

Flight Simulator 2004 in Windows 10

A User's Guide

Windows 10 And Older Software

Windows 10 was released by Microsoft in 2015, and was rapidly taken up by many computer users around the world, as it offered a free upgrade from Windows 7 through 8.1, and improved performance in all aspects of use.

Windows 10 is able to run on equipment able to run Windows XP at a minimum, and offers dramatic performance advantage, as it encompasses all the improvements and advances in Windows 7 since 2007, but without the metalogical 'baggage' which inhibited the previous developing operating systems in the past.

One of the important additions to Windows 10 is a much improved Compatibility Layer (also known as the Compatibility Mode in Microsoft parlance). This incorporates all versions of Windows since Windows 95, and individual Service Packs of Windows XP, Vista, 7 and Windows 8.

Microsoft Flight Simulator 2004

MS Flight Simulator 2004 remains a popular simulator among enthusiasts, as it permits older equipment to deliver an excellent flight experience, as well as an incredible library of add-on aircraft and scenery from web sites such as FlightSim.Com, Avsim, and many others. Developers of commercial (payware) add-ons are beginning to offer their FS2004 add-ons as free downloads, for instance the Virtavia software library of AlphaSim aircraft.

FS2004 represents an optimum for many users - it features a near-complete experience of stunningly good graphics, an ability to download and implement real world weather NOTAM's provided by Jeppesen to this day, as well as simulated vocal Air Traffic Control, and Instrument Flight Rules and Flight Plan integration.

It runs extremely well on Windows XP, Vista and 7. But - can it run on Windows 10?

Installation

Windows 10 has the brains to notice that FS2004 is being installed, and automatically switches to Windows XP SP2 mode during the installation process.

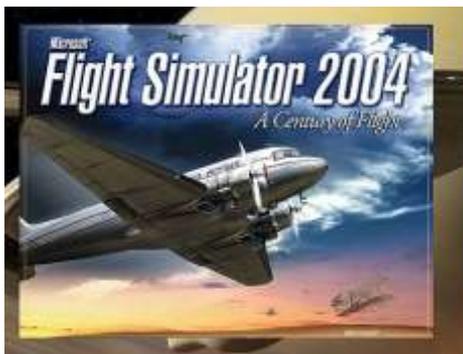
If you choose to download and install the FS9.1 (the equivalent of an FS2004 SP1), Windows 10 picks up this too as a Win XP SP2 compatibility.

In all, this is a good thing, as the installation of the program is therefore easy to do.

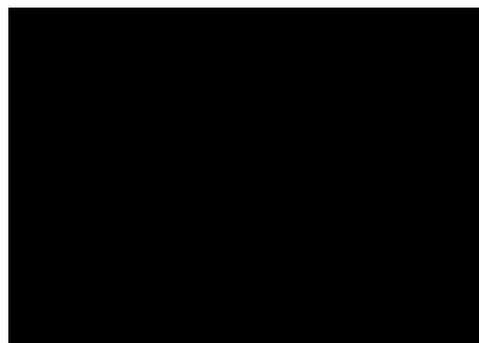
The Perils Of Running FS2004 In Windows 10

Windows 10, like Windows Vista, 7 and 8 before it, is very careful about security on your PC. Flight Simulator, as it is going to be reading and writing files to the main disk drive, triggers a warning before use. Please click 'Yes' in the dialog box, and press on.

First start of FS2004 in Windows 10 looks good - in fact it looks like this:



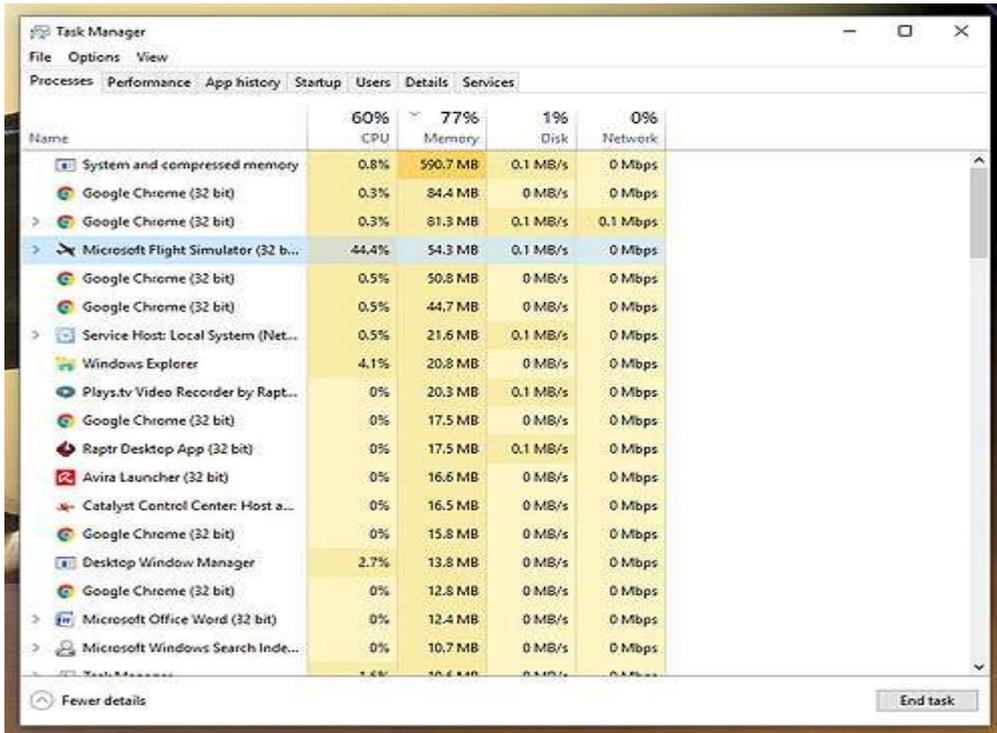
But then:



This view is a not very educational black screen!

What's Going On?

If you type Ctrl+Alt+Del, and launch the Task Manager, you get a very interesting result:



Name	CPU	Memory	Disk	Network
System and compressed memory	0.8%	590.7 MB	0.1 MB/s	0 Mbps
Google Chrome (32 bit)	0.3%	84.4 MB	0 MB/s	0 Mbps
Google Chrome (32 bit)	0.3%	81.3 MB	0.1 MB/s	0.1 Mbps
Microsoft Flight Simulator (32 bit)	44.4%	54.3 MB	0.1 MB/s	0 Mbps
Google Chrome (32 bit)	0.5%	50.8 MB	0 MB/s	0 Mbps
Google Chrome (32 bit)	0.5%	44.7 MB	0 MB/s	0 Mbps
Service Host: Local System (Net...	0.5%	21.6 MB	0.1 MB/s	0 Mbps
Windows Explorer	4.1%	20.8 MB	0 MB/s	0 Mbps
Plays.tv Video Recorder by Rapt...	0%	20.3 MB	0.1 MB/s	0 Mbps
Google Chrome (32 bit)	0%	17.5 MB	0 MB/s	0 Mbps
Raptr Desktop App (32 bit)	0%	17.5 MB	0.1 MB/s	0 Mbps
Avira Launcher (32 bit)	0%	16.6 MB	0 MB/s	0 Mbps
Catalyst Control Center: Host a...	0%	16.5 MB	0 MB/s	0 Mbps
Google Chrome (32 bit)	0%	15.8 MB	0 MB/s	0 Mbps
Desktop Window Manager	2.7%	13.8 MB	0 MB/s	0 Mbps
Google Chrome (32 bit)	0%	12.8 MB	0 MB/s	0 Mbps
Microsoft Office Word (32 bit)	0%	12.4 MB	0 MB/s	0 Mbps
Microsoft Windows Search Inde...	0%	10.7 MB	0 MB/s	0 Mbps

Flight Simulator 2004 is **definitely** running!

Even more confusingly, using the Alt+Tab key delivers a weird result - there's miniature vignette of the FS2004 interface window - so why can't we access the program.

We also know the program is running even when 'blacked out' - pressing Esc, and then Enter, allows the program to close, which means it's not malfunctioning.

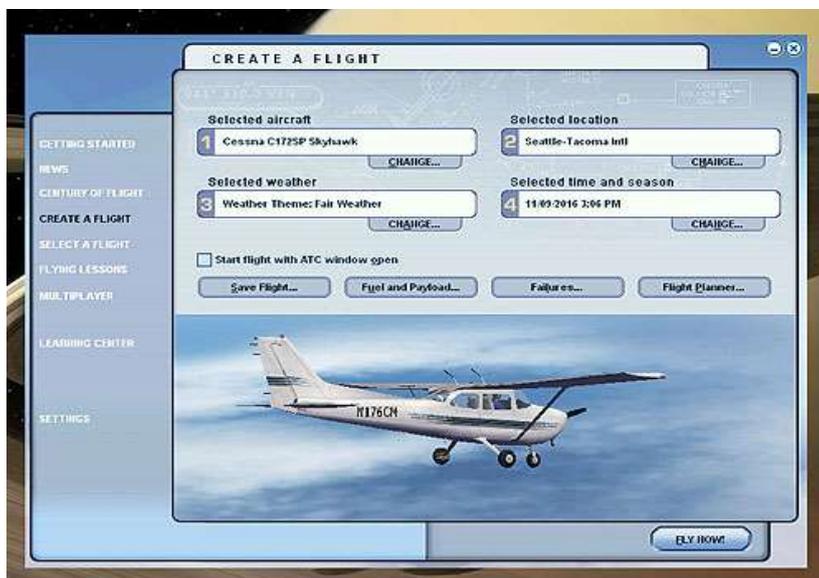
A Bit Of Sleuthing - And The Penny Drops!

One thing you quickly learn with computers today is that there is so much to know, we either forget the obvious, or else need to be reminded of a common tool built into Windows, which can help.

On FlightSim.Com's forum, users have made great contribution of an essential piece of knowledge, which I can heartily recommend.

In this case, the saving grace is a simple keyboard combination - Alt + Enter!

Press this, with FS2004 in 'Black Screen' view, and this is the result:



And with this, we are back in business, FS2004 is accessible.

Visual Switches In Use

Having accessed FS2004, there are a few things to bear in mind:

- After launching a flight, it's necessary to expand the field of view using Alt+Enter again, for maximum visual use.
- When finished a flight, or pressing Esc, the black screen appears - press Alt+Enter again to minimise the field of view, and see the flight map.

And that's about it.

Results Of Alt+Enter

With Alt+Enter in use, it's possible to make use of FS2004 in Windows 10, and have great enjoyment. I've been enjoying the Seattle-Tacoma scenery with great effect combined with the AlphaSim de Havilland Hornet:



The performance of FS2004 on my PC is very good indeed, and I recommend combining Win10 and FS2004 to anyone, with the sole good advice to make Alt+Enter your go to friend.

Martin La Grange
Auckland, New Zealand, 2016.