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## How to find google earth flight simulator

Reader Nick writes in: I'm a big flight tracking fan. When my bride travels on business I like to show our pre-schooler where Mom's flight is on the map. This flight tracker has a Google Earth button labeled "NEW! Track this flight in 3D via Google Earth!" Julian Chokkattu/Digital Trends It was already easy enough to lose yourself in Google Earth. Whether you're dodging through the narrow alleys of Kobe, Japan, or skimming Lake Achen in Austria, Google Earth offers rich 360-degree content, along with spectacular satellite imagery that can satiate any hunger for exploration. But Google went a step further this week with a major update that not only redesigned the interface, but also added rich textual and visual content from partners such as BBC Earth, NASA, and the Jane Goodall Institute. The new Voyager tab acts as a curated magazine that houses stories from these select partners, and it even features never before seen behind-the-scenes content from shows such as Planet Earth II. There's also plenty of packaged content from the Google Street View team you can check out. Say goodbye to any other plans you had this weekend, as we explore all the new possibilities in the new Google Earth. This is home Google Earth The first address most of us type when we see the blue marble floating in space is home. It's why one of the highlights of the Culture category in the new Voyager tab is a series called "This is Home." This series takes a look at some traditional homes of cultures and people most of us may not know much about. There are five homes you can visit at the moment: an Inuit Igloo, Bedouin tent, Reed House, Sherpa home, and Greenlandic Illoq. Tap on one and you'll be taken to the geographical coordinates, with a brief description of the person and the area. There are usually three "cards" telling the story of the culture and the home — the first shows the satellite view, the second offers a Street View 360-degree image, and the third takes us into the home itself. Stories of more homes are on the way. This is Home Nature and wildlife Google Earth With the new Voyager tab, you can learn more about nature and wildlife than ever before. Partners include BBC Earth, the Jane Goodall Institute, the World Wildlife Fund, and The Ocean Agency, among others. What's neat is that much of the content is from decades of back catalogs from these various agencies, and you can even find behind-the-scenes content that has yet to be aired — such as when the BBC Earth team found a Komodo dragon in their bathroom. A lot of this content includes videos you can watch in Google Earth, without needing to leave the site. The Natural Treasures series, for example, lets you choose environments like "Islands," "Mountains," and "Jungles," to explore. For example, if you choose Mountains, you'll get a story describing major mountains and the surrounding area. Most of these have accompanying videos you can enjoy. "We're trying to give viewers that deeper experience," Chadden Hunter, a producer at the BBC Natural History Unit, told Digital Trends. "With this fully interactive tool, we're hoping people will just explore for hours." There's a lot of content to sift through, as there's more than a 100 assets from BBC Earth alone. You can check it all out by tapping on the Voyager icon on the left, and clicking on Nature. The view from space Julian Chokkattu/Digital Trends You can't talk about Earth and satellite images without mentioning NASA, a partner with the new Google Earth. The space agency currently has two stories you can explore in Google Earth: "Scenes from Space" and "Reading the ABC's from Space." The latter involves scrolling through the alphabet with geographical structures that look just like the letters — you'll also find fun, quirky descriptions with each letter. "Scenes from Space" takes a look at gorgeous landscapes via satellite images, with a description and links to read more about what you're seeing. To check out NASA Earth Observatory's content, tap the Voyager icon, and head to Nature. Travel and history Google Earth Google already has Trips, an app you can use to plan your next vacation, but you can use the new Google Earth for this as well. The Travel tab in Voyager offers curated points of interest in major cities around the world, such as Paris, Tokyo, New York City, and more. If you choose to explore Paris, for example, you can find stories like "72 Hours in Paris: Day 1," where you'll see multiple points of interest to visit. The History tab seems to be more of an assortment of random stories from the Street View team and some other partners. The list here is small, but you can explore interesting pieces such as "The Hidden Worlds of the National Parks," and "Lost Civilizations from Above." A surprising Sesame Street tie-in Julian Chokkattu/Digital Trends Sesame Street is broadcast in more than 150 countries, reaching more than 156 million children around the world. The tie-in here is to provide educational content for children through the Muppets, who act as role models promoting education, good habits, respect, and understanding. The first story from Sesame Street on Google Earth is called "Girls Around the World," and you'll find aired content from 12 different co-productions in places such as Afghanistan and India. Tap on a country and children can learn a little about the place, meet the local Muppet, and even see the Muppet interviewing locals. There's also a lot of content that's told by kids, for kids. To find Sesame Street in Google Earth, tap on the Voyager icon on the left, tap on Culture, and find Sesame Street's Girls Around the World. Expect more content to be added often. Sesame Street's Girls Around the World Tips and tricks Julian Chokkattu/Digital Trends There are a few neat tricks in the new Google Earth you should know about. Firstly, if you have a Google Chromecast, you can cast to your TV. On Chrome, find the Cast icon on the top right and share your tab to a nearby Chromecast device. On Android, you'll need to open the Google Home app, slide out the navigation drawer, and tap on Cast screen/audilo. There's also a dice icon below Voyager on the sidebar — tap it to trigger "I'm Feeling Lucky," where Google will take you to a random point in the world. You can bookmark any place you visit, and you can find these saved places in the My Places tab on the sidebar. You can also share a location with just a link. Tap the Share icon in the sidebar and you can either copy the link to your clipboard, or share it directly to Facebook, Twitter, and Google+. Immerse yourself to the max in VR Got an Oculus Rift or an HTC Vive? The Google Earth VR app is now available on both platforms, and it allows you to fly to anywhere in the world. You can take cinematic tours, visit featured places, and even move the position of the sun to transform the place you're in from day to night. You can grab the app from the Oculus store here, and you can find it on Steam for the HTC Vive. Google told Digital Trends that Voyager content will regularly be updated with partners. The new Google Earth is available on Android and the Google Chrome browser. An iOS version is in the works, and the company is looking to bring the experience to other browsers as well. Editors' Recommendations Flight simulators have been a staple of PC gaming since the original Microsoft Flight Simulator launched way back in 1982. Here's a list of the best free flight simulators for testing your piloting skills. These games are available for various operating systems. Check the system requirements to make sure they are compatible with your device. FlightGear is an open-source flight simulator that has been in on-going development since 1997. Not only is this game free, but you can even contribute to the project. While the 3D environments that come built into the game are limited, there are thousands of regions and airports available for download from the FlightGear website. FlightGear is available for Windows, macOS, and Linux. Download For: Aces High III is a World War II flight simulator that offers free offline play and a competitive multiplayer mode that puts hundreds of players in simultaneous head-to-head combat. You have a choice of 50 aircraft as well as tanks, carriers, and cruisers from six different countries. There is a subscription fee for multiplayer, but the game comes with a two-week free trial. You can download the game from the official website or from Steam. Download For: GeoFS is a web application that runs in almost any browser. You can pick from a variety of flying vehicles including a multi-engine jet, a classic propeller plane, a helicopter, a hot air balloon, and even a paraglider. In addition to a helpful online instructions manual, GeoFS features a map that tracks all pilots currently playing the game, so you can arrange to meet up with your friends and explore the virtual world together. War Thunder is a freemium game for Windows, Mac, PlayStation 4, and Xbox One. Another World War II-themed game, War Thunder features multiplayer combat as well as a casual mode for those who just want the experience of flying in a fighter jet. In addition to classic aircraft from the U.S.S.R. and other allied powers, battles also include anti-aircraft ground units. If you're playing on PC, you can interact with Xbox One and PS4 users. Download For: Google Earth Pro gives you the ability to virtually fly over places you might never get to see in real life. Choose between an F16 jet fighter or a SR22 airplane and pick a real-world airport to take off from to explore the globe as seen from real satellite images. Bored with Earth? You can also fly around the Moon and Mars thanks to photorealistic maps supplied by NASA. Download For: Thanks for letting us know! Tell us why! If you always wanted to fly but were held back by the expense and risks of flying real airplanes, you may want to try one of the flight simulators available for Linux systems. Given today's high-performance desktop and notebook computers and the high-resolution wide-screen monitors, you can experience some of the thrills of flying your own airplane from the safety of your home or office. Flight simulators allow you to choose from a wide range of aircraft, from small turboprop to large airline jets and fly to many places on the earth, and many airports in different cities. X-Plane is one of the most advanced flight simulator software packages for personal computers and includes complete scenery of the planets Earth and Mars. X-Plane creates a realistic flight model by computing the forces that act upon each part of the aircraft. This includes turbulence, ground effect, and downdraft simulations. Even the weather is realistically simulated using weather data downloaded in specified intervals. The terrain is modeled according to the data from the Shuttle Radar Topography Mission, and the environment is animated using road traffic simulations. X-Plane 11 includes more than 25,000 airports. Efficiency improvements have reduced memory usage and increased loading speeds. Additional aircraft models have been added, and the tool to build your own airplanes has been enhanced. The software is available for around \$60 and comes on eight DVDs, which includes all required data. A free and open-source alternative to X-Plane is FlightGear, which has been under development for ten years and has come a long way. It is a highly realistic flight simulator for use on ordinary PCs. It has been developed on Linux but is also available for most other common platforms. The wide range of aircraft and terrain, and the realistic simulations of the aircraft behavior and the environment, including the sun, moon, and earth make it both fun and instructional. FlightGear's simulation engine and 3D graphics rendering are so advanced that the system is used for all kinds of projects, such as a system for analyzing oscillation problems in jets, or as a visualization tool for unmanned aerial vehicles. A FlightGear based simulation was used as part of the TV show Justice to provide illustrations in a plane crash investigation. JSBSim implements a flight dynamics model (FDM), which is used to simulate the physical forces that move aircraft, rockets, and other flight objects. Such forces include any control mechanisms applied to the object as well as natural phenomena. As such, this one isn't a full flight simulator, just the mathematical core of one. The software allows you to configure the flight control system, the aerodynamics, the propulsion, and landing gear arrangement using XML based configuration files. It can simulate rotational earth effects, such as coriolis and centrifugal forces. Data can be output the screen, files, or sockets. Thanks for letting us know! Tell us why! Google Earth 4.2 came with a nifty Easter egg: a hidden flight simulator. You could fly your virtual airplane from several airports or start midair from any location. The feature was so popular that it was incorporated as a standard function of Google Earth and Google Earth Pro. No unlocking necessary. The graphics are realistic, and the controls are sensitive enough to feel like you have a lot of control. If you crash your plane, Google Earth asks if you want to exit Flight Simulator or resume your flight. See Google's instructions for using the virtual plane. There are separate directions if you're using a joystick versus a mouse and keyboard. To use the Flight Simulator in Google Earth, you must have Google Earth or Google Earth Pro (both are free) installed on your computer. It does not work with the online version of Google Earth. When Google Earth is installed, follow these instructions to activate the Flight Simulator: With Google Earth open, access the Tools > Enter Flight Simulator menu item. The Ctrl + Alt + A (in Windows) and Command + Option + A (on a Mac) keyboard shortcuts work, too. Choose between the F-16 and SR22 plane. Both are fairly simple to fly once you get used to the controls, but the SR22 is recommended for beginners, and the F-16 is recommended for skilled pilots. If you decide to change planes, you must exit the flight simulator first. Pick a starting location in the next section. You can pick one from a list of airports or select your current location. If you've used the flight simulator before, you can also begin where you last ended a flight simulator session. If you have a compatible joystick connected to your computer, select Joystick enabled to control your flight using the joystick instead of the keyboard or mouse. After you choose your settings, press Start Flight in the lower right. As you fly, you can monitor everything on the heads-up display that shows on the screen. Use it to see your current speed in knots, the direction your aircraft is headed, the rate of ascent or descent in feet per minute, and several other settings relating to throttle, rudder, aileron, elevator, pitch, altitude, and flap and gear indicators. When you are finished flying, you can exit the flight simulator in two ways: Select Exit flight simulator in the upper right corner of the screen. Use the keyboard shortcuts, Ctrl + Alt + A (in Windows) or Command + Option + A (on a Mac). You can also select the Esc key. These steps apply to Google Earth 4.2. The menu isn't the same as on newer versions: Go to the Fly to box in the upper left corner. Type Lilienthal to open Flight Simulator. If you're directed to Lilienthal, Germany, it means you've already launched Flight Simulator. In this case, you can launch it from Tools > Enter Flight Simulator. Choose a plane and an airport from the respective drop-down menus. Start Flight Simulator with the Start Flight button. After you perfect the skills necessary to pilot your plane anywhere in the world, you may want to sit back and enjoy the Google Earth Pro virtual astronaut program and visit Mars in Google Earth. (Requires Google Earth Pro 5 or later.) Thanks for letting us know! Tell us why!

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