturer=** line determines what you see when you view your “select aircraft” menu.

The **title=** line is used by FS2004 to identify the specific aircraft in several operations, including how it may be used in flightplans.

The **title=** line **must be unique**. (this is the first line in every paint of every aircraft) Just adding something simple, like your initials, is all that is required. (see the example below).

If you have made a copy of a default or addon aircraft folder **and** kept it in your FS2004 Aircraft folder and made **not** made any changes to the **title=** line, then the **title=** definitions are no longer unique.

Simply stated, you will have two identical aircraft.cfg files with identical **title=** lines. This will result in some strange displays (or non-displays) of your aircraft. If you modify the panel associated with your cloned aircraft, it probably will not display correctly as FS will likely attempt to load the original panel.cfg instead of the one you had modified.

So if you copy an entire aircraft (clone it) and keep it in your Main aircraft folder, be sure to modify the **title=** line(s) **and** the **ui_manufacturer=** line(s) in the aircraft.cfg of your copy.

As a practical example, I recently added the Deckviews II package by **Slim Tannor** – “**deckviews2.zip**” at **Avsim.com**. This package adds several very interesting view options to the default Cessna 172.

Rather than modify my current C172, I decided to make a copy of the aircraft folder and renamed it C172 DeckViews. I kept this new copy in my aircraft folder. The provided new bmps and modified panel.cfg files were then copied and pasted into the panel folder of this renamed aircraft.

In order for this “new” aircraft to be listed properly in my FS Aircraft menu, it was then necessary to modify the **title=** line **and** the **ui_manufacturer=** line for **each** of the paints in this aircraft.cfg file. I simply added the letters DV to each **title=**line and added DeckViews to each **ui_manufacturer=** line.

Example: Original

```
[fltsim.0]
title=Cessna Skyhawk 172SP
ui_manufacturer=Cessna
```

Modified

```
[fltsim.0]
title=Cessna Skyhawk 172SP DV
ui_manufacturer=Cessna DeckViews
```

This pattern was followed for each variation of the aircraft (i.e. each paint).



I know that may sound like a good deal of work but it is really very simple to do and well worth the very small amount of time involved.

Tip: If you have installed the Deckviews II package, hit Shift 1 first to remove the normal panel before selecting your new view via Shift 2 thru 9.

Too Many Gauges?

Here is a common scenario; you download an interesting new aircraft, unzip it to a temporary location and discover the package includes many gauges that are to be added to your gauge folder. Is this really necessary, you ask, and how will I later remove all of these new gauges I added if I don't wish to keep the aircraft?

If this sounds familiar, you can make a backup copy of you main gauge folder first and restore it later if you don't keep the new aircraft. There is, however, a much easier and quicker way to audition the aircraft and its associated gauges without going to all that trouble.

Simply place the new gauges into the **panel** folder of this new aircraft rather than into your main gauge folder. If FS finds gauges in this folder - even if they have the same name as those in your normal gauge folder - the gauges in your panel folder will take precedence over those in the main gauge folder and that is what the simulation will use.

If you later decide you do not wish to keep the aircraft, when you remove it you will be removing the associated gauges also. No more making backup copies of your main gauge folder and going through a restoration process.

This fine tip came from the Guru of Gauges himself - **Rob Barendregt**.

Make A Little History Yourself

Even though I have been using FS2004 for almost three years now, I have to admit I had never fully explored the possibilities of the **Historical Flights** section that MS has included in the base package. One of our readers, **Richard J. Parrish** changed all that for me by sending me an enticing e-mail, urging me to try them.

I followed his advice and sure enough, discovered a whole new aspect of flying which I had simply overlooked before.

A year or so ago I took a quick peek at this option and told myself I would "check it out later" as it appeared to be just a history lesson. I did not realize that you are presented with flights you can re-create and fly in segments (legs) using some of the vintage aircraft which actually were involved.

These adventures can be one of the most **challenging**, yet **rewarding** aspects of FS2004 if you will just take the time to fully explore them.

How do we find these adventures that await us, you ask? Just start your Flight Simulator FS2004 and click on the section that says: **Century of Flight**. Lane Wallace presents nine different historical missions all with the original aircraft of its day as your selection. You can change it within the simulation, but first try what's given as the choice aircraft.

Within your selection there are two or more legs to fly. Each historical mission also provides an in-depth history of why these flights were important to aviation, along with some antidotes that gives us a taste of why early aviators were considered heroes.

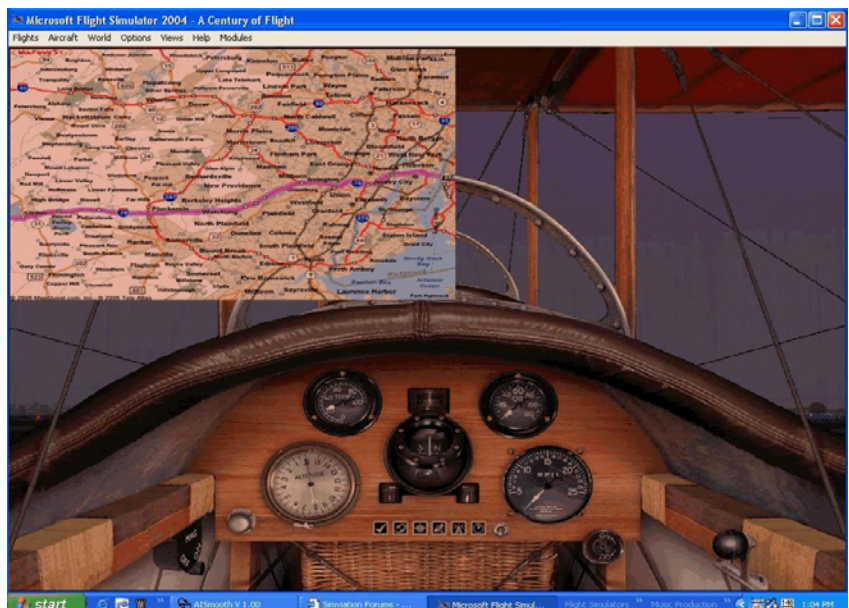
Note: This is not something you should investigate “on the fly”. I suggest that you send the wife and kids to a movie and let the answering machine take your telephone messages for a hour or two – once you get started, you won’t want to be interrupted!

Most of the sophisticated gauges (such as GPS) that we take for granted today were not available in the early days of aviation and charts were crude if available at all. Richard has devised a method of creating and displaying VFR Maps from the cockpit (of any aircraft) to make these historical flights even more interesting.

He has shared his method in the file named “**VFR_Map_Tutorial.zip**” which you can find at **Avsim.com**. At **Flightsim.com** it is named “**VFRMpTut.zip**“. Maps for one of the historical flights are included.

You will find this is a relatively simple, yet **very creative**, way to help you “find your way”, especially when exploring the Historical Flights!

My thanks once again to **Richard J. Parrish** for prodding me to try his passion for flying these missions!



Other Recent Scenery Releases

As I am running out of space, I won't spend a great deal time describing these recent releases – sufficient to say they are “**must haves**” in my book.

FreeFlow Bermuda – By **Scott Gridley** and friends. Bermuda as it really is!
“**ffbm1.3.zip**” at **Avsim.com**.

Be sure to get “**bermudatreezii.zip**” by **Ron Jeffers** also – this adds many trees to the area and makes a huge difference in the overall effect of the scenery..

Victoria, B.C. Canada Harbor – By **Jon Patch** and **Holger Sandmann**.
“**vicenh05.zip**” at **Avsim.com**.
One of my very favorite spots on earth.

What Is It – Answer

If you said it was the engine of the FS2004 Curtiss “Jenny”, then you are absolutely correct.

You are seeing the external cam arrangement which opens and closes the intake and exhaust valves of the engine. All this is nicely animated – that is why I consider it to be “special”.

To check it out for yourself just load up your Curtiss “Jenny” and zoom in on the engine in spot view. If the engine is running, you will see the cams in action. Pretty cool if you ask 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. If you have a tip or trick you have found useful, or anything else you want to share, please 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/eseach.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!

