



# FS Flying School

BY GENE DAVIS

**H**ave you ever found yourself at the end of a flight, parked in your parking spot and wondering how well you did? Many of my flights of late have become short hops up and along the Oregon Coast or just quick little jaunts out of Newport Municipal to test my take off and landing abilities within MSFS; this gives me the opportunity to get in and just give it a go allowing for what little time I do have for it.

It's really kind of ironic, but not too long ago I was wondering if there was such a program as FS Flying School, I had found myself wanting to know how well I was actually doing when flying my virtual aircraft. This alone could be a double edged sword for me as I could find out how little I actually know or it could reinforce what I do know. A product like FS Flying School opens up a world of learning as it helps to improve one's abilities when it comes to flying the virtual skies that are MSFS. So whether you are a seasoned pilot, budding pilot or a virtual pilot, Flying School has a lot to offer.

## FS Flying School

FS Flying School offers the Flight Simulator user an integrated copilot in the form of a virtual flight instructor riding in the second seat during each phase of flight. Every aspect of your flying is graded and critiqued as well as logged in an easy to use program, that way you can actually go back and see what you did wrong and where you did it. Instructors will hold nothing back and you are graded on just about everything.

Flying School touts a team of flight instructors that talk to you, a unique scoring system that rates all phases of your flight, a detailed log book, individual pilot records, the fact that it works with all of the FS default aircraft as well as some 3rd party aircraft, the ability to edit in additional aircraft that aren't covered by the program, a career analyzer that includes an in-depth look at all of your flights, allows you to select different voices for your instructor, plus, the FS Flying School program is totally configurable so you can make it the way you want it to be! The overall list is impressive and creates a utility that can become the backbone of each and every flight you undertake.

# REVIEW

The career analyzer is really impressive and is probably the most useful tool to come out of Flying School as it incorporates all of the following when grading the pilot, especially when the pilot is flying something on the bigger side, like a commercial airliner:

- Cruising fast and low
- Danger of stall
- Danger of tail strike
- Descending too fast
- Descent during takeoff
- Exceeded flaps speed
- Exceeded gear extension speed
- Excessive bank angle - left
- Excessive bank angle - right
- Excessive negative Gs
- Excessive positive Gs
- Flaps not set for landing
- Flaps not up during taxi
- Flew low over obstacle
- Flight Score
- Ground strikes
- ILS approach glide slope rating (%)
- ILS approach localizer rating (%)
- Landing bank angle (degrees)
- Landing flaps (degrees)
- Landing IAS (kts)
- Landing NAV1 localizer needle deflection (degrees)
- Landing pitch (degrees)
- Landing rudder pedals: left / right (%)
- Landing score
- Landing stall warning
- Landing throttles (%)
- Landing turn coordinator ball: left / right (%)
- Landing vertical speed (fpm)
- Landing while too fast to land
- Late rotation

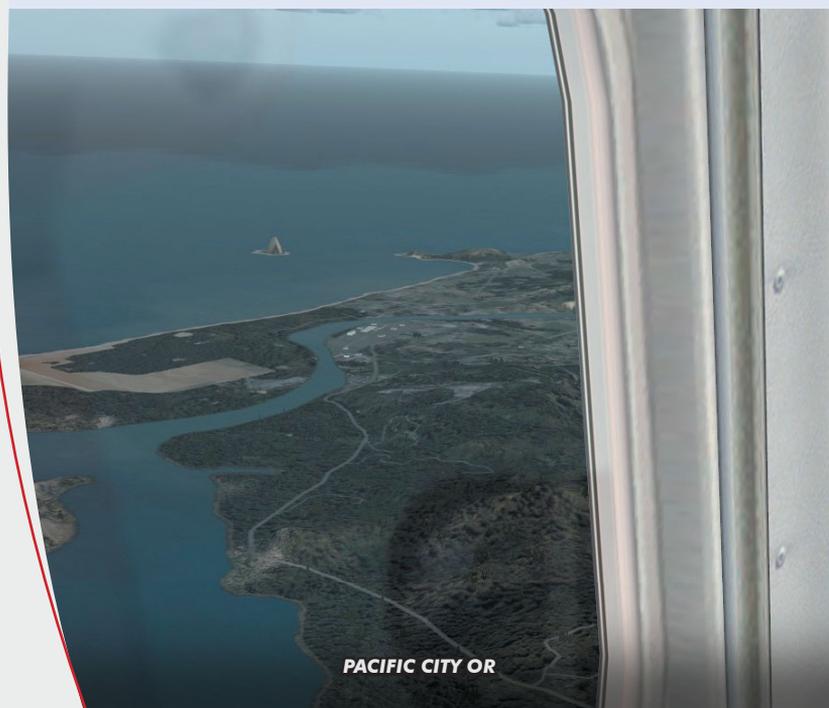
The end result here is a product that rates your virtual flying skills in any aircraft and tests your airmanship on a level that has not been seen before in MSFS.

The entire program is available in a boxed package. A demo is available from the product's official website and if you want to get an idea of what this add-on can do for you, this would definitely be a good way to start.

FSX or FS9? Or how about both? One of the great benefits of FS Flying School is that it works with both FS9 and FSX; thus giving me a new lease on life for FSX. FSX gives me a wonderful General Aviation environment. I like the way the aircraft handle and with new add-ons like *Ultimate Terrain*, *Ground Environment* and *ActiveSky* I have definitely found my niche when it comes to flying in the world of FSX and Flying School adds a whole new element to that niche.

## My Experience With FS Flying School

My first flight with FS Flying School was to be short. I chose to fly from Newport Muni (KONP) in Oregon to Tillamook (S47). This flight takes just over a half hour and makes for some wonderful sightseeing.





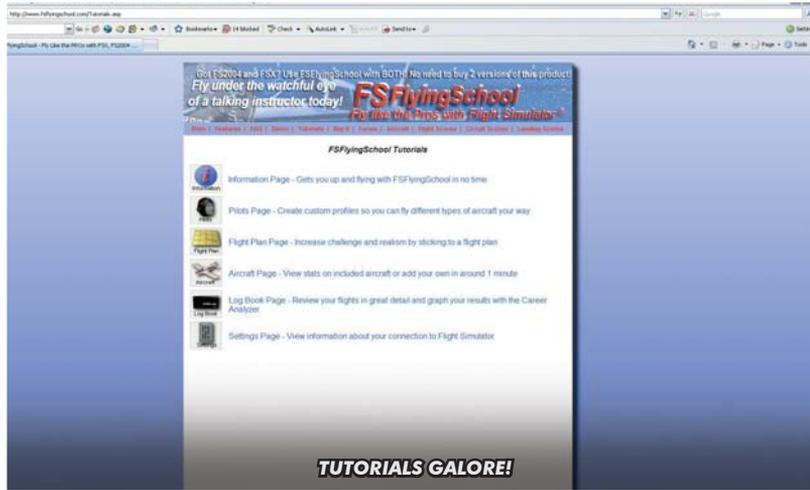
ARRIVING AT S47 TILLAMOOK



THE END RESULT!



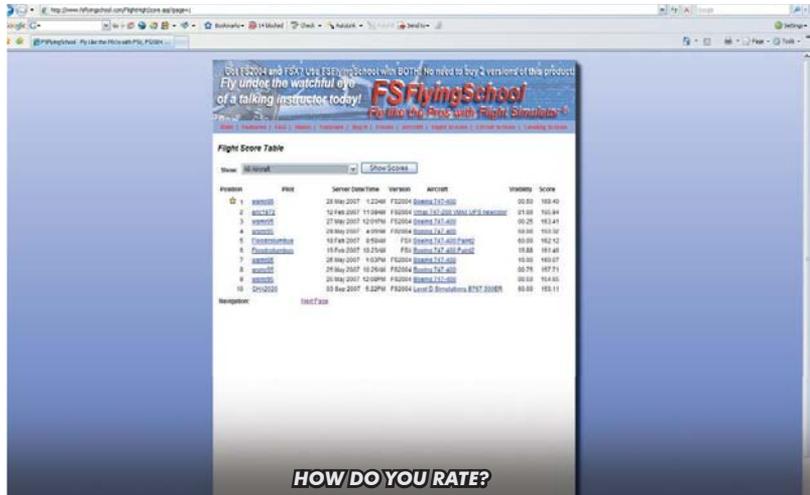
THE HEART OF FS FLYING SCHOOL



TUTORIALS GALORE!



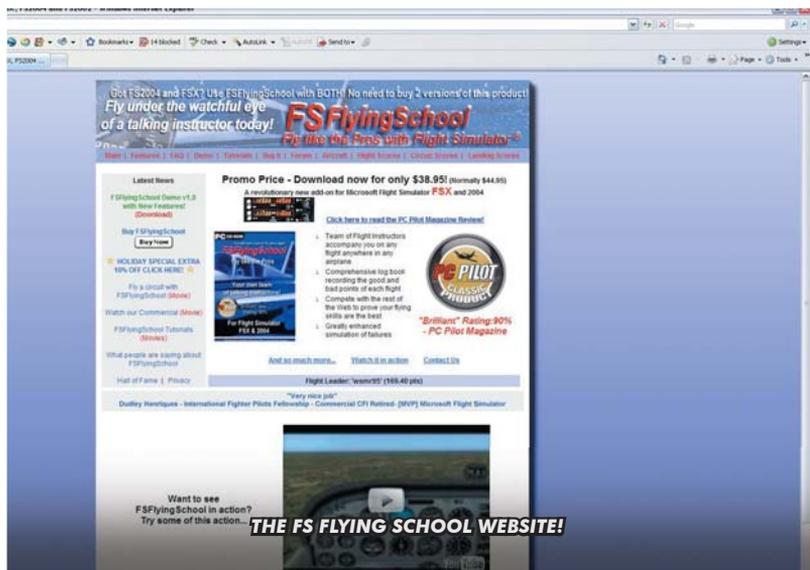
READYING THE 737 WITH FS FLYING SCHOOL



HOW DO YOU RATE?



CLIMBING OUT OF NEWPORT IN THE 172



THE FS FLYING SCHOOL WEBSITE!

Setting up the flight was relatively easy. Simply create a flight plan in Flight Simulator and then load the same flight plan within FS Flying School. It is also imperative that you create your own pilot profile, especially if you have multiple users, otherwise everything will be compiled into one profile. After that is done, you are ready to connect to Flight Simulator. This is done by simply clicking on the connect button within FS Flying School.

Sitting at parking, cold and dark, in the Cessna 172 I was ready for my first flight. The Flying School program announces that it is on and gives you the leg information in text at the top of the screen. Ready for startup, I went through my preflight and got the plane fired up and warm. Ready for taxi, I announced my intentions to taxi to the active via ATC. Now, KONP is a non-controlled airport so you're just letting everyone else know that you are going to be moving around on the taxiways.

Control of the aircraft both in the air and on the ground is crucial, otherwise it will hurt your overall score in FS Flying School. As I started my taxi and going into my first turn I was told by the instructor to watch my taxi speed, and if that wasn't enough, as I went into that turn to get to the runway I was told to watch my speed as the plane was leaning too far to the right and was somewhat off balance! I also found that if there is a heavy crosswind the instructor will tell you to use left, right, up or down aileron depending on where the crosswind is coming from. The funny thing was I never really gave much thought to any of that during my taxi periods before.

Once I completed my taxi I announced my intention to take off and turned the plane onto the active. It is also important to position your plane in the correct spot on the runway for takeoff otherwise you will lose more points. Ready for takeoff, I was ready to go! As I throttled up and started moving down the runway I was a little annoyed that I was getting an announcement from the Instructor telling me that I was going too fast for taxi. What? I am taking off here! The quick and short answer to this little problem was to read the manual, as I failed to advance the mode of flight for FS Flying School.

During the flight I received one announcement from the Instructor and didn't hear anything except some coughing and throat clearing until I got to my destination. Deciding I probably tanked on the first part of my flight, I went back and set the Flying School program to monitor and grade my landing on a VFR landing rather than an ILS approach. It is important to know that if you do any other type of flying you need to maintain a fix with all legs of your flight and make sure that your OBS is set and working properly.

Upon landing things were a little rough as there was a bit of a crosswind and I landed kind of hard. Moving the aircraft off of the runway and shutting down is the next step before going into the final results for Flying School. My overall rating was a whopping zero, but the detailed information that is provided via the log book allowed me to go back and see exactly what I did wrong, a lot of it was because I didn't read the manual first!

In the end I found that there was a lot that I missed and I missed it simply because I didn't read the manual first. If you truly want to get the most out of this product I strongly recommend reading the manual. I found that my problem with the Instructor talking about my taxi speed on takeoff was because I didn't advance the mode of flight within FS Flying School. This is done through a SHIFT-CTRL+Z keystroke. Had I known that prior to my flight my overall score would have been much better.

I really wanted to try this product with a heavy and chose the default CRJ in FSX to do this. I came to find out there is no configuration file for this particular plane. Why? This is a default aircraft and it really needs to be included with the overall package!

So, my next step was to jump up to the 737. This time around I was quite pleased with my IFR flight from Eugene, Oregon to Portland. Though short, it gave me a good look at what Flying School is capable of, though I did find that if you use a program like *ActiveSky* and the weather changes frequently there seems to be some issue with the instructor constantly telling you to change the altitude setting. This is of little consequence, but it does get really annoying.

As far as scoring goes you are graded on just about everything so if you forget something or goof up it will reflect in the end results of your flight. Though I am far from it there is an Airmanship challenge that proves to be quite interesting and reflects that of a true challenge within MSFS.

### The Pilot With The Highest Score!

As you progress through your flying career you will amass scores for each of your flights and as you get really good you can have your scores posted on the FS Flying School website for everyone else to see. My highest score so far is only 38. There are scores that reach into the hundreds which reflects the wide user base this product has already achieved and the quality of those individuals that use it.

The FS Flying School website is packed with information and most impressive is its online tutorials for the Flying School program. After spending some time with the product I found myself with some questions relating to the use of the log book. The manual was of little help here so I found myself at the Flying School website and was quite surprised when I found the online tutorials, as each is presented as a video and is very well narrated and simple to understand.

One of the biggest draws for me to this product was the quality of support offered through the website, forums, tutorials, and FAQs. The information that is provided via the website is critical to the program as a whole and having this amount of information available to me makes me feel like the developers of this product really do care about their customer base.

### In The End

If you are a budding pilot, current pilot or a Flight Simulator user that wants to better his/her flying skills in the Flight Simulator environment I would have to say this product is a no brainer as it adds an element of learning and realism to the Flight Simulator that we haven't really seen before. It's in-depth flight tracking and pilot monitoring comes in really handy when things go wrong. I have to say this is a product that is educational, however, it is also fun and really does add a whole new level of realism to the virtual world of flying simply because you are not in the cockpit by yourself anymore.

The FS Flying School website can be found at [www.fsflyingschool.com](http://www.fsflyingschool.com) The add-on is available via download purchase from the publisher's website or other good online sim download stores or on disk from good simulator add-on retailers for US\$39. ➔