

# Creating VIP Parking in FSX

## An Illustrated Guide

compiled by  
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The question has been asked many, many times: Is it possible to have ATC direct the aircraft I am flying to a specific gate – preferably one in the same area as other aircraft from the same airline?

The answer is a “qualified” yes.

You cannot jump into just any aircraft and fly to just any airport and expect ATC to know what you are flying and how to direct you when you land. That would be a wonderful feature but it is not possible in FSX.

But you **can** set up **specific** aircraft (presumably your favorites), and then create “reserved” parking space(s) at virtually any airport which has **sufficient** parking spaces available. When properly set up, ATC **will** direct you to that reserved (VIP) parking space.

The procedure which is outlined in this document will work on the default FSX aircraft (and any repaints for them which you have added) **only**. It does not work with many third party aircraft because the developers have simply ported over FS2002/2004 aircraft and are using the old style .air files.

In the appendix I have included instructions outlining a simple test you can perform which will help you determine if a particular “FSX” aircraft is likely to work as a VIP aircraft or not.

Before proceeding, I think it is only right and proper to give credit to Jim Vile and Reggie Fields for their insights regarding what can and cannot be done with ATC in FSX and FS2004. Much of what I am about to outline is the direct result of their efforts. That of course is only one small part of the contributions these gentlemen have made to our common hobby / addiction.

The concept is quite simple: Basically, in FSX, ATC directs traffic based on matching the **wingspan** of the aircraft to the **radius** of available parking spaces. (In FS2004, the radius of the model was matched to the parking spot radius).

If the **wingspan** of the aircraft you are flying matches a **unique** parking spot radius, that is where ATC will direct your aircraft and no other aircraft will use that spot. That unique parking spot will always be reserved for you. Again, this is contingent upon having sufficient parking available for AI aircraft.

To perform this procedure, you will need to download and install an Airport Editor which is capable of working with FSX airports as we will be editing the radius of our selected parking spots.

Several are available:

**ADE** (Airport Design Editor) by Jon Masterson/ADE Development Team which is freeware. This fine product is still under development but works well for the edits we need to make.

Download and install Version 1.20 from Avsim.com.

[http://library.avsim.net/search.php?SearchTerm=ade\\_120.zip&CatID=fsx&Go=Search](http://library.avsim.net/search.php?SearchTerm=ade_120.zip&CatID=fsx&Go=Search)

Then download and install the update which will bring it up to Version 1.35.

[http://library.avsim.net/search.php?SearchTerm=ade\\_135\\_update.zip&CatID=fsx&Go=Search](http://library.avsim.net/search.php?SearchTerm=ade_135_update.zip&CatID=fsx&Go=Search)

By the time you read this, a full new release of ADE may be available.

**FSX Planner** by zBlueSoftware, which is also freeware.

You can download it here:

<http://www.zbluesoftware.com/fsxplanner/index.cfm>

**AFX** (Airport Facilitator X) – this is payware, available from Flight1.com

<http://www.flight1.com/products.asp?product=afxv1>


You will also need a calculator or access to one of the online “conversion” sites.

I use OnlineConversion.com

[http://www.onlineconversion.com/length\\_common.htm](http://www.onlineconversion.com/length_common.htm)

## Welcome to OnlineConversion.com

Common Length and Distance Conversions


Convert what quantity?  

From:

centimeter
<b>feet</b>
inch
kilometer
league
league [nautical]
meter
microinch
mile

To:

centimeter
feet
inch
kilometer
league
league [nautical]
<b>meter</b>
microinch
mile

Result: 

[See Also: All Length Conversions](#) | [Metric Length Conversions](#)

1 feet = 0.304 8 meter

## The Procedure

For this exercise we will be creating a VIP spot at my home airport which is Love Field in Dallas, Texas (KDAL).

The default 737-800 will be used as the VIP aircraft.

**Note:** The basic procedure will work for default aircraft of any size. I currently have VIP parking set up at KDAL for the Beechcraft King Air 350, the Lear 45, a flyable version of the deHavilland Dash 8-100, the Airbus 321, the b737-800 and the 747-400.

If you open KDAL and review the radius sizes of the parking spaces, you will observe that Small gates are set at 18 meters, Medium gates are 23 meters and Heavy gates are 36 meters. These are common values used at all airports.

Our goal is to reduce the radius of our VIP spot so it is unique.

We must also reduce the wingspan of our aircraft slightly so it will match our edited parking spot.

**Note:** Lest you are concerned, a slight reduction in the wingspan seems to make no difference to the flight dynamics of the aircraft.

The procedure is a two step process – we will begin by setting up the VIP aircraft.

Assuming a default installation on your C drive, navigate to:

C:\Program Files\Microsoft Games\Microsoft Flight Simulator X\SimObjects\Airplanes

Highlight the folder named B737\_800.

Right click on it and select Copy.

On any clear space, Right click and select Paste.

That will create a folder named Copy of B737\_800.

Right click on that folder and select Rename.

Rename the folder - B737\_800 VIP

Double Left click on this folder and locate the aircraft.cfg file.

Open the aircraft.cfg file (Notepad works well for this) and make the following edits:

1. Remove (delete) all [fltsim.?] entries except the very first one [fltsim.0]
2. Edit the **title=** line so it reads **title=Boeing 737-800 VIP**
3. Edit the **ui\_manufacture=** line so it reads **ui\_manufacturer="Boeing - VIP 737"**
4. Add the following two lines to the [fltsim.0] entry:

```
atc_parking_types=GATE  
atc_parking_codes=VIP
```

5. If you wish to change the default texture to something else, edit the **texture=** line accordingly.

If you do that, you will also need to edit the **ui\_variation=** line to match.

The entry should look like something like this when you are finished -

The lines I have edited are highlighted in **Red** and I am using a Southwest airlines texture.

```

[fltsim.0]
title=Boeing 737-800 VIP
sim=Boeing737-800
model=
panel=
sound=
//texture=1
texture=SOUTHWEST_G
kb_checklists=Boeing737-800_check
kb_reference=Boeing737-800_ref
atc_id=N737W
atc_airline=Boeing
atc_flight_number=
ui_manufacturer="Boeing - VIP 737"
ui_type="737-800"
ui_variation="Southwest"
ui_typerole="Commercial Airliner"
ui_createdby="Microsoft Corporation"
atc_parking_types=GATE
atc_parking_codes=VIP

```

Note: The two forward slash marks (//) before the texture=1 line are used to “comment out” that default line so FSX will not attempt to process it. As you can see, that line was replaced by the **texture=SOUTHWEST\_G** line.

6. Scroll down until you find the following label – [\[airplane\\_geometry\]](#) – it is generally fairly near the end of the aircraft.cfg file.
7. We are interested in the line which reads **wing\_span**

The default entry is     **wing\_span   = 117.42        // Feet**

8. It's time to do a little math!

To determine what the radius is, divide the wing\_span number (117.42) by 2.


That gives us the radius of the wingspan which is 58.71.

Using a calculator or the OnlineConversion.com site we can convert that 58.71 figure to meters.

The following shows that 58.71 feet = 17.894808 meters.

**Welcome to OnlineConversion.com**

Common Length and Distance Conversions


Convert what quantity?  


From:

centimeter
<b>feet</b>
inch
kilometer
league
league [nautical]
meter
microinch
mile

To:

centimeter
feet
inch
kilometer
league
league [nautical]
<b>meter</b>
microinch
mile

Result:  See Also: [All Length Conversions](#) | [Metric Length Conversions](#)



That figure is always rounded up to the next higher value, so the result in this case is 18 meters.

Earlier I mentioned the default parking radius for Small aircraft was 18 meters so you can now see the correlation between wingspan and parking radius.


9. We want to make our selected parking spot unique, so we will reduce the radius of our VIP parking spot to 17 meters (that will be done in the next section) and reduce our wingspan to match.

Again using a calculator or an online conversion site, we want to determine the correct value to use (in feet) for the edited wingspan.

So taking the 17 meter value multiplied x 2 (radius x 2 = wingspan) we see the result is 111.548 556 43 feet.

## Welcome to OnlineConversion.com

Common Length and Distance Conversions


Convert what quantity?  

From:

centimeter  
 feet  
 inch  
 kilometer  
 league  
 league [nautical]  
**meter**  
 microinch  
 mile

To:

centimeter  
**feet**  
 inch  
 kilometer  
 league  
 league [nautical]  
 meter  
 microinch  
 mile

Result:  See Also: [All Length Conversions](#) | [Metric Length Conversions](#)

34 meter = 111.548 556 43 feet

FSX does some internal math to round up the number to equal 17 meters for us so we can use a value of 111 feet and use it in our aircraft.cfg file.

So we want to edit the [airplane\_geometry] section so it looks like this:

```
[airplane_geometry]
wing_area      = 1344.0          //Square feet
//wing_span    = 117.42         //Feet
wing_span      = 111.00         //Feet = Parking radius 17 meters
wing_root_chord = 21.0          //Feet
```

I recommend commenting out the wing\_span line with it's original value as shown above so you will always have a record of the original default settings.

10. Review your work thus far and if all appears correct, Save the edits (from the file menu in Notepad).

What we have just done only needs to be done once for each VIP aircraft you may wish to setup.

**Note:** If you set up more than one VIP aircraft, be sure the Parking Code is unique for each one. We used VIP for this one. I suggest additional codes be numbered – V0P, V1P, V2P, V3P and so on.

What you have just completed may seem difficult but after you have done it a few times it will become quite easy.

**Note:** I have include an appendix at the end of this document which shows the required edits for several different aircraft.

## The second part of the procedure.

Setting the radius of the VIP parking spot at your airport(s) is the last and easiest step.

1. Using whichever airport editor you installed, Open KDAL (Love Field, Dallas, Texas).
2. You can edit any Small gate you wish but for this exercise I suggest using Gate G – 8.
3. Select G – 8 and then select Properties. This option may be named Edit depending upon which editor you are using.

**Properties**

☐ Locked

**Parking**

Name: GATE\_G Number: 8

Type: GATE\_SMALL Radius: 18.00 Meters

**Tee Offsets**

Values in Meters

T1	T2	T3	T4
7.92	0.00	0.00	0.00

**Airlines**

All Airlines: 135 Airways +

MRU Airlines: +

Codes:

**Location**

Edit Latitude: 32.848862261

Longitude: -96.850972921 Heading: 224.1

Comments:

OK Cancel



- Change the gate radius to 17 meters and Add VIP as the only Parking code.

**Properties**

☐ Locked

**Parking**

Name:  Number:

Type:  Radius:  Meters

**Tee Offsets**

Values in Meters

T1:  T2:  T3:  T4:

**Airlines**

All Airlines:  +

MRU Airlines:  +

Codes:

**Location**

Latitude:  Longitude:  Heading:

Comments:

OK Cancel

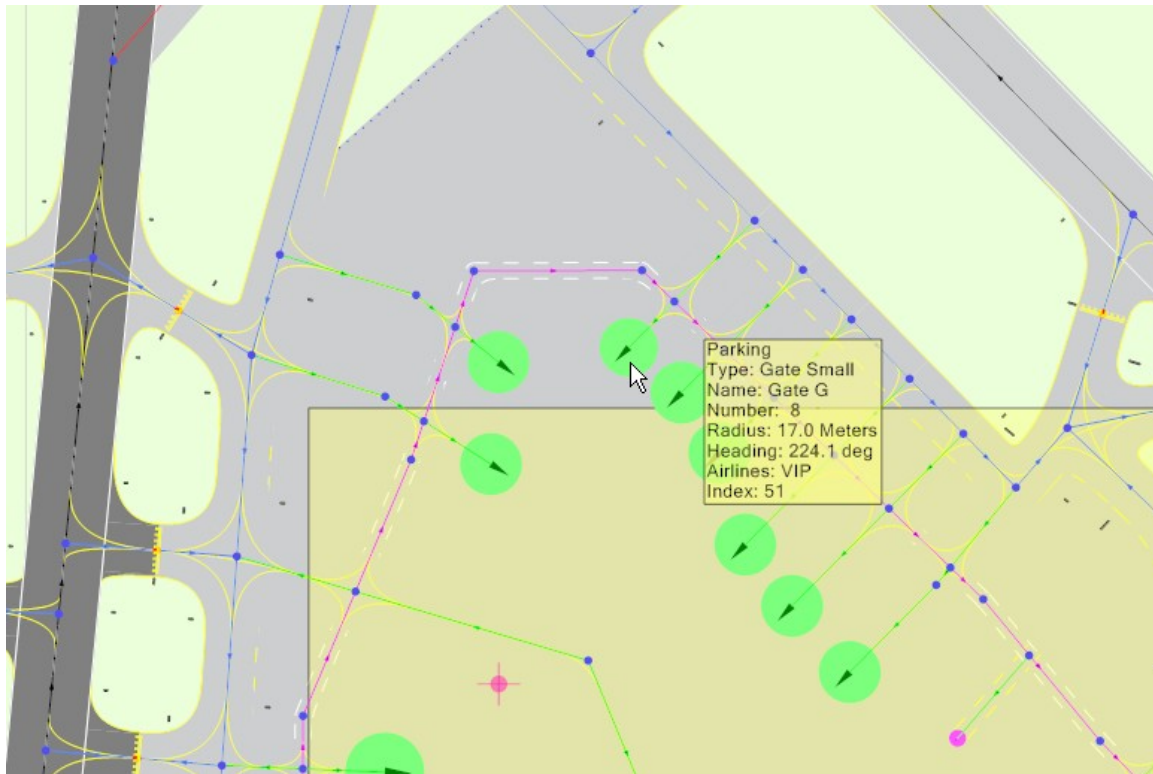
**Parking**

Index	Type	Name	No.	Radius Meters	Heading	Airlines
043	RAMP_GA_MEDIUM	PARKING	042	14.00	315.1	
044	RAMP_GA_MEDIUM	PARKING	043	14.00	134.8	
045	FUEL	PARKING	044	16.00	135.7	
046	GATE_MEDIUM	GATE_G	003	23.00	091.6	
047	GATE_MEDIUM	GATE_G	004	23.00	091.6	
048	GATE_MEDIUM	GATE_G	005	23.00	092.6	
049	GATE_SMALL	GATE_G	006	18.00	122.9	
050	GATE_SMALL	GATE_G	007	18.00	129.1	
051	GATE_SMALL	GATE_G	008	17.00	224.1	VIP
052	GATE_SMALL	GATE_G	009	18.00	224.1	
053	GATE_SMALL	GATE_G	010	18.00	224.1	
054	GATE_SMALL	GATE_G	011	18.00	224.1	
055	GATE_SMALL	GATE_G	012	18.00	224.1	
056	GATE_SMALL	GATE_G	014	18.00	224.1	
057	GATE_SMALL	GATE_G	013	18.00	224.1	

Randomize Original

Export Preview Print Edit Close

The screenshots were made using the ADE airport editor. Other programs will have similar editing screens.



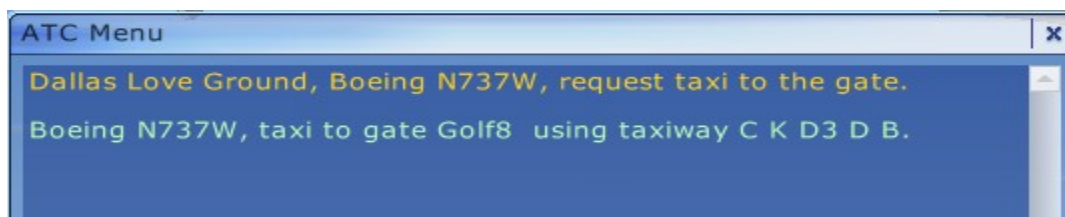
5. Save your work and exit the editor.

6. Start FSX.

7. Select your VIP aircraft.

As you can see in this screenshot, I have several VIP aircraft to choose from in my FSX setup.

If you select the Boeing – VIP 737 and “fly now” from KDAL, when you contact ground and request taxi to the gate, ATC should respond by directing you to gate G-8.



If you are creating other VIP parking spots it is imperative to use a **unique** parking code for each one and that code must also be used in the aircraft.cfg file.

It is also imperative to use a “gate” description for your VIP parking spot, even if you are setting up a VIP spot for a GA aircraft. You need to be able to ask ATC for directions to a “gate”, not a GA parking area.

The same would hold true if you are setting up a VIP parking spot for a Cargo aircraft which you enjoy flying.

Remember this concept will only work with the aircraft you altered. If you are flying some other variation of the aircraft, ATC will direct you wherever it wishes.

My testing had AI set at 100% with both Airlines and GA enabled. I have a lot of AI aircraft of both types and ATC never placed one in any of my “reserved” spots. That is not to say it could not happen, only that it did not occur during any of my testing.

If any GA aircraft should show up in “your” spot, check to be sure the offending aircraft does not specify GATE in it's atc\_parking\_types= line.

And it probably does not need to be said (but I will say it anyway) – Be sure to check the situation in “action”. You do not want the wings of your or adjacent aircraft touching each other!

## Questions and Answers

Question: Does changing the wingspan radius affect the flight dynamics of the aircraft?

Answer: No, it apparently does not affect flying in any way. Numerous tests have been made and as long as the change is minimal, no issues were noted.

Question: Will this procedure work with FS2004?

Answer: This particular procedure only works with FSX.

I wrote a “Guide” which outlines a slightly different procedure which is used in FS2004. It is available at [Flightsim.com](http://Flightsim.com) and [Avsim.com](http://Avsim.com) as [vip\\_park.zip](#).

Question: Can I have more than one VIP spot at an airport?

Answer: Yes you can. Keep in mind that having many different VIP spots reduces the spaces available for regular AI traffic.

I hope you have as much fun experimenting with this procedure as I have.

## APPENDIX

### Test your FSX Aircraft

If you do not already have it, download and install the small utility named AirEd.

[http://library.avsim.net/search.php?SearchTerm=aired152\\_update806.zip&CatID=fs2004&Go=Search](http://library.avsim.net/search.php?SearchTerm=aired152_update806.zip&CatID=fs2004&Go=Search)

Use AirEd to open the .air file of the aircraft you wish to test.

Select Special and then Search for Entry.

Search for the word **wing**

If **any** occurrence of the word wing is displayed, that aircraft will likely **not** be able to respond to the VIP procedure.

If there is **no** occurrence of the word wing, that aircraft **is** a likely candidate.

We are simply verifying whether or not the .air file used by your aircraft is written according to MS FSX standards or is an older version.

## Some Settings I Use for Other Aircraft

747-400 Heavy - radius 33 meters

//wing_span	= 211.4	// Feet
wing_span	= 210.0	// Feet - Parking set at 33 meters

Lear 45 - radius 7 meters

//wing_span	= 45.8	// Feet
wing_span	= 44.0	// Feet = Parking set at 7 meters

Dash 8-100 - radius 13 meters

//wing_span	= 85.0	// Feet
wing_span	= 84.0	// Feet - Parking set at 13 meters

Airbus 321 - radius 17 meters

//wing_span	= 112.04	// Feet
wing_span	= 111.00	// Feet - Parking set at 17 meters

King Air 350 - Parking radius 9 meters

//wing_span	= 57.2	// Feet
wing_span	= 55.0	// Feet - Parking set at 9 meters

This procedure has been extensively tested with FSX on machines running XP with no known issues.

However the author accepts no responsibility for real or perceived damage to your system. As with all freeware you use it at your own risk.

Questions and/or Constructive Comments may be directed to:

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