

Tips and Tricks for FS2004

Part XXV - Addenda

Compiled by David “Opa” Marshall

July 2008

Disclaimer: These ideas may or may not work for you – they do work well on my FS2004 setup using XP Home as my operating system.. 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.

A Few Words from Opa

Well here we are again – some 20 months since the “final” issue of the Tips and Tricks series in November of 2006.

The dictionary describes an addenda as follows:

n. pl. **ad·den·da**

Something added or to be added, especially a supplement to a book.

That’s what the issue is all about – adding a few more Tips and Tricks to what has gone before.

Does this signal the resumption of the series? No, I’m sorry, but it does not.

I simply do not have the time (or energy) it requires to put together a regular edition. But over the past months I have run across several interesting (and hopefully useful) “tricks” which I wanted to share. Also there have been a number of amazing advances in our hobby/addiction which I feel deserve special mention.

Note: My Operating System is XP – Some of the Tips and Tricks mentioned may not work properly if you are running FS2004 under Vista.

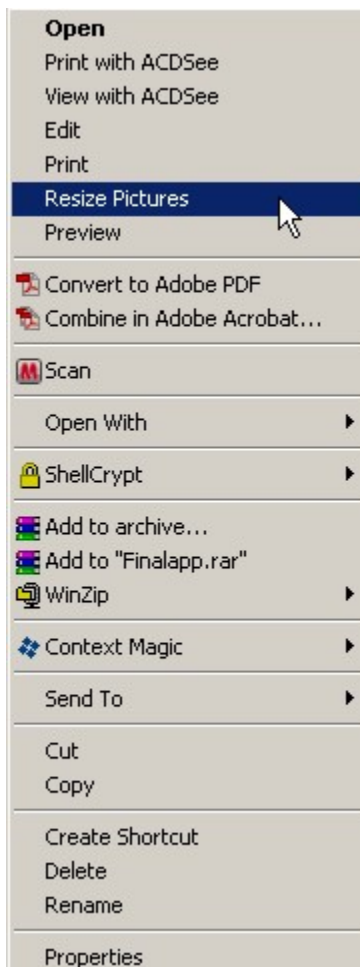
So, without further ado, let’s get on with it!

One Size Does Not Fit All

From time to time you may need to resize pictures, especially if you are uploading them to one of the Flight Simulator web sites.

There is no need to open up your graphic editor to resize most pictures if you install this handy “**power toy**” from Microsoft. It is available here:

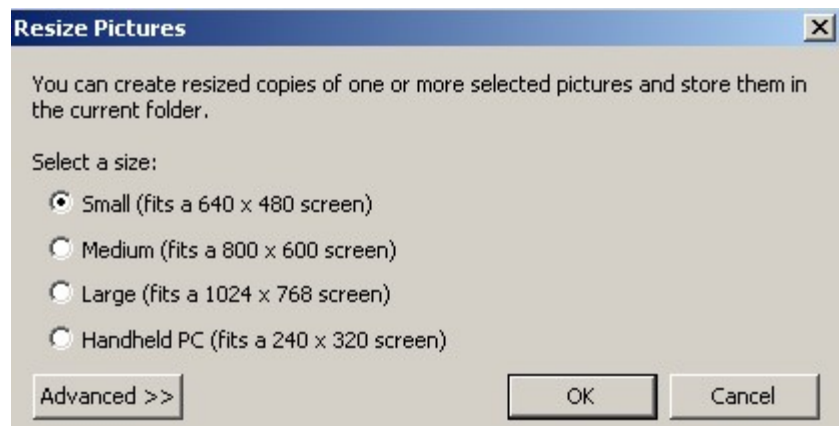
<http://download.microsoft.com/download/whistler/Install/2/WXP/EN-US/ImageResizerPowertoySetup.exe>



After installation, when you right click on a graphic file (jpg, bmp etc.) your context menu will have a new option.



If you select Resize Pictures, you get the following screen:



Just select the output size you want and in mere moments a resized copy of your original picture will be created and the name will have the size appended to it. Simple but very effective.

Optical Illusion

Speaking of pictures, here is a great optical illusion photo taken of a Lufthansa 747-400 and a United 757-200 that were on simultaneous approaches to runways 28L and 28R at San Francisco (KSFO).

The separation requirement for flying parallel and simultaneous approaches is 225 meters (about 750 feet).

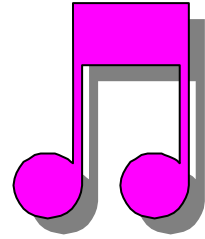
These two aircraft **are** at a safe distance for the approaches each are flying.

Due to the 747 being three times larger than the 757, and being slightly behind, it gives this incredible optical illusion,



Music to My Ears

While we are on the subject of “media”, there are times when it is desirable to edit sound files. As an example, you may want to increase or decrease the volume of engine sounds or some other .wav file associated with FS2004.



Of course there are a number of excellent payware programs available for such editing, but their cost may be prohibitive for the average user,

I use, and **highly** recommend, the **free**, open source program named **Audacity Sound Editor**. It is packed with powerful features just like the expensive programs and is quite simple to use.

PC Magazine has rated it as one of the 100 best products of 2008.

You can get it here: <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>

Airline Mergers

With all of the talk of more mergers of various airlines, is this what we might see in the not too distant future?



From the E-Mail Bag Department



I recently received an e-mail asking how to change the radius of aircraft. The writer also said he could see no reference to radius in the aircraft.cfg file for any of his aircraft and wondered where this information was stored.

Answer: The radius of all aircraft is coded in the model (mdl) file and really should not be changed unless you are absolutely sure you know what you are doing.

However, the Afcad program, by [Lee Swordy](#), **does** allow the radius of any aircraft to be shown and edited if necessary.

When you start the Afcad program, simply select the Tools option and then select Aircraft Editor. If you have a great many aircraft installed it may take a few moments to index them. If the screen displays a blank page, simply use the scroll bar at the right to bring up the list in view.

This is a screenshot of the list of default aircraft:

A screenshot of the 'Aircraft Editor' window. It features a table with three columns: 'Mfr', 'Type', and 'Variation (paint scheme)'. The table lists various aircraft models like Beechcraft King Air 350, Boeing 737-400, and Bombardier Learjet 45. Below the table are several input fields and buttons for editing aircraft settings, including a 'Parking Code Selector', 'Parking Code', 'Gate (G), Ramp (R), Cargo (C), Dock (D), Mil_Cargo (MR), Mil_Combat (MB)', 'Parking Type', 'Aircraft Radius (m)' (set to 11), 'Restore Original Settings', 'OK', 'Help', 'Cancel', 'Title' (set to 'Beech King Air 350'), and 'ATC Airline (callsign)'.

Clicking on any aircraft will display a great deal of information including the radius of that aircraft as coded in the model by the designer.

It is best not to change this value, but you can use the data to indicate the correct radius you want when you are adding parking spaces to an airport via the afcad program.

You can easily add Parking Codes and ATC call signs from this dialogue also.

I must admit that even though I have used the Afcad program for a number of years, I had never fully explored the functions of the Aircraft Editor. It's a great, and I suspect often overlooked, tool.

To access a table of standard radii used by FS2004, follow this link: <http://de.geocities.com/janswebsites/flightsim/ai-model-radiusing.html>

A very useful site provide by **Jan Martin**.

Those of you who work with the Afcad program may also be interested in a tips and tricks style "tutorial" I uploaded last year which deals with some of the less obvious things you can do with the program.

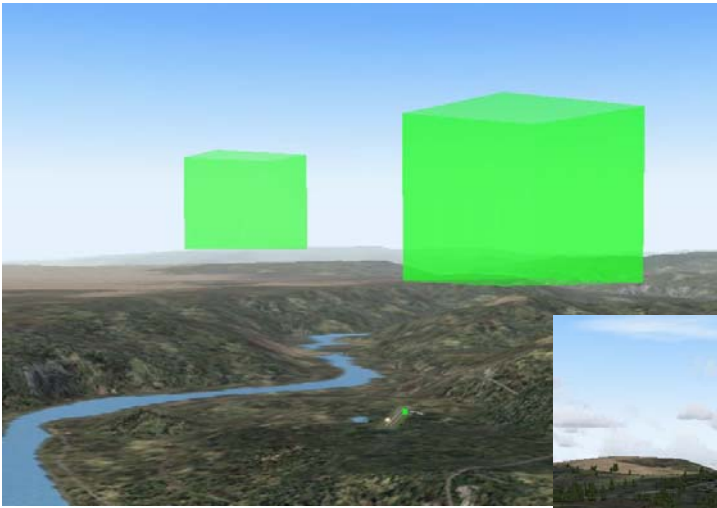
It is available at **Avsim.com** and **Flightsim.com** as [afcadtrt.zip](#)

A more recent tutorial deals with a method of "hardening" surfaces such as building roofs and ship decks using the Afcad program. It is available at **Avsim.com** and at **Flightsim.com** as [afc_hard.zip](#)

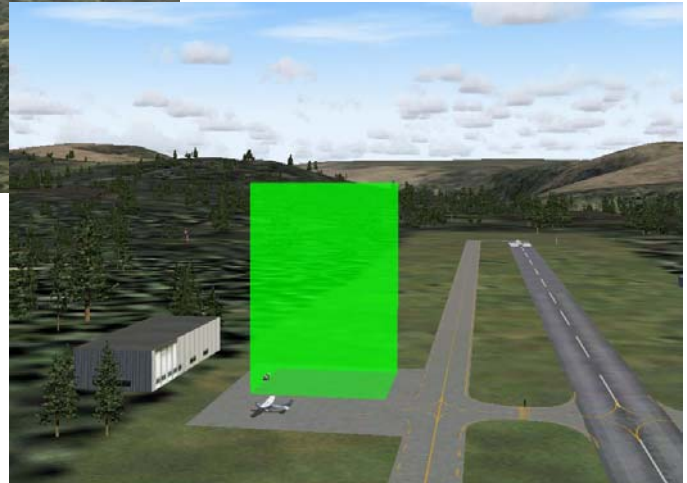
Am I Seeing Things?

I would be willing to bet most simmers have never seen the "Green Boxes" displayed in the following screenshots.

Care to venture a guess as to what they are?



Both shots were taken at the Chelan Airport (S10) in Washington State and are **not** Martian space vehicles about to invade Earth.



The green boxes are what you will see when you add the following line to the [SCENERY] label of your FS9.cfg file.

ShowTriggers=1

The green box in the lower right picture is the “trigger” area around a fuel island where you can automatically refuel your GA aircraft by taxiing near it and parking.



The upper left picture show the locations of “thermal boxes” which are used when flying a sailplane. They provide the updraft you are seeking.

Seeing the green boxes all the time is not desirable of course, but if you have added a fuel trigger or a thermal to the scenery, it is a great way to check your work.

Sailplane enthusiasts can also use it to determine where thermals are prior to sailing in a specific area.

Notes: There are many Fuel triggers in the default FS2004 installation and many thermal boxes too. At the various download sites you can also find numerous thermal packages which can be added to your setup.

Issue number 3 of the Tips and Tricks series has complete details regarding how to find the FS9.cfg file – which is hidden by default.

Two Useful Shortcuts

It is often desirable to consult the FS2004 **Help** file or the **Lessons** file and most simmers think that FS2004 has to be up and running to do so.

Not true! You can easily set up shortcuts to these areas on your desktop so you can access them at any time – FS2004 need not be running.

The process is the same for both shortcuts – only the “location” information and how you name the shortcut is different.

Right click on your Desktop and select New and then Shortcut from the menu which will display,

In the box where it asks you to type in the location of the item, Copy and Paste the following line:

C:\Program Files\Microsoft Games\Flight Simulator 9\Fsweb\LearningCenter\lc_index_KeyTopicsTabs.htm

Be sure to get it all, starting with C and ending with htm

This assumes a default installation of FS2004 on your C drive. If installed elsewhere, edit the path accordingly.

Then hit Next and give the shortcut a better name such as **Shortcut to FS2004 Help files** – and click on Finish to complete the process.

To create a shortcut to the Flying Lessons section, Copy and Paste this line into the location box:

C:\Program Files\Microsoft Games\Flight Simulator 9\Fsweb\Lessons\Lessons_index_mainframe.htm

Again edit the path if necessary.

Complete the process as in the first example by giving the shortcut a name like **Shortcut to Flying Lessons**.

Now there is no excuse for not consulting the Help files or reviewing any of the Lessons prior to use.

Coordinates Tip

When you hit Shift+Z, several useful bits of information are displayed in the upper right hand corner of your FS2004 screen.

Coordinates are normally displayed like this:



To see extended coordinate information like this:



Simply add the following line to the [MAIN] label of your FS9.cfg file:

Display_Fractional_Minutes=0

Hitting Shift+Z again will change the type of information displayed in case you had not already discovered that. Try hitting it several times and note what happens.

Two Useful Sites

Actually, these are far more than “useful” in my humble opinion, they are “must haves” in your list of Favorite sites:

The first is a site set up by **Jim Robinson**, a long time and extremely knowledgeable simmer:

<http://www.cat-tamer.com/flightsim/faq001.html>

It shows where everything is on your install disks and how extract just what you need when you want to restore files.

(I also recommend **fs9cddir.zip** compiled by **Brian Collins** which is available at **Avsim.com** and **Flightsim.com**. This is an Excel format listing of all the files on your install disks. A great resource to keep handy).

The second site will display a listing and the links required to download any of the FS9 SDK's (Software **D**evelopment **K**it).

<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/555857>

Many of the things we do in FS2004 require the utilities (and instructions) found in the SDK's so it is helpful to know where they can now be found.

Problem Solving Tip

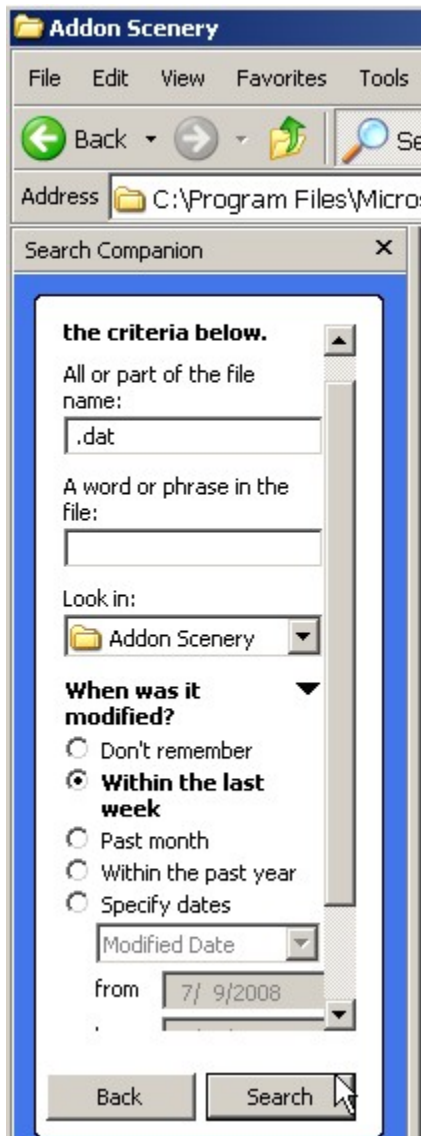
I ran across this tip on one of the forums a few months ago but unfortunately did not note the name of the gentleman who posted it so cannot give him proper credit.

The premise:

A problem arises with a scenery enhancement – everything had been working alright but you have installed a number of new sceneries recently and figure one of them might be causing a conflict. But, you did not keep any record of what you had installed.

The tip:

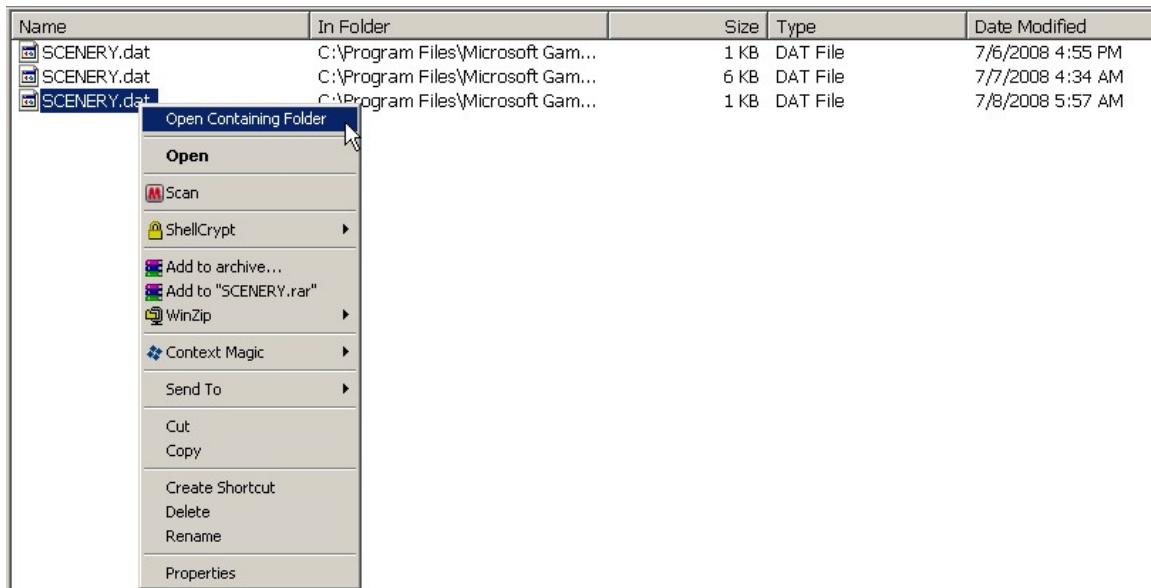
Using the Windows Search function, search for .DAT files under the all files and folders tab and limit the search to “when modified” – selecting one of the various time options. Use “Within the last week” or “Past month” to keep the resulting list size manageable..



In a few moments a list of the .dat files will be presented – the number of .dat files displayed depends of course upon the number which were modified during the selected time period.

They can be sorted by date modified.

Right clicking on any of the results will give you the option to **Open Containing Folder** and that takes you to the scenery entry in question.



Selecting **Folders** from the Menu at the top of your screen at that point will display the actual folder so you can check what scenery it is.

This process provides another way to find out what you had added or modified within the specified time frame and may help narrow down the search for the problematic scenery.

The idea works as a new .dat file is written for any scenery anytime it has been added or edited in any way.

It is best to invoke the Search option when you are in the area where you have scenery enhancements installed – typically your Addon scenery folder.

Simple, yet effective. Try it!

Words of Wisdom?

***Do not spin this aircraft.
If the aircraft does enter a spin it will return to earth
without further attention on the part of the aeronaut.***

From the First handbook issued with the Curtis-Wright flyer.

“The average male pilot is a poor, confused soul who talks about women when he’s in an airplane... and talks about airplanes when he is with a woman.”

- Source unknown

Both optimists and pessimists contribute to the society. The optimist invents the aeroplane, the pessimist the parachute.

— *George Bernard Shaw*

Some New Approaches

As I mentioned at the beginning of this document, there have been several amazing advances in our hobby/addiction over the past few months.

One is the **Tile Proxy** program, created by **Christian Buchner** – which has already spawned another similar program named **Maps2Bgl** created by **Gunnar Daehling**.

Both use differing approaches to create alternative textures based on **real world images** which are displayed as you fly instead of the simulation based textures.

The effect is quite dramatic!



To learn more about **Tile Proxy**, visit this site:

<http://edtruthan.com/tileproxy/tutorial/>

Here you will find an excellent Tutorial by **Ed Truthan** and a link to download the latest version of the program. I recommend you save the page which will be displayed for reference as you set up the program.

The **Maps2Bgl** program can be download from **Avsim.com** –

<http://library.avsim.net/search.php?SearchTerm=maps2bgl.zip&CatID=root&Go=Search>

There is also a very helpful Tutorial written by **Jeremy Fletcher**.

http://library.avsim.net/search.php?SearchTerm=maps2bgl_how_to_.zip&CatID=root&Go=Search

Both programs are free and continue to improve each passing week.

Whichever program you decide to audition, it will vastly change what you see as you fly.

A New Design Tool

The new (as of this writing) program named **Instant Object Maker** (from **FlightSim Tools**) is one I believe to be worth watching.

The program allows you to create 3D “objects” such as buildings, signs and vehicles from photographs.

These objects can be placed directly using user supplied coordinates or they can be made in to object library items which can be placed anywhere with the popular **Instant Scenery** program.

To check it out, log unto:

<http://flightsimtools.com/iom/>

There you can watch a Video or view the Manual (PDF format). Both show how the program works and walk you through the creation of a couple of sample objects. If viewing the Manual, you may want to save the displayed pages so you can study it at your leisure.

The program is marketed with a 30 day money back guarantee. Pretty hard to beat that.

This is only the first release of the program and further enhancements are in the works according to their support forum.

This appears to be an exciting new tool to add to the scenery enhancer's collection. It seems to be easy enough that even I could do it!

Confused About Zipping?

No, I am not referring to those found on clothes. I am speaking about the programs which create zipped files and unzip them.

The basic concept is simple: any given file or groups of files and/or folders can be compressed to a fraction of their original size and this makes it easier to send such files over the Internet or attached to e-mail.



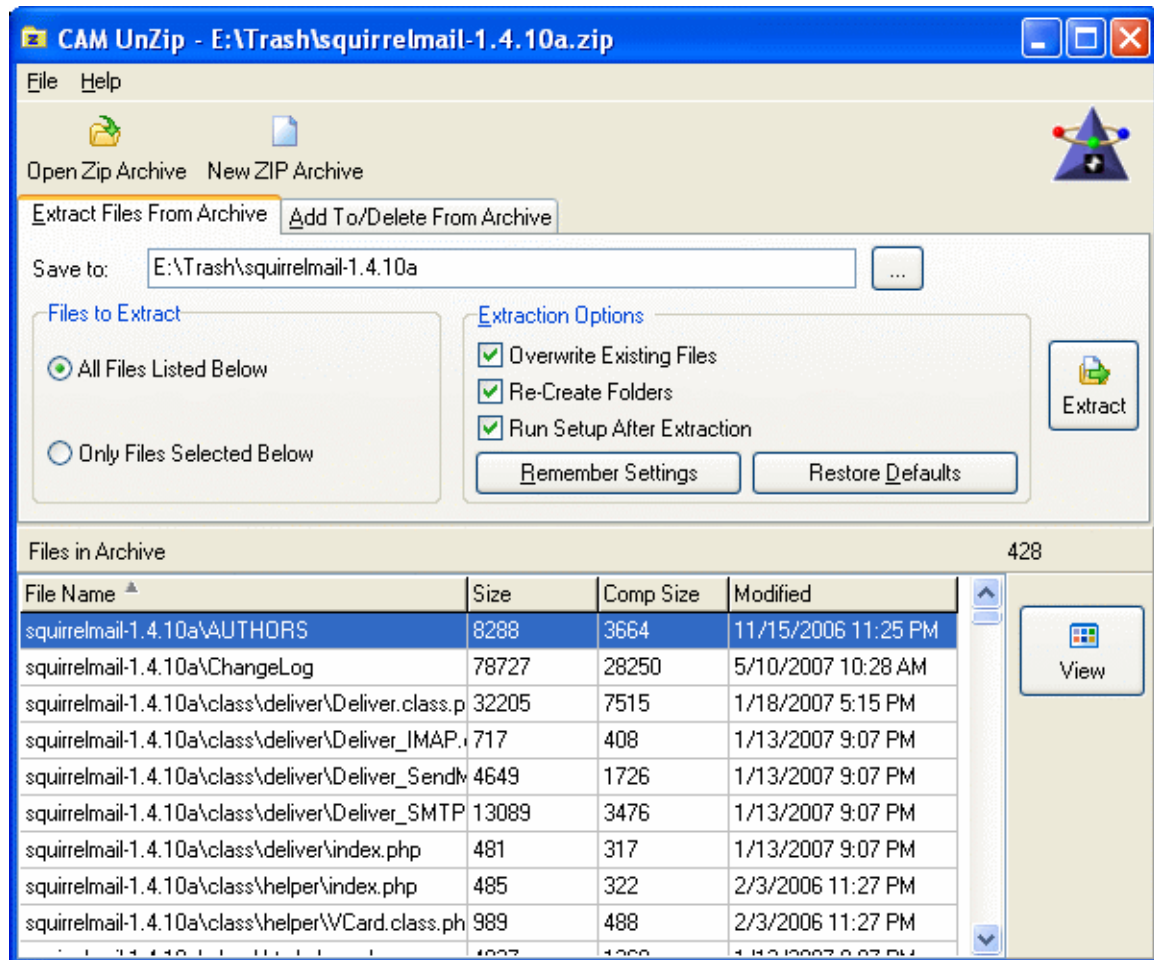
I found the zipping program, which is built into XP, very user un-friendly and quickly installed the payware **WinZip** program.

If you are looking for a simple, **FREE** zip program that **is** user friendly and works well, may I recommend the program named **Cam UnZip** – by the **Cam Development Company**.

<http://www.camunzip.com/>

It does not have all of the features of the payware **WinZip** program, but will do all your basic zipping and unzipping chores easily.

This is a screenshot of it's interface showing just a few of the options such as viewing any individual file prior to extraction and extracting all files or only the ones you have selected from any zipped archive.



For anyone who is new to the concept of zipped files, this is a fine program and the price (free) is certainly right.

Time to Fly!

Back in April of 2008, **Pierre Fauteux** released a clever little program named **FLT_Date_Heure** which probably did not get the attention I think it should have.

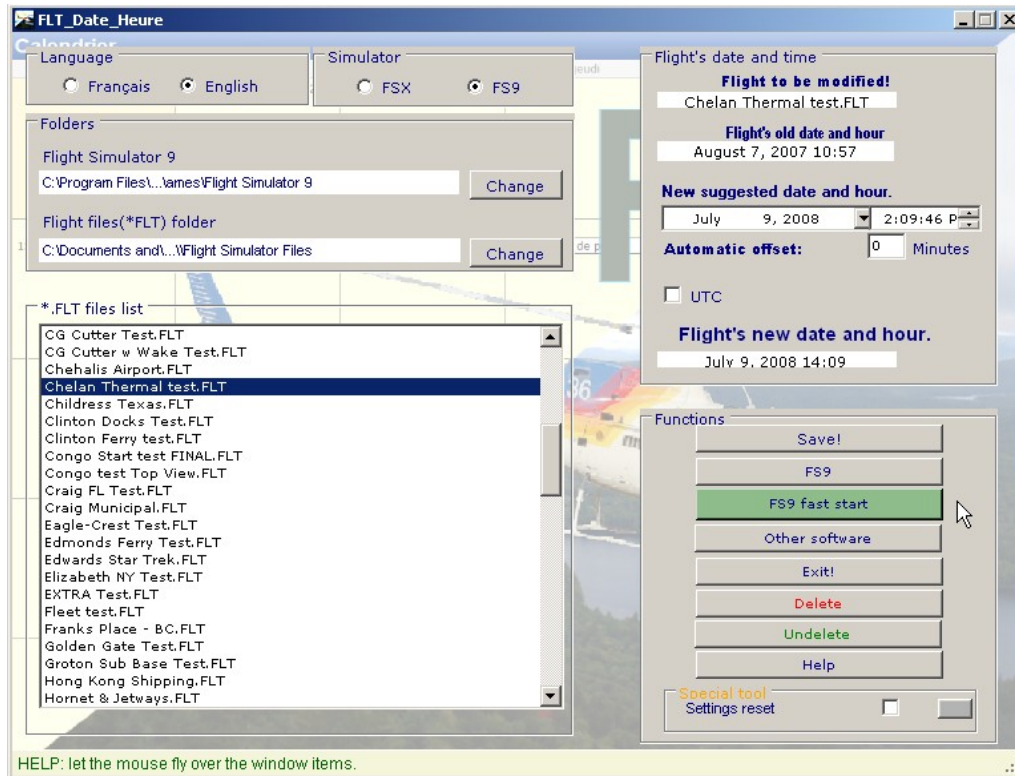
The program file name which is in French may have been a factor in deciding to download and audition it or not.

I did and find it a welcome addition to my setup.



The program will list all of your saved flights – including the “previous flight”. You can click on one and use it as is, or change the start time.

Clicking on the Fast Start button will start your sim, bypassing the main FS2004 or FSX screens.



You can give it try yourself by using this link:

http://library.avsim.net/search.php?SearchTerm=flt_date_heure.zip&CatID=root&Go=Search

The filename is **flt_date_heure.zip**

I believe you will find it useful also.

Another Question From the E-Mail Bag Department



“Hi Opa – What are the numbers I see after an entry in my FS9.cfg file under the [KEYBOARD_MAIN] label?

Here is an example of what I mean:

`SOUND_TOGGLE=81,8”`

Answer: You will see a number of similar entries in the FS9.cfg file. The first part of the line indicates what the action is, and the numbers specify which key is to be pressed and if it is a single key press or is a combination press such as Shift or Control plus the key.

I won’t go into a great detail here as all of this is spelled out in a document named [FSUIPC for Advanced Users.pdf](#), which comes with the download of the FSUIPC program.

The coding is based upon an old system using “virtual keycodes” and I believe it was first used in FS2000.

The document contains an appendix with all potential actions which can be triggered and a listing of all keys with a number code assigned to them.

The basic “states” of the keys are as follows:

The basic “states” of the keys are as follows:

- 8 plain key only
- 9 SHIFT + key
- 10 CTRL + key
- 11 SHIFT + CTRL + key

Thus in the above example, the key to toggle Sound on and off is the Q key (81 is it’s assigned number) with no combination being needed.

Another example:

`ENGINE_AUTO_START=69,10`

69 is the number assigned to the E key and it is coupled with the number 10. So to auto start an aircraft’s engines, you would press CTRL and E.

When you enter a new key combination assignment in your Settings / Assignments dialogue or change an existing assignment, that data is written to your FS9.cfg file in the format just discussed.

There are exceptions to the above examples; however that was a general outline of how it works and what the numbers mean.

If you want to do some experimenting on your own, try these two additions:

Add these events to the [KEYBOARD_MAIN] section of your fs9.cfg:

TOGGLE_TAXI_LIGHTS=75,8

TOGGLE_BEACON_LIGHTS=74,10

Use the “K” key for taxi lights and “CTRL+J” for beacon.

More logical key assignments would have been better but everything that made sense (CTRL+T, T, SHIFT+T, B, CTRL+B, etc.) was already in use.

It is **imperative** that you do **not** use a key combination which is already in use – so search the entire FS9.cfg file for your selected number combination to be sure it is available.

This last segment, regarding the Taxi and Beacon lights, was sent to me by a fellow simmer whose name I have misplaced – so my apologies for not being able to give him credit for couple of useful but undocumented toggles.

Annoying Sound?

If the “click” sound which is heard when you click on a Menu or similar item in FS2004 annoys you, you can turn it off by disabling the following wav file: [btnstdc.wav](#)

It is located in your Flight Simulator 9 / UIRES folder. To disable it, just rename it [btnstdc.wav.BAK](#) or [btnstdc.wav.ORIG](#)

Ah, peace and quiet at last.

Exceptional Scenery

Unless you have been on a space mission for the past year or so, you undoubtedly have at least heard about Kai Tak – the now closed airport at Hong Kong and it's infamous “checkerboard” approach.

Thanks to the **9Dragon Team** and **Fly Tampa**, we now have two magnificent versions of this airport to use. One is freeware (9Dragons) and the other is payware (Fly Tampa).

Both set new standards in scenery design which will likely not be surpassed in the near future.

The Fly Tampa version can be found at:

<http://www.flytampa.org/>

To audition the 9Dragons version, follow this link:

<http://library.avsim.net/search.php?CatID=fs2004scen&SearchTerm=9dragons&Sort=Added&ScanMode=1&Go=Change+View>

You are after Version 2 which has an automatic installer. There are 4 file plus a small update.

The old Kai Tak airport (VHHX) is now closed and has been replaced with a new one named Chek Lap Kok (VHHH).

This one has been excellently modeled by **Thomas Kwong** and is available at **Avsim.com** as **vhhh2005b.zip**.

It is possible to have the 9Dragons version of the old airport and the Thomas Kwong version of the new airport useable at the same time.

For detailed instructions on how that is accomplished, follow this link:

http://forums.avsim.net/dcboard.php?az=show_mesg&forum=263&topic_id=35432&mesg_id=35432&page=

Regardless of whose version you use or how you have set it up, flying the “checkerboard” is a challenge not to be missed.

FS2004 Blues?



I think it is safe to say that, sooner or later, almost all of us will be faced with the need or desire to remove our current FS2004 setup and do a clean re-install.

The reasons are many and varied, ranging from a “bloated FS” (very slow to load), to a real problem (perhaps not loading at all) to a simple desire to run a “lean and trim” version, using only the aircraft you regularly fly and scenery enhancements you simply cannot do without.

The decision to remove and reinstall is a difficult one, but the process can be “therapeutic” and in my opinion, well worth the time and effort.

To help make the process as easy and painless as possible, you may wish to download a my Tips and Tricks style document from **Avsim.com** or **Flightsim.com** named **unint&t.zip**

I hope you will find the suggestions and guideline useful as a number of items which you may have never considered are included.

Holger Has Done It Again

We are indeed privileged to have access to scenery – both payware and freeware – which has the name **Holger Sandmann** on it.

In case anyone has missed it, there is an exceptional rendition of the Glacier Bay area in Alaska and Canada created by Holger and his team.

It is a two part, freeware download which can be found here:

<http://library.avsim.net/search.php?SearchTerm=glbayv2b.zip&CatID=root&Go=Search>



Absolutely stunning work which is not to be missed!

Long Live FS2004! (editorial comment)

I take my hat off to those who have been able to successfully transition to FSX. If it works for you – congratulations.

Although I have FSX installed (it was a gift), my relatively powerful setup simply cannot handle the demands of FSX so as anyone who knows me or has been a reader of this series will attest, I am still a staunch advocate for FS2004.

I was quite amused reading a forum post a few weeks ago – by a forum administrator no less – suggesting that more people were visiting their FSX forum than their FS2004 forum simply because FSX was “more popular”.

From my perspective I think perhaps more folks were visiting the FSX forum because they had issues to be solved while most of us who stick with FS2004 have it running quite smoothly (on XP – Vista is another subject all together) with a minimum of problems.

Our prime reason for visiting a FS2004 forum is to seek out the opportunity to help others just getting their feet wet and/or look for that new trick we had not discovered yet.

I may be wrong, but that is how I see it.

Where Is It?

If your operating system is now Vista, instead of XP, you most likely have already discovered some FS2004 files are **not** located where they used to be.

As an example, I have been told that the FS9.cfg file now resides in:

C:\Users\Your Name\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\FS9

rather than

C:\Documents and Settings\Your name\Application Data\Microsoft\FS9

Leave it to Microsoft to re-invent the wheel!

An Eye for Detail



The advent of Object Placing programs such as the [EZ Object Placer](#) from Abacus and my favorite, the [Instant Scenery](#) program from Flight1, has allowed many of us to try our hand at enhancing airports and scenery without the need to learn large and complex design programs.

I would like to call your attention to the work of **Lauren Robison** who has an uncanny ability to take a small default airport area and turn it into a place which actually seems alive!

If you have not already discovered her work, I **highly** recommend her two Montana Unleashed packages.

<http://library.avsim.net/search.php?SearchTerm=montana.zip&CatID=fs2004scen&Go=Search>

and

http://library.avsim.net/search.php?SearchTerm=montana_unleashed_pt_2.zip&CatID=fs2004scen&Go=Search





Her work requires you to have most of the EZ style object libraries installed. If you do not already have those libraries, her instructions explain an easy method to obtain them.

I understand Lauren also drives race cars – a multi-talented lady.

If you appreciate detail, you will have to look long and hard to find anything which even begins to equal her fine work.

Note: Part 2 was done in collaboration with **Sidney Schwartz**, a prolific contributor to our FS2004 world in his own right.

Scenery Design Tool

If you have done any scenery enhancement work you know precise placement of objects can be tricky, especially getting the heading of the object “just right”. This is often due to the magnetic variation of the area which we may fail to take into account.

Jim Robinson has created a small gauge which can be added to the fine Crosshairs placement tool by **Gary Mills, Robert Finnegan** and **Kevin Bryan**.

The Crosshairs “aircraft” can be downloaded from:

<http://library.avsim.net/download.php?DLID=73331>

and Jim’s gauge is available from:

<http://library.avsim.net/download.php?DLID=108863>

Unzip the two Crosshair files into two separate temporary folders and follow the instructions for combining the two and adding the result to your Aircraft folder.

Note: Many simmers use the excellent **Tcalc** program by Richard Ludowise to provide the necessary coordinate and elevation data. ([tcalc_v2.zip](#) at Avsim.com).

For most projects I prefer the enhanced Crosshairs utility as it combines a placement tool along with a simple gauge which provides the needed data.

Also it does not require an interface such as FSUIPC or FDSCConnection to work properly.



The fact that it displays the heading properly – the magnetic variation is automatically calculated – is, in my opinion, one of its best features.

Sticking With the View

Earlier in this document we discussed the basics regarding the various items which can be toggled as seen in your FS9.cfg file.

The following, which came from a discussion on the Avsim FS2004 forum, outlines a quick and easy method to change the behavior of the 7 and 9 keys on your number pad.

These two keys are commonly used in 2D cockpit mode to look forward left and look forward right.



The problem lies in the fact that the view reverts to straight ahead as soon as you stop holding the 7 or 9 key down. The gentleman who started the forum discussion wanted to be able to press one once and have the selected view remain.

To allow that to happen until you hit either the space bar or the 8 key to restore a front view, a simple edit is made to the FS9.cfg file using Notepad.

Scroll to the [KEYBOARD_MAIN] section. Then locate the entry which reads:

```
VIEW_FORWARD_LEFT=36,41
```

Change it to read:

```
VIEW_FORWARD_LEFT=36,9
```


Now find the entry named

VIEW_FORWARD_RIGHT=33,41

Change it to read:

VIEW_FORWARD_RIGHT=33,9

In each case we are changing the number 41 to 9.

I prefer to comment out the original entry (using two forward slash marks) and add a changed one below it.

Examples:

```
// VIEW_FORWARD_LEFT=36,41  
VIEW_FORWARD_LEFT=36,9
```

```
// VIEW_FORWARD_RIGHT=33,41  
VIEW_FORWARD_RIGHT=33,9
```

Save your work.

Now when you are in 2D Cockpit mode and your Num Lock key is ON, you will be able to hit the 7 or 9 key once and the forward left or forward right view will remain until the space bar or the 8 key is tapped.

I am not at all sure I understand why it works this way – but it does.

Multiple Installations of FS2004



Over the years I have read that it is possible to have more than one installation of FS2004 on your computer at the same time.

To be very honest, I was more than a little skeptical.



My FS2004 had become very slow to load over the past year or so due to many sceneries and aircraft I had installed. I referred to it as “bloated”.

Not being ready to do a complete uninstall and reinstallation, I decided to try installing a second copy of FS2004.

It worked beautifully so I now have my “bloated” version and one which I refer to as “virginal” – just as it came out of the box.

The process is surprisingly simple so I thought I would outline the procedure I used in case you wish to try it.

1. Renamed my Flight Simulator 9 **folder** – **FullFlight Simulator 9**
2. Renamed my FS9.cfg **file** - **fullfs9.cfg**
3. Renamed my fs9.exe **file** - **fullfs9.exe**
4. Created a **new** Shortcut on my Desktop to:

C:\Program Files\Microsoft Games\FullFlight Simulator 9\fullfs9.exe

I also deleted the present Shortcut to FS2004 as I knew a new one would be created during the installation.

5. Tested the Shortcut to see if it started my “bloated” version of FS2004 and that everything in it still worked properly. It did.

At this point I Defragged my hard drive before proceeding.

6. Installed FS2004 in the normal manner using the default location on my C drive as offered by the installation dialogue.
7. Updated the installation to version 9.1 and applied my NOCD patch to it.
8. Renamed the Shortcut to FS2004, which was created during the installation to **Shortcut to FS2004 BARE**. Any name can be used of course – I just wanted to be sure I could tell the difference between the shortcuts to the old “bloated” version and the new “virginal” version.
9. Started the new version and tested all aspects – adjusting the video and other settings as needed.

10. Retested. Everything worked correctly in both versions.

The only payware program which “transferred” itself to the new installation was my EZ Object placer program. How or why that happened I do not know. It was not a problem however.

11. I defragged my hard drive once again.

Very important cautions:

Both installations share a common folder for flights which are saved. It is:

C:\Documents and Settings\Your User Name\My Documents\Flight Simulator Files

When running the New version, be careful not to select a flight which was saved in the Old version. That would include the “previous flight” also.

It may have used an aircraft which **is** installed on the old version but which is **not** present in the new version.

Selecting a flight which calls for an aircraft which is not installed **will** lead to a CTD (Crash To Desktop).

If there is a way to direct saved flights to different folders I have not discovered it.

I have not “saved” any flights in the New version nor do I plan to. It is only being used as a comparison installation and as a quick place to find the original files should any need to be restored to the Old installation.

You can use any names you wish when renaming the various files and folders - as long as they are applied consistently.

If you have utilities such as Afcad and Traffic Tools installed in sub folders of FS2004, any shortcuts to them will need to be edited as the path will have changed.

Two installations require considerable disk space obviously. Fortunately I had ample space on my hard drive.

Please remember – this was done on an **XP** operating system – I have no idea if it will work with Vista!

That's all there is to it – if I can do it, you can also – but I accept no responsibility if it does not work for you.

Where's the Aircraft?

In past issues I have tried to include one or more reviews of aircraft which I found particularly innovative or of historical interest.

While I have no doubt there have been numerous aircraft released in the past months which meet these criteria, my focus has been on scenery and AI work and thus I have not kept abreast of new aircraft releases.

Since the release of the “final” issue of Tips and tricks (Number 24, back in November of 2006), my work has involved collaboration with several scenery designers, writing a few Tutorials and the creation of some AI shipping and Ferry packages as well as working one on one to help a couple of friends get started using FS2004.

I actually found the time to do some “flying” also.

AI Orphans?

During a recent “cleanup” session, I wanted to determine which aircraft I had installed were being used as AI traffic – i.e. had a Traffic file associated with them.

To do this I turned to a wonderful utility written by **Peter van der Veen** named **Aircraft Analyzer 2005 v1.2**.

This program can analyze your installed aircraft and report myriad useful information including errors of all types. It can even correct errors which are found.

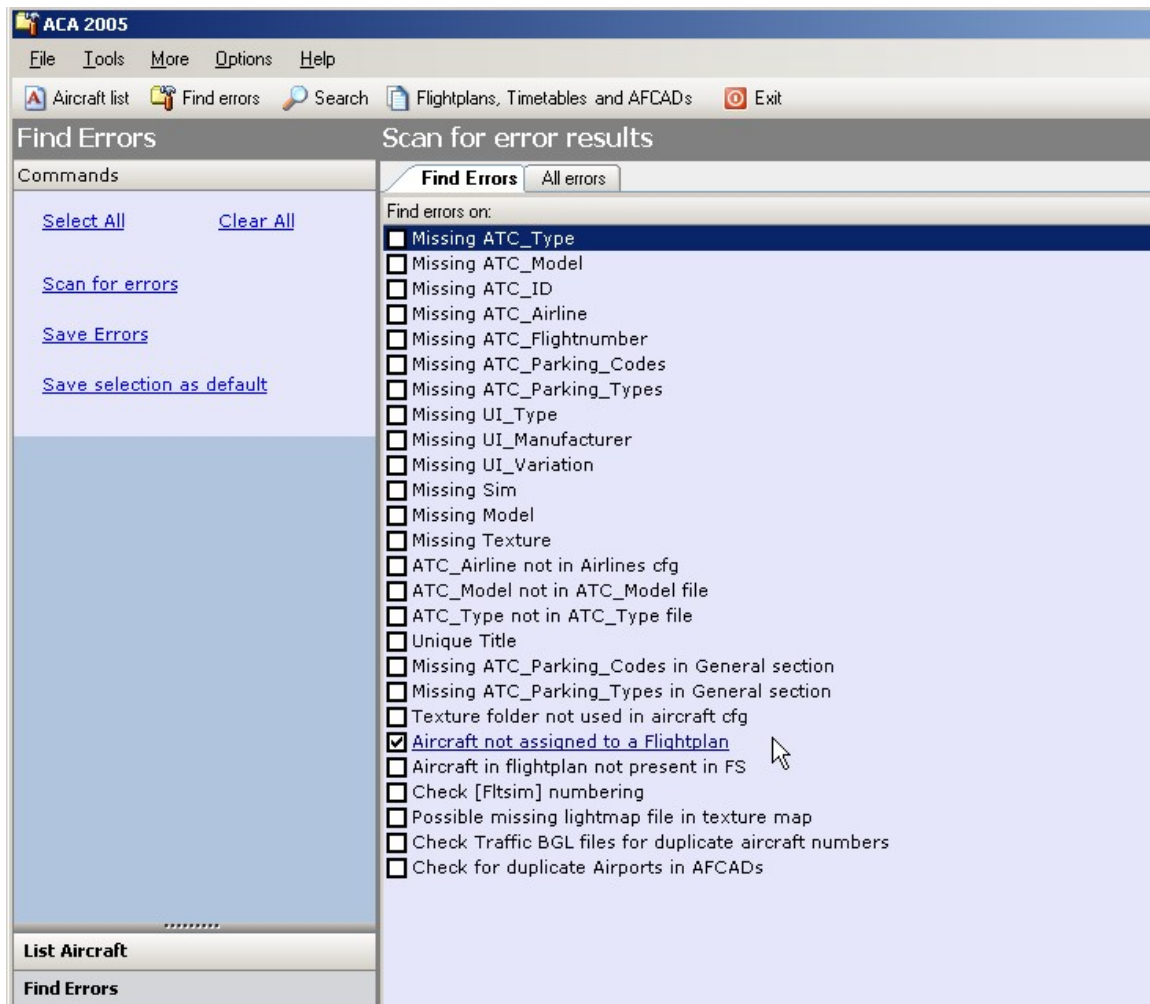
You can download it here:

<http://aifs.pvdveen.net/ACA2005.htm>

The site also provides full details about the program and it's usage.

I recommend navigating to the Documentation page and saving it for future reference. You will find it in the Downloads area.

The following screen shots show the various errors which you can scan for and a “results” page. I had asked to scan only for Aircraft not assigned to a Flightplan in my new installation and as you can see, eight aircraft met that criteria.



Scan for error results			
Find Errors All Errors Aircraft not assigned to a Flightplan			
CFG File	Title	Error	
bell206b	Bell 206B JetRanger	Aircraft not assigned to Flightplan	
c172	Cessna Skyhawk 172SP IFR	Aircraft not assigned to Flightplan	
c182	Cessna Skylane 182S IFR	Aircraft not assigned to Flightplan	
extra300	Extra 300S	Aircraft not assigned to Flightplan	
mooney_bravo	Mooney Bravo IFR	Aircraft not assigned to Flightplan	
Robinson_R22	Robinson R22	Aircraft not assigned to Flightplan	
Robinson_R22	Robinson R22 Paint1	Aircraft not assigned to Flightplan	
schweizr	Schweizer 2-32 Sailplane	Aircraft not assigned to Flightplan	

The Aircraft Analyzer program is not a “new” utility but if you haven’t yet tried it, I **highly** recommend it.

Computer Maintenance

One key to keeping FS2004 running well, is regular maintenance of the computer itself.

Here are two suggestions I recently ran across.



1. When cleaning the inside of your Computer case, always use canned, compressed air rather than your household vacuum hose.

Why? As the nozzle of the hose may be metal and there is a metal wire inside the hose to help keep it's shape, it is possible to have a static electrical charge created by the motor travel down the hose when you are poking around inside the computer case. That charge can also be created simply by dragging the vacuum across the floor – especially if the floor is carpeted.

Static electrical charges (or discharges) can easily damage delicate computer components so don't forget to ground yourself before poking around inside the case of your computer.

2. Excessive heat, particularly around your Video Card may result in very strange display issues.

When cleaning around your Video Card, check to see if there is a protective shroud around the cooling fan. If there is, see if you can carefully remove it.

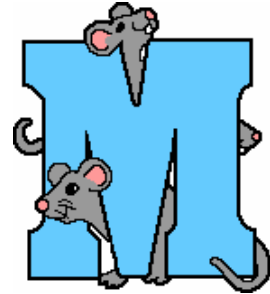
If so, you may be surprised by the amount of accumulated dust and dirt which is trapped by the shroud. A careful cleaning of this normally unseen area may help your Video Card run significantly cooler.

A Cool Computer is a Happier Computer

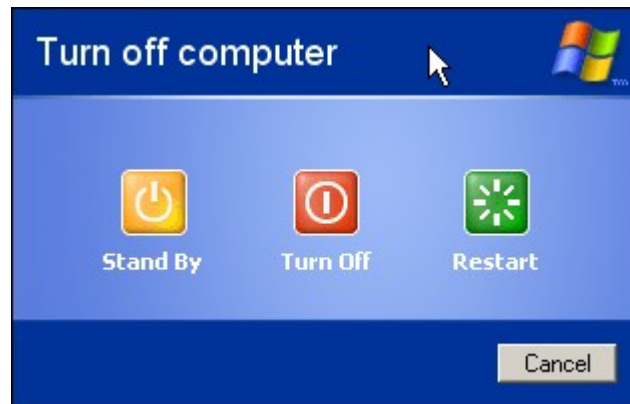
Tired Mouse Finger?

It's been a long "flight" – you have finally landed, taxied to the gate and shut down your aircraft.

You have exited FS2004 and are ready to close down the computer for the night.



But getting to this screen and clicking "Turn Off"



will require three more mouse clicks..... and you are just too tired!

Here is a simple way to Turn Off your computer with only One double click!

1. Create a new Shortcut on your Desktop.
2. Copy the following line exactly, and Paste it into the "location" box:

`Shutdown -s -t 00`

3. Give the Shortcut a name such as **Shutdown Computer**.
4. Click on Finish to complete the process.

You can then Right click on the new Shortcut and change the icon to something other than the default icon.

To make a Shortcut which will **Reboot** your computer, make a new Shortcut and Copy and Paste this line into the “location” box:

`Shutdown -r -t 00`

Name the shortcut accordingly and select a different icon if you wish.

This is how mine appear -



One simple double click on either shortcut will now do what formerly required three clicks.

Just think of the number of mouse clicks you will save in a year's time by shutting down or rebooting you computer with these shortcuts.!

Your mouse finger will thank you!

Bonus Files!

When you unzipped this package you may have noticed a folder named Bonus Shortcut Files.

In this folder are the four shortcuts outlined in this document: the shortcut to the FS2004 Help files, the shortcut to the FS2004 Lessons and the two we have just discussed. Just place a copy of them on your Desktop.

The FS2004 shortcuts are setup assuming a default installation on your C drive. If FS2004 is installed elsewhere, edit the path accordingly.

All four work on my XP setup – I do not know if they will work under Vista.

Safety Resources

Ever wonder what the proper, safe procedures are at Uncontrolled Airports or at Towered Airports? Got questions about runway procedures?



If so, the Aircraft **O**wners and **P**ilots **A**ssociation has a web site packed with great information on these subjects and many, many more.

The site's home page is:

http://www.aopa.org/asf/safety_topics.html

For a PDF file, which can be saved, that outlines the procedures for Non Towered Airports, follow this link:

<http://www.aopa.org/asf/publications/sa08.pdf>

For a PDF file, which can be saved, that outlines the procedures for Towered Airports, follow this link:

<http://www.aopa.org/asf/publications/sa07.pdf>

Check it out if you are interested in becoming a more proficient pilot, either in the real world or just sitting in front of your computer.

One Additional “Word of Wisdom”

When flying on a commercial airline, I always request a seat near the rear of the aircraft.

Why is that?

Because I've never heard of anyone backing an airplane into a mountain!

Tim Conway - from a sketch on the Carol Burnett show.



That about does it for this issue. I trust you found something of value and perhaps a smile or two along the way. As always, I look forward to your questions and/or comments.

Thanks once again to John Burford (Australia) for his continuing friendship and assistance with this series.

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.

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=1&Go=Change+View>

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!



Flightsim Award Winner