



## **Hosting and Sharing a Cockpit in FSX Steam Edition**

**Greg Whiley  
Flight Simulation Australia**



## About this resource

This manual has been produced for the use of flight simulation enthusiasts, who wish to achieve the greatest possible level of realism when flying large aircraft such as jet airliners in a shared aircraft environment. Its aim is to support those who wish to engage in pilot and co-pilot sessions sharing the one aircraft through FSX: Steam Edition multiplayer. A previous publication, *Multiplayer Pilot Co-pilot Manual Boeing 747-400* (2012) was written to adapt specifically to the Boeing 747. The multiplayer hosting and sharing of aircraft procedures in this iteration could be applied equally to any aircraft in your virtual hangar.

## Statement of copyright

Copyright © 2020, Greg Whiley, Aussie Star Flight Simulation. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. August 2020.

This publication is released under the terms of the Creative Commons licence accessed through the following link: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>. In short this allows you to use the publication without payment but for non-commercial purposes only and no adaptation or use in other works is permitted.

Please read the Creative Commons Licence in full before downloading or otherwise making use of the publication.

When using this publication, you must attribute *Aussie Star Flight Simulation* and any identified author in accordance with the terms of the Creative Commons Licence.



Aussie Star Flight Simulation publications are products of Flight Simulation Australia

[www.flightsimaus.com.au](http://www.flightsimaus.com.au)

[info@flightsimaus.com.au](mailto:info@flightsimaus.com.au)



**WARNING!** These procedures and checklists were developed for use with Microsoft Flight Simulator X from research of a wide range of sources. The procedures and parameters are a close approximation of real flying operations. However, under no circumstances should they be used in real aircraft operations.

# CONTENTS

Introduction.....	5
Hosting a session.....	5
Joining an aircraft.....	9
Connecting directly to a private session.....	11
Transferring aircraft control.....	11
Voice communication.....	12
The sterile cockpit.....	13
Set up problems with Steam.....	14
Resources.....	16

# Microsoft Flight Simulator X STEAM EDITION

## How to Host and Share a Cockpit

Sharing a cockpit can be a fun and educational pastime when engaging in flight simulation. Add to the experience the opportunity to communicate by voice with each other, then you have a realistic pilot and co-pilot environment where the workload can be shared as in real aircraft operations. This is particularly pertinent in commercial airliners where, in the real world, there needs to be two pilots in the cockpit. It is also an effective way to engage in training sessions or check flights.

This tutorial will provide step-by-step instructions on how to set up a server to host a session for two persons and how to join a session established by a host. Two sets of instructions are provided. The first outlines how to **host** a shared cockpit session. The second explains how you **share** the cockpit established by the host. Note that while some instructions are common, there are some procedures that are different from each other. It is recommended that both the host and the sharer examine both procedures to gain an understanding of the whole process. The items in **bold** are the set-up features in Multiplayer requiring attention.

Voice communication between pilot and co-pilot is essential for realistic operations and training purposes. Additional information is therefore also provided on how to establish this. Finally, some troubleshooting strategies are provided should there be difficulties in establishing connection between the host server and the Steam client software.

So let's begin.

## Hosting a Session

Open FSX Steam in the usual way and click on **MULTIPLAYER**. Ensure the Internet (Steam) radio button is selected in **Connection options**. Nothing needs to be set up in Network Settings.

Connection options

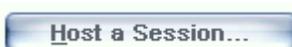
Internet (Steam)       Local network (LAN)

Steam user ID:       Player name:

Click



Click



Enter the following **Session information**:

- Session name (e.g. Pilot Training)
- Session category (e.g. Flight Training)
- Password (optional)

Session information (appears in game list)

Session name:

Session Category:

Session description:

Session password (optional):

Confirm password:

In **Session availability**, check 'Make this session visible to everyone' and 'On the Internet via Steam'.

Session availability

Make this session visible to everyone

On the Internet via Steam

On your Local Area Network (LAN)

Make this a private session

Click



In **Choose session conditions**, enter the following information:

- Role (pilot)
  - Current Aircraft
  - Current Location.
- NOTE: Always start at a gate, NEVER on a runway.
- Current Weather
  - Current Time and Season
  - Establish Fuel and Payload

Note all these details to give to your Sharer when joining the session.

Choose session conditions

Select role:

State intentions to other players (optional):

ATC Name

VH-FSA

**1** CURRENT AIRCRAFT:

**2** CURRENT LOCATION:

**3** CURRENT WEATHER:

**4** CURRENT TIME AND SEASON:

Launch flight with Chat window open

Click



In **Choose host options / Player restrictions** enter only 2 maximum players and 0 reserved slots for friends.

**Player restrictions**

Maximum players:

Slots reserved for friends:

Minutes until session starts:

In **Voice communication**, ensure 'Ensure voice communication' is unchecked if using a voice over Internet protocol (VOIP) such as TeamSpeak.

**Voice communication**

Enable voice communication (broadband required)

Always activated for all players

Only activated using aircraft radios

In **Sharing**, ensure 'Share my aircraft' is checked. The password is optional. The other two boxes are left unchecked.

**Sharing**

Share my aircraft

Password (optional):

Disable sharing after session begins if no one has joined

Enable shared voice communication

**Advanced Options...**

In **Advanced Options**, Check the boxes as shown below. This will ensure your private session remains private.

### Player options

- Players can change realism settings
- Players can change location after joining
- Players can share aircraft
- Players can use Slew mode
- Players can join during session
- Players can pause their session
- Host can pause session for everyone

### Starting location

- Players can start at an airport of their choice
- Players can start in the air near the host
- Players can start at the airport nearest the host's aircraft

Click



The session will now load and you will be taken to the Briefing Room

The **Briefing Room** will now tell you the status of the session. There is nothing to change here.

## Briefing Room

### Review your session

CaptAus

**Aircraft:** Boeing 737-800 Paint1

**Voice:**

**Airport:** Heathrow

[Change Role or Aircraft](#)

Shared aircraft

### Pilot Training

**Host ID:** CaptAus

**Weather:** Weather Theme: Gray and Rainy

**Description:**

**Status:** 1 of 2 slots taken. Waiting for players to join.

Minutes to launch: 13:39 .

Players:

Click



## Joining an Aircraft

Open FSX Steam in the usual way and click on **MULTIPLAYER**. Ensure the Internet (Steam) radio button is selected in **Connection options**.

**Connection options**

Internet (Steam)
  Local network (LAN)

Steam user ID: 
 Player name:

Click



In the main Multiplayer window, click on the server you are going to join. For the purpose of this tutorial, we will select Mr.Bale's server at Salt Lake City Intl.

### MULTIPLAYER

Choose a session to join or host a new session

User: **CaptAus**

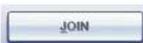
Category:

All Server Categories

Only show sessions in my country/region

Session Name	Players	Connection	Nearest Airfield	Voice
AUSTRALIAN AIRLINES	8/99	24	Kingsford Smith Intl	
SYDNEY-FLIGHTS AUSTRALIA	1/99	27	Kingsford Smith Intl	
VFA-81 TACPACK	3/24	224	'nuggs' Flying M	3600
Mr.Bale's	25/74	225	Salt Lake City Intl	
UFLY ATC (JOIN DISCORD)	2/99(5)	240	Friday Harbor	
FlyFS Formation Fun	5/22(10)	244	Ft Worth Alliance	44000
EasternHops /// PRIVATE	1/99	251	Hartsfield - Jackson Atlanta I	
TownDogTenn	1/8	268	Abernathy	
Airliner World Flights	1/99	271	McCarran Intl	

Click



In **Choose your session options**, change Aircraft, ATC Name and Fuel and Payload to EXACTLY the same as the Host's provided settings.

### MULTIPLAYER

Choose your session options

Choose role

Pilot

State intentions to other players (optional)

Aircraft

Current Aircraft

Boeing 737-800

Change...

ATC Name

VH-FSA

Change...

Fuel and Payload...

Load Flight...

Save Flight...

Flight Planner...

Failures...

In **Sharing**, make sure the 'Share my aircraft' box is UNCHECKED

Leave the other two boxes also unchecked.

Enter the Password if provided by the Host

### Sharing

Share my aircraft

Enable shared aircraft voice communication

Password (optional):

Disable sharing after session has started

In **Starting Location**, check 'At an airport of my choice' and enter the EXACT same location and gate as that set by the Host.

### Starting location

At an airport of my choice

#### Current Location

Melbourne Intl

CHANGE...

In the air near the host

At the airport nearest the host's aircraft

Click

OK

You will be taken to the **Briefing Room**

In the **Briefing Room**, find the player's aircraft you want to join (i.e. your Host)

## Briefing Room

### Review your session

**CaptAus**

**Aircraft:** Boeing 737-800 Paint1 Change Role or Aircraft

**Voice:**

**Airport:** Melbourne Intl

---

**AUSTRALIAN AIRLINES**

**Host ID:** AustralianAirlines

**Weather:** User-defined weather

**Description:**

**Status:** 7 of 99 slots taken. Waiting for players to join.  
Time since session started 31:11.

Players:

KalaTheFox	Extra 330SC VH-SPX	Kingsford Smi	IN SESSION	<span>Join Aircraft</span>
ShadowWolpa	Cessna Skyhawk 172SP G1	Kingsford Smi	IN SESSION	
Alex	Cessna Skyhawk 172SP G1	Kingsford Smi	IN SESSION	
Radar1701	Aircreation582SL red	Kingsford Smi	IN SESSION	
tristancondie1	Aircreation582SL red	Kingsford Smi	IN SESSION	
Danzy	iFly 737-800 (Wide screen)	Kingsford Smi	IN SESSION	<span>Join Aircraft</span>

Click

Join Aircraft

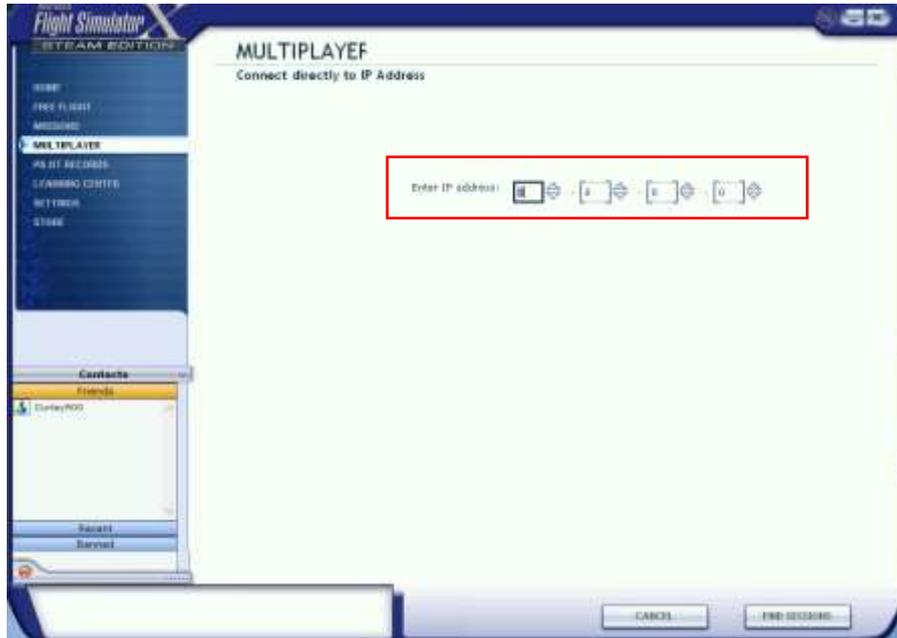
then click

JOIN SESSION

## Connecting directly to a private session

If you have arranged with a friend to use Multiplayer but do not wish to have the session visible to all, you can connect directly to a private session. In this situation, the host will set up the session and advise you of the IP Address of his server. The host can determine the Public IP Address simply by going to a site such as <http://whatismyip.com/>.

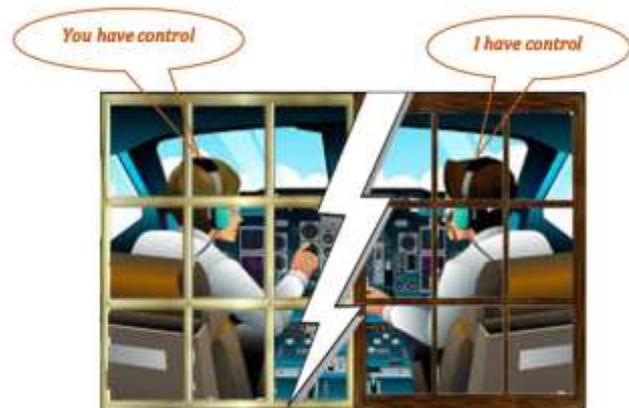
To connect to the host's server, click on **Connect Directly** in the Multiplayer Session page and enter the IP Address provided in the four boxes.



## Transferring aircraft control

Once you start flying in a Multiplayer shared aircraft session, you can transfer control of the aircraft back and forth. The pilot in control (pilot flying) is the only one who can fly the aircraft. However, the other pilot can still operate the aircraft after control has been transferred.

To transfer control of the aircraft: Press **Shift+T**. The other pilot (pilot not flying) will receive a message asking if he wants to receive control of the aircraft. To accept control of the aircraft and become pilot flying: Press **Shift+T**.



## Stop sharing an aircraft

At some point in a session you may wish to stop sharing control of the aircraft with the host ending the session. To stop sharing aircraft control, Press **ESC** to exit to the **Briefing Room**. The other pilot will receive a message that the aircraft is no longer shared.

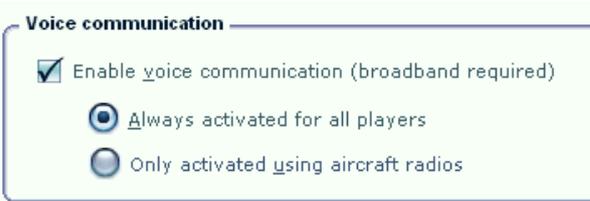
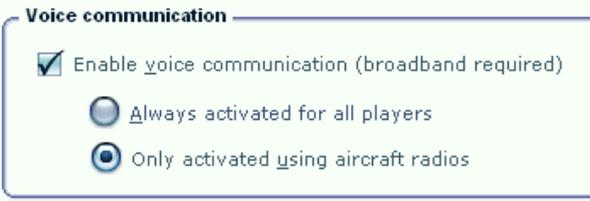
Note: You can **not** mix a session using the boxed and Steam versions of FSX.

## Voice communication

For maximum realism and operational efficiency, voice communication between pilot and co-pilot is essential. A Windows-compatible headset is essential for a shared aircraft Multiplayer session. To use voice communications while sharing an aircraft, you must select the voice communications option. There are three voice communication options in FSX Steam:



A Saitek Pro Flight headset

Option	How it works
Always activated for all players	<p>All players in the session can hear all other players. Players must press and hold <b>CAPS LOCK</b> to talk.</p> 
Only activated using aircraft radios	<p>Players wishing to talk to each other must tune to the same radio frequency. It is recommended you select a less commonly used frequency and tune it in on COMM 2 in your radio stack. To communicate, press and hold <b>CAPS LOCK</b> to talk (recommended) or press and hold <b>SHIFT+CAPS LOCK</b> to broadcast to all players, regardless of whether they are on the same radio frequency.</p> 
Enabled shared voice communication	<p>Only available when two players are sharing an aircraft. With this option, <b>players don't have to press a button to talk</b>. This option is for pilot co-pilot operations.</p> 

## A better option



A better option for clarity and reliability is to use a voice over Internet (VoIP) program such as *Teamspeak3*. *TeamSpeak3* is the most popular and widespread VoIP software used in flight simulation. Teamspeak3 uses 'crystal clear sound to communicate with team mates cross-platform with military-grade security, lag-free performance and unparalleled reliability and uptime.' The Client software is a free download and is available [here](#).



*Discord* is another VoIP which is gaining popularity among flight simmers. *Discord* is a small group of passionate gamers whose mission is to bring people together around games. They believe that with diversity comes a better product, better decisions, and a better environment. Their Client software is available free [here](#).

## The Sterile cockpit

If your reason for engaging in a shared cockpit is for training/learning purposes or piloting under normal operation procedures, then consideration of the sterile cockpit is essential. A sterile cockpit has nothing to do with cleanliness of the physical environment. It has everything to do with the professional, mental environment. The purpose of having a sterile cockpit is to remove any distractions that might impinge on the safe, proper and proficient operation of an aircraft and the maintenance of a high level of situational awareness. A summary of this aviation rule is as follows:

The graphic has a yellow header with the title "Aviation-Sterile cockpit rule". Below the title, there are two bullet points. At the bottom right, there is a cartoon pilot character wearing a blue cap and a white mask, next to the text "The Sterile Cockpit".

### Aviation-Sterile cockpit rule

- Prohibits crew member performance of non-essential duties or activities while the aircraft is involved in taxi, takeoff, landing, and all other flight operations conducted below 10,000 feet, except cruise flight.
- Prohibits the personal use of a personal wireless communications device or laptop computer while a flight crew member is at duty station during all ground operations

 **The Sterile Cockpit**

Reproduced with permission

## Set up problems with Steam



### Setting up

If you are having problems setting up and using Multiplayer here a few things you could try, courtesy of Steam Support:

1. Check your connection to the Internet. Is your router turned on and working? If not try restarting it.
2. Check your connection to the Internet on your PC. If it is not showing that you are connected restart your router and then restart your PC.
3. If your PC still cannot connect to the Internet, contact your Internet service provider for more advice.

If your PC is showing a connection to the Internet then follow the steps below:

1. Restart the Steam platform client
2. Log out of Steam
3. Restart the Steam platform client by closing it completely and launching it again
4. Log back into Steam.

If it is still not working, try the following steps:

1. Load the Steam platform client and log into your account
2. Click the Library tab in the menu at the top of the screen
3. Click the List View from the view options on the top right of the screen
4. Right click on Microsoft Flight Simulator X: Steam Edition to bring up a popup menu
5. Click on Properties from the popup menu to bring up another popup box
6. Click on Local files from the popup box menu
7. Click on Verify integrity of game cache from the Local file options
8. Wait for the process bar to finish verifying your files
9. Restart Steam.

### Port Forwarding

If you are trying to host a Multiplayer session you will also need to setup your PC for that. As a host, you may have to configure your Router to allow participants to access your PC. Firstly, you will need to set up port forwarding on your Router. The following ports need to be forwarded to your PC:

- **6112 – TCP and UDP:** Default FSX network game port. If you change your Network Settings in the game on the Multiplayer Sign-in screen, change this port too.
- **27016 – TCP and UDP:** Steam Server Master Browser port. Steam talks to your host via this port.

For details on how to set up Port Forwarding for your Router, refer to the manufacturer's documentation.

### Using a Firewall with Steam

If you are installing Steam for the first time or there has been a recent Steam update, a firewall may be preventing Steam from connecting to the Steam Network. You may be asked to re-authorize Steam after a client update. Some Steam games may also prompt for firewall authorization after a game update.

Follow these troubleshooting steps:

1. Close the Steam client application
2. Open the configuration view of your firewall program and remove any instance of the following executables from the permissions:
  - a. Steaminstall.exe

- b. Steme.exe
  - c. Hl.exe
  - d. Hl2.exe
  - e. steamTmp.exe
3. Start Steam. Your firewall should prompt you to set new permissions for steam.exe. If it does not, the security settings may be too strict – you will need to change these settings so you will be prompted to set permissions.
  4. Give the Steam executables permission for all TCP and UDP ports when prompted
  5. Restart your computer and start Steam.

If you are still having connectivity problems, try the following:

1. Exit the Steam client
2. Temporarily disable your firewall
3. Restart Steam and test connectivity
4. Re-enable your firewall.

If Steam operates normally only when your firewall is disabled, recheck your firewall configuration. You may wish to contact the provider of your firewall for configuration help. **It is not recommended that you leave your firewall disabled.**

### Firewall Provider Resources

- **Microsoft** Windows Firewall is the most commonly-used firewall program used by Steam customers on Windows. If you are using Windows Firewall, you must ensure that your LAN is identified as being either a Home or Work network. If you are connected to a Public network the firewall constraints will prevent access. FSX, however, needs to be allowed to access Public networks so ensure your Windows Firewall correctly allows full access.



- **Apple** provides the Application Firewall for all current Macos versions.
- **Norton** provides support for Norton Personal Firewall
- **McAfee** provides support for McAfee Personal Firewall and the McAfee Internet Security Suite
- **Zone Labs** provides support for ZoneAlarm
- **nVidia** – Historically nVidia’s Network Access Manager was known to be incompatible with Steam and other network client software.

### Still stuck?

Get in direct contact with the Dovetail Games support website at <http://dovetailgames.kayako.com/>

## Resources

geardown three greens (2015) *Setting up shared cockpit for multiplayer in FSX Steam Edition – a tutorial*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZ5Uw74z370>

Flighsimguy (2016) *[FSX] How to Establish a Shared Cockpit Session*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVNCiE4H5sg>

Novawings (2015) *FSX Tutorials – Cockpit Sharing*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyJ5wkALcHo>

Captain Walton (2014) *How to Setup Shared Cockpit in FSX & FSX SE*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rEB8wxCEdw>

Whiley, Greg (2012) *Aussie Star Flight Simulation, Multiplayer Pilot Co-pilot Manual Boeing 747-400, Flight Simulation Australia*



[www.flightsimaus.com.au](http://www.flightsimaus.com.au)