# MSFS 2024 Career Mode: User Guide

by DarkStar (August 2025 - <u>Google Drive</u>) v1.0.6 With thanks to the <u>MSFS Discord</u> crew in <u>#career-mode</u>

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# Introduction to MSFS 2024 Career Mode

Microsoft Flight Simulator 2024's Career Mode introduces a structured experience beyond Free Flight. It simulates your journey from beginner to professional pilot, blending realistic flight simulation with RPG-style progression. You'll manage finances, certifications, maintenance, aircraft ownership, and reputation as you climb the ranks.

But be warned—Career Mode is still frustratingly buggy.

You'll fail missions through no fault of your own.

You'll lose points due to common glitches.

You'll find missions that can't be completed because they get stuck.

Sometimes, the game will crash your plane before you even get in.

Other times, your aircraft will explode while you taxi gently to the runway.

This is the current state of Career Mode. It's improving, slowly. And once you reach the Acceptance stage of grief, it's actually pretty fun.

#### **Overview of Career Mode**

You begin as an employee pilot, flying company-owned aircraft and earning experience and a small amount of Credits (the game currency) through various missions. As you progress, you unlock **Freelancer Mode**, allowing you to buy your own aircraft and manage costs like fuel, maintenance, and insurance. Your aircraft persist across missions, carrying forward fuel levels, wear, and damage.

## **Employee vs. Freelancer Modes**

#### • Employee Mode

You start here, and you can return to it at any time. It carries no financial risk. You fly company-provided aircraft, and expenses like fuel, maintenance, and insurance are covered. Payouts are much lower, but it's a good way to test unfamiliar missions and aircraft later on.

#### Freelancer Mode

Once you've gained enough experience and credits, you can enter Freelancer Mode. You'll buy companies and aircraft, taking full financial responsibility for fuel, maintenance, and insurance. In return, you earn higher payouts but also face greater risk.

# **Progression**

The different dimensions for Progression are:

#### Levels

You gain XP by completing missions. As you level up (well into the hundreds, possibly unlimited), you unlock new specializations.

#### Certifications

Some aircraft and mission types require certifications, such as a Commercial Pilot License (CPL). You pay to take the exam, but once paid, you can retake it as often as needed. Most are

currently easy to pass.

#### Specializations

Missions fall into categories such as Cargo Transport - Light, Charter Service - Private, Passenger - Airliner, Medevac, Search & Rescue, Firefighting, Agricultural Aviation, and more. Each has prerequisites like level, certifications, and prior jobs completed.

### Companies

Buying a company grants access to specific aircraft and mission types. You must meet specialization requirements and have enough funds for both the company and at least one aircraft. However, you can buy the company first and purchase an aircraft later.

#### Aircraft Ownership

Owning aircraft is essential in Freelancer Mode. You'll typically start with a Cessna 172 (or similar GA aircraft) and gradually move up to turboprops, business jets and airliners like the PC-12, PC-24, CJ4, and Boeing 737. Ownership includes costs for purchase, fuel, maintenance, and insurance. Always keep a backup aircraft and enough credits on hand for maintenance. Don't sell your only plane to afford the next one—bugs, errors, or bad luck could leave you stranded.

Career Mode adds structure and strategy to the simulation, encouraging you to explore different missions, aircraft, and global locations for a deeper experience.

# **Getting Started in MSFS 2024 Career Mode**

You begin in **Employee Mode**, flying aircraft owned by various companies. This mode allows you to build experience and funds without financial risk, as the owning companies cover all costs such as fuel, insurance, and maintenance. You start with 5000 Credits of in-game money. Choose a **Home** airport on the map, then complete a short introductory flight to get started.

Jump into the **Certification** sub-menu and work your way through the **Private Pilots License** training sessions or jump ahead and try to Pass the exam. It will cost 2000 Credits to unlock the exam, and just requires you to fly a basic traffic pattern and land; you can retake it repeatedly so don't worry about failing.

Once you pass, go into **Missions** and jump into your first mission, which will be the **First Flight** "Golden Mission" at your Home airport. Golden Missions are special missions with a golden, or yellow, icon that you have to complete to unlock new Specializations you have qualified for.

Once that mission is completed you will hopefully see a bunch of First Flight missions nearby and you'll need to fly at least 1 of those. As soon as you qualify, go get your **Commercial Pilots License** (2500 Credits and requires 2 First Flight missions to have been completed; again, it just has you fly a simple pattern and land). Once you complete that you can start getting paid.

Once you hit Level 3 that will unlock the **Ferry Flight** specialization. The **Ferry Flight** Golden Mission will show up in Germany, complete that and you will unlock the **Ferry Flight** missions on your map. Once you are Level 5 you will qualify to unlock the **Flightseeing** specialization, and then fly the Golden Mission out of Venice, Italy. And then at Level 8 you can open up **Skydive Aviation**.

From there, keep an eye on the **Cargo Transport - Light** specialization and work towards that and save up about 36,000 credits. You'll need to be Level 10 and complete 5 airplane missions with a landing smoothness of 50% or better and also some number of missions with a rating of C or better.

Once you've gained enough experience and sufficient credits, you can transition into **Freelancer Mode**, where you purchase your own aircraft, assume operating costs, and earn significantly higher payouts.

#### Freelancer Recommendations

While you're free to explore any missions and progress at your own pace, the following approach can accelerate your career and avoid some common pitfalls. I recommend you avoid getting any additional certifications or anything until you get into your first Cargo Transport airplane because those missions will make money so much faster. Once you do that then expand. Drive your certifications by which Specializations you want to get.

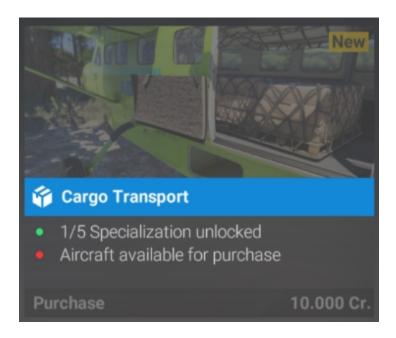
### Choose Your First Company Wisely

To buy a company you must have enough Credits to pay for the Company **and** the first aircraft within that company. However, once you buy the company you can skip buying any aircraft, if you wish. To unlock new companies you need to qualify for one of the Specializations within that company.

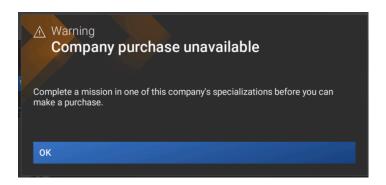
Avoid starting with **Flightseeing** despite its tempting lower initial cost. Instead, I recommend starting with the **Cargo Transport** company and the **Cargo Transport - Light** specialization. This path offers

stable income and clear progression. You'll need at least **25,950 credits** for your first Cessna 172 and **10,000 credits** to purchase the **Cargo Transport** company.

**NOTE**: You cannot buy the company until you can also afford the cheapest available aircraft in that company. You need to clear the red marker on "Aircraft available for purchase".



You may get a misleading error about needing to complete a specialization but so long as you have 1 Specialization unlocked (shown green above) that would not be the true issue:



**IMPORTANT:** Only your *very first* aircraft comes at a steep discount and, while it can be resold for a tidy profit, do not fall for this trap. You won't earn enough from the sale to buy a replacement (which will not be discounted), and you'll be stuck grinding Employee missions for weeks. Many players have opted to restart Career Mode after discovering this too late.

You also want to make sure to check the departure and arrival runway type (grass, dirt, pavement, or water) and that the lengths are sufficient for your skill level in that plane. The game will try to send your wheeled aircraft into the water or on to RC plane fake runways. As the pilot-in-command you have to take responsibility for the flight, and that includes not running out of fuel (the game will have a suggested minimum amount but it is often not sufficient). You can, at larger airports, use SimBrief (free online tool) to assist in route and fuel planning. However, a lot of the smaller early airports won't exist in that tool.

Recommended Core Companies and Planes

One option is to go with reliable, affordable aircraft in a proven progression:

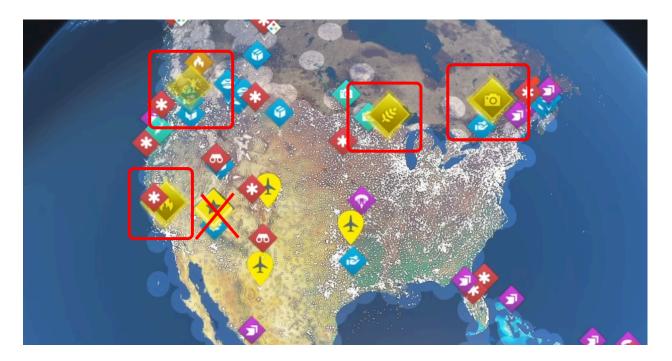
- Cargo Transport Light, Cessna 172
- Charter Service Private, Vision Jet G2
- Cargo Transport Medium, Cessna 208B Grand Caravan OR save for PC-12
- Charter Service VIP, PC-12 or PC-24 (Premium-only) or CJ4

After securing a solid fleet and income stream, feel free to explore other company types and specializations. Make sure you place newly purchased planes near a good source of missions. Some specializations like **Charter Service - Private** have limited availability.

If you want the potential for faster progression, it has been suggested that going straight to **Charter Service - Private** with your first Cessna 172 is the way to go. This does mean more grinding in Employee missions and working to unlock that specific speciality. But that will leapfrog you into 200k missions, just make sure you stay near a source of missions and have funds to move the plane when needed. For that reason, and you will be missing out on a whole section of gameplay, I would not recommend this approach for newer pilots.

Once you qualify for a new Specialization it will unlock a special **Golden Mission** that you need to locate in *Employee Mode* and complete successfully – that special **Golden Mission** will then unlock the Specialization for you. To then also see that new mission type in **Freelancer Mode** you will also need to own an appropriate aircraft.

- Unlock the **Specialization** by meeting the prerequisites
- Find the Golden Mission in Employee Mode and complete that
- CAUTION: If the game crashes or fails in some way the Golden Mission icon might disappear
  from your map, find the originating airport code from the list below and then go to the "Mission
  List" option on that airport (zoom in until you see the airport icon on the map and then click on
  the airport icon to bring up the menu). If you don't see the Golden Mission there you may need
  to create a <a href="https://flightsimulator.zendesk.com/">https://flightsimulator.zendesk.com/</a> ticket and wait for support.
- Own that type of company and a valid aircraft that can fly that mission type in that company



**Golden Missions** will have the associated company icon on them, not to be confused with the **Special Missions** which have the Star icon and are more Yellow.

# **Essential Early Tips**

- Consider disabling Photogrammetry (under Settings > General > Online), especially if you see
  a lot of very bad looking terrain where you are trying to depart or arrive. If you don't it can cause
  the plane to crash during ground operation.
- **Keep Your Starter Plane**: Don't sell it to buy another aircraft early on. You could end up grounded without the funds to recover.
- Use the Visual Assistances (General > Assistances) to help guide you where to taxi and fly
  early on. Use Piloting Assistances (General > Assistances) like Auto-Rudder or the Helicopter
  Assistances if needed. Use Automixture and Gyro Drift Compensation until you are ready to
  take control of your fuel/air mixture and recalibrate the heading indication mid-flight.
- Maintain a Financial Buffer: Always keep extra credits on hand for unexpected repairs or game-breaking bugs.
- Buy Top-Tier Insurance: While expensive upfront, it protects you from financial losses due to bugs or mission failures. You only pay for flight hours you personally fly—the insurance doesn't apply when your crew flies or the aircraft is idle. Once you have multiple aircraft or enough capital to self-insure, this becomes optional. You also get a 25% discount if you maintain S-tier and 20% for A-tier reputation.
- Use Fast Travel Wisely: Zoom into airports on the world map and click the appearing circle
  icon to fast travel. This opens new job markets but costs credits based on distance, so use it
  strategically.

By following these guidelines, you'll build a strong foundation for a smooth and profitable progression.

Spreadsheet of Airplane & Career related Information including costs of planes in each specialization and earning ranges (roughly) of different specializations:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1\_ZZLyWEZVdnoA1Ql9bufOUeT3Y8fkfGayRG0cGlYdSM/edit ?usp=sharing

### Other Specializations?

Once you get established in **Cargo Transport - Light** you'll have enough money to earn more certifications and try other specializations, I've only outlined what is a fairly efficient path forward.

### **Should You Reset Career Mode?**

I think it is rarely worth resetting Career mode, you would have to retake the certifications and everything. You'd have to balance how long it will take to get back to where you are now or get another airplane (maybe you, or the game, crashed your only plane, etc). You would have to be very early on I think.

What I would probably do is look at progressing into a more valuable Specialization like **Cargo Transport - Medium** (level 25) or **Charter Service - VIP** (level 45) as quickly as possible and then do those missions to get back into a used Cessna 172 at somewhere around 250k or 350k (so maybe 5 or 7 of those missions).

# **Specializations & Certifications**

**Specializations** and **Certifications** form the core of your progression in *MSFS 2024 Career Mode*. **Specializations** unlock different mission types, each with unique requirements tied to experience and credentials. To qualify, you'll need specific **Certifications**, such as your **Commercial Pilot License - Airplane (CPL)** and relevant **Endorsements** or **Type Ratings**.

**Certifications** you unlock by paying for and passing the corresponding test on the **Certification** page, you just need to unlock the prerequisite certifications. You can move through these as fast as you can pay for them.

**Specializations** you earn through passing **Certifications**, completing missions, and overall pilot level – and then finally by completing the **Golden Mission** associated with that **Specialization**.

**Medevac** is pretty solid but is still somewhat buggy, requires you to fly more carefully and can divert you to another airport (which is fairly buggy). **Search & Rescue** are fun, the airplane ones can be very difficult due to terrain. **Skydive Aviation** is ok but not a great earner. **Agricultural Aviation** is extremely challenging, requires you to hold a narrow speed, fly very low to the ground, and avoid obstacles while trying to carefully time your spray to cover only the designated area. **Aerial Firefighting** isn't too bad but the water scoop can be a challenge. **Aerial Construction** is pretty easy if you can fly the Skycrane (I cannot). **Aerial Advertising** is pretty fun, use the Flight Path "Assistances" to follow the correct path.

### **Certifications / Endorsements**

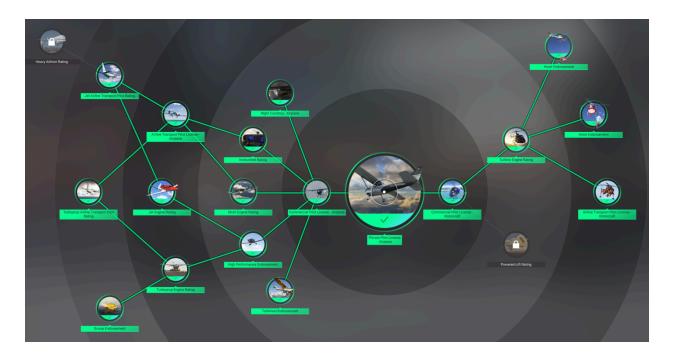
You can view your progress and available certifications under the **Certification** tab. Many form a branching network, where unlocking more advanced credentials requires completing prerequisites first.

Some **Specializations** may silently require **Night Currency - Airplane**, so pick that up early if a specialization seems inexplicably locked.

Note: The **Heavy Airline Rating** and **Powered-Lift Rating** are currently reserved for future updates. Release had been a goal of Sim Update 3 but that seems to not be happening for now.

I do not have all of the cost details at this time. See the Specialization list below for the certification prerequisites, only some key ones are mentioned below.

Tier	Туре	Certification	Cost	Notes (**SU3=more in SU3)
0	<b>+</b>	Private Pilot License - Airplane	2000	Pass this to get started. Unlocks Cessna 172, SW121, Robin DR400/100, DV20, JMB VL-3
1	<b>+</b>	Commercial Pilot License - Airplane	2500	Required to earn \$
2	<b>+</b>	Night Currency - Airplane	7500	Unlocks real-time flights (not all missions can be flown at night)
2	<b>+</b>	Instrument Rating	10000	Unlocks Live Missions, Cargo-Medium, & Charter
2	<b>+</b>	Multi-Engine Rating	15000	Required for all multi-engine aircraft including the C90, PC-24, DA-62, CJ4, G58, 350i, C408
2	<b>+</b>	High Performance Endorsement	5000	Required for DHC-2, C400 TT, Optica, G58, G36, PA28-236, CT210N, SR22T, **SU3
2	<b>*</b>	Tailwheel Endorsement	5000	Unlocks taildraggers for you Bush pilots. Required for DHC-2, Norden, X Cub, CAP-4, Shock Ultra, AT-802, Draco X, Cap10, **SU3
3	<b>+</b>	Airline Transport Pilot License - Airplane	40000	
3	<b>+</b>	Jet Engine Rating	30000	You'll need this for the Vision Jet G2, CJ4, and PC-24
3	<b>*</b>	Turboprop Engine Rating	20000	Unlocks turboprops and Cargo-Medium. Required for C90, 208B, PC-12, TBM 930, AT-802, Draco X, 350i, C408
4	<b>+</b>	Jet Airline Transport Pilot Rating	100000	Required for the Boeing 737 Max
4	<b>+</b>	Turboprop Airline Transport Pilot Rating	50000	Required for ES-30, CL-415, Saab 340, A400M
4	<b>+</b>	Scoop Endorsement	15000	Required for Firefighting planes CL-415 and AT-802
5	<b>+</b>	Heavy Airliner Rating (grayed out/locked)	250000	For Future Expansion, we don't know when
1	<b>*</b>	Commercial Pilot License - Rotorcraft	3500	Prerequisite for Rotor missions. Required for Cabri G2
2	<u>*</u>	Turbine Engine Rating	7500	Required for R66, H125
2	<u>*</u>	Powered-Lift Rating (grayed out/locked)	5000	For Future Expansion, we don't know when
3	<b>*</b>	Hook Endorsement	25000	Required for Cargo/Hook CH-47D, H125, S-64F
3	<u>*</u>	Hoist Endorsement	12500	Required for Hoist H125
3	<u>*</u>	Airline Transport Pilot License - Rotorcraft	75000	Required for CH-47D, S-64F



## **Companies / Specializations**

**Specializations** and their requirements are organized here by company and company buy-in cost (not including aircraft purchase requirements). The Golden Missions details for each Specialization are in a table at the end.

Note: First Flight and Ferry Flight are only available in Employee Mode.

- Employee Only
  - First Flight
    - Level 1
    - Private Pilot License Airplane
  - o Ferry Flight
    - Level 3
    - Commercial Pilot License Airplane
- Flightseeing 1,000 credits
  - Flightseeing Airplane
    - Level 5
    - Commercial Pilot License Airplane
  - Flightseeing Rotorcraft
    - Level 5
    - Commercial Pilot License Rotorcraft
- Skydive Aviation 20,000 credits
  - Skydive Aviation
    - Level 8
    - Commercial Pilot License Airplane
    - Score Airplane missions with C or above (N)

Perform Airplane missions with landing smoothness above 50% (N)

#### • Cargo Transport - 10,000 credits

- o Cargo Light
  - Level 10
  - Commercial Pilot License Airplane
  - Perform Airplane missions with landing smoothness above 50% (N)
  - Score Airplane missions with C or above (N)
- Cargo Medium
  - Level 25
  - Instrument Rating
  - Turboprop Engine Rating
  - Perform flights with full ATC procedures with an Airplane (N)
  - Perform Cargo Airplane missions (N)
- Cargo Transport Heavy (non-functional)
  - Level 75
  - Jet Airline Transport Pilot Rating
  - Perform flights with full ATC procedures with an Airplane (N)
  - Score Cargo Transport Medium missions with A or above (N)
- Cargo Transport Super Heavy (non-functional)
  - Level 90
  - Heavy Airliner Rating (not available)
  - Score Cargo Transport Heavy missions with S (N=1)
- Cargo Hook (Rotorcraft)
  - Level 30
  - Turbine Engine Rating
  - Hook Endorsement
  - Score Rotorcraft missions with B or above (N)

#### Aerial Advertising - 35,000 credits

- Aerial Advertising
  - Level 12
  - Commercial Pilot License Airplane
  - Score Flightseeing or Skydive Aviation missions with B or above (N)

#### Charter Service - 25,000 credits

- o Charter Service Private
  - Level 16
  - Instrument Rating
  - Perform Airplane missions with landing smoothness above 50% (N)
  - Score Airplane missions with C or above (N)
- Charter Service VIP
  - Level 45
  - Instrument Rating

- Turboprop Engine Rating
- Score Private Charter Airplane missions with B or above (N)

#### • Search & Rescue - 40,000 credits

- Search & Rescue Rotorcraft
  - Level 12
  - Turbine Engine Rating
  - Score Rotorcraft missions with C or above (N)
- Search & Rescue Airplane
  - Level 20
  - Tailwheel Endorsement
  - Perform landings with an Airplane on soft runways or bush (N)
- Search & Rescue Hoist (Rotorcraft)
  - Level 20
  - Hoist Endorsement
  - Turbine Engine Rating
  - Perform Search & Rescue Rotorcraft missions (N)

#### • Aerial Firefighting - 100,000 credits

- o Aerial Firefighting Initial Attack
  - Level 30
  - Scoop Endorsement
  - Turboprop Engine Rating
  - Score Airplane missions with A or above (N)
- Aerial Firefighting Extended Attack
  - Level 60
  - Scoop Endorsement
  - Turboprop Airline Transport Pilot Rating
  - Score Firefighting Airplane missions with A or above (N)

#### • Medevac - 50,000 credits

- Medevac
  - Level 35
  - Instrument Rating
  - Turboprop Engine Rating
  - Score Airplane missions with passengers with B or above

#### Agricultural Aviation - 70,000

- Agricultural Aviation Rotorcraft
  - Level 40
  - Turbine Engine Rating
  - Perform landings with a Rotorcraft on soft runways or bush (N)
- o Agricultural Aviation Airplane
  - Level 40
  - Tailwheel Endorsement

- Turboprop Engine Rating
- Perform landings with an Airplane on soft runways or bush (N)

### • Passenger Transport - 150,000 credits

- o Passenger Transport Airline
  - Level 50
  - Jet Airline Transport Pilot Rating
  - Perform flights with full ATC procedures with an Airplane (N)
  - Score Airplane missions with passengers with A or above (N)
- o Passenger Transport Rotorcraft
  - Level 3
  - Commercial Pilot License Rotorcraft

### • Aerial Construction - 200,000 credits

- Aerial Construction (Rotorcraft)
  - Level 50
  - Airline Transport Pilot License Rotorcraft
  - Hook Endorsement
  - Score Helicopter Cargo Transport missions with S (N)

### **Golden Mission Details**

These are the ones I have details on so far:

Airplanes Specialization	Aircraft	Difficulty	Location
First Flight	→ C172	<b>★</b> 100	Home Airport
Ferry Flight	→ C172	<b>★</b> 125	Germany, EDRM→EDRD
Flightseeing	→ C172	*	Venice, Italy, LIPV
Skydive Aviation	→ C172	<b>★★</b> 150	Spain, LEAP
Cargo Transport - Light	→ C172	*	Madagascar, FMNC→FMAD
Aerial Advertising	→ C172	★★ 225	Florida, KLNA
Charter Service - Private	→ C172	125	Bora Bora, NTTB→NTTR
Search & Rescue - Airplane	→ XCUB	320	Chile, SCHA
Cargo Transport - Medium	→ C208B	**	Japan, RJTF→RJTQ
Aerial Firefighting - Initial Attack	→ AT-802	<b>★★★★</b> 350	Spain, LEVX
Medevac	→ C208B	★★ 200	France, LFLJ+LFLB
Agricultural Aviation - Airplane	→ AT-802	<b>★★★★</b> 425	Wisconsin, WS16
Charter Service - VIP	→ PC-12	**	Nice, France, LFBY-⊁LFMN
Passenger Transport - Airline	→ B737	***	Jeju to Seoul, RKPC→RKSI
Aerial Firefighting - Extended Attack	→ CL-415	<b>★★★★★</b> 475	California, Newhall, KVNY
Cargo Transport - Heavy	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cargo Transport - Super Heavy	N/A	N/A	N/A

Rotorcraft Specialization	Aircraft	Difficulty	Location
Passenger Transport - Rotorcraft	<u></u> € G2	150	New York, KFRG → 6N5
Flightseeing - Rotorcraft	<u></u> € G2	125	Canada, CYHU
Search & Rescue - Rotorcraft	<u></u> ₩ H125	200	Australia, YHOT
Search & Rescue - Hoist	<u></u> ₩125	★★ 250	South China Sea, WIDM
Cargo Transport - Hook	<u></u> ₩ H125	***	Alaska, OL860
Agricultural Aviation - Rotorcraft	<u></u> ₩ H125	****	Piedmont, Italy, LICU
Aerial Construction	<u></u> S-64F	***	Washington, WA74

# **Aircraft Guide & Recommendations**

Choosing the wrong aircraft can ruin your experience. I recommend you test new aircraft and mission types in **Employee Mode** before committing to a purchase that might not suit your flying style. At this time, avoid the **ES-30**, **Saab 340**, **King Air 350i**, and—depending on your preference—the two large helicopters: **Boeing CH-47D Chinook** and **Erickson S-64F SkyCrane**.

### **Recommended Progression by Specialization**

## Cargo Transport - Light

You have four solid options for a first aircraft. Listed prices are for new purchases, but your first aircraft includes a ~95% discount (e.g., the **Cessna 172** costs just 25,950 credits after the discount).

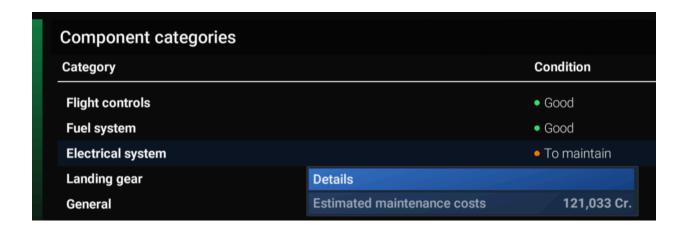
Name	New Price	Cruise(KTAS)	Range(NM)	Ceiling (ft)	Notes
Cessna 172	499,800	124	640	14,000	G1000
Norden	431,000	100	660	15,000	Cheaper, slower
Draco X	639,000	156	550	31,000	Faster, taildragger
DHC-2	961,400	109	395	15,750	Too expensive

The **Cessna 172** is a solid and reliable choice. If you're comfortable with taildraggers, the **Draco X** offers more speed, but the extra performance won't matter much early on. Prioritize safety and ease of operation, fly what you know best.

#### Charter Service - Private

Again, watch the specialization **Charter Service - Private** and meet the prerequisites and also get the **Jet Engine Rating** required for the **Cirrus Vision Jet G2** (certification) and buy into the **Charter Service** company for 25,000 credits (you'll need some extra in the bank because you need enough to buy your first plane also). Once you get the company look for a used **Cirrus Vision Jet G2**. To evaluate the prices, take the listed used price, add the "Estimated maintenance costs" from all "To maintain" entries, and compare totals. Buy the cheapest viable option, repair it, and start flying.

Expect to spend around 900,000 credits after repairs, but this aircraft pays for itself quickly. You can usually get 1 or 2 flights out of a used aircraft before you must repair it but if it fails enroute you might want to Abort the mission before you crash to avoid even higher costs.



### Cargo Transport - Medium

If you can handle it, the **Cessna 208B Grand Caravan** is a logical next step as the cheapest plane in this category. A better option, though, is the **PC-12**, with one major caveat: do not fly it above FL200, or missions may fail due to a bug in this plane. Always file for **FL180** and carry extra fuel due to flying at the lower altitude. The **C408 SkyCourier** is enjoyable to fly but lacks the **PC-12**'s speed and range in the same price range. When you can afford it, consider jumping to the **PC-24** (if you own it, individually or in the Premium package).

Name	Used Price (approx)	Cruise(KTAS)	Range(NM)	Ceiling (ft)	Notes
Cessna 208B Grand Caravan	4 mil	195	964	25,000	Poor handling, Garmin Avionics
Cessna C408 SkyCourier	5.5 mil	210	920	25,000	Garmin Avionics
PC-12	5.5 mil	290	1803	30,000* Stay under 20,000!!!	Fatal above 20,000, Apex Avionics
PC-24	6.5 mil	440	2040	45,000	Burns 2x the fuel it should. Bind "Add Fuel Quantity"

#### Charter Service - VIP

This specialization gives you access to upgraded (more expensive) versions of the **PC-12**, **PC-24**, and the luxury **CJ4** (35 million) but the missions will pay considerably more. The **PC-24** is the go-to workhorse (except on xbox if you only have a controller, seems the <u>throttle is broken</u>). Whether the **CJ4** is worth the extra cost depends on your preference.

You can also experiment with the **Beechcraft King Air C90 GTx** and **350i**. The **C90** has better range but is slower; the **350i** suffers from various issues. Both are more expensive than the **PC-24** and offer less.

### Passenger - Airliner

Currently, the entry-level airliners (**ES-30** and **Saab 340b**) can have issues where they crash on spawn, auto-skip-boarding-fail, or yeet the airplane into the sky. **Charter Service – VIP** pays better anyway.

That leaves the **Boeing 737 Max 8** as the only operational—if fairly buggy option.

Graphics performance can be poor, and the mission type is riddled with bugs:

- Never use "Skip to Taxi" this causes immediate mission failure and sometimes aircraft damage.
- Taxiing can cause crashes.
- "Skip to Takeoff" can also crash the plane.
- Some airports spawn you midair or slam the plane on the ground.
- Autopilot struggles at > 2x Sim Rate.
- ATC may glitch, reassign runways mid-flight, or stop responding.

#### Tips:

- Keep a financial buffer and/or a backup aircraft.
- Test unfamiliar airports in **Employee Mode** first.
- Despite bugs, rapid missions that use Skip to Takeoff, Skip to Descent, and Skip to Parking
  with Cruise altitude set at 7000 feet earn me about 10 million credits every 30 minutes on
  average (some runs are faster, some can be slower due to ATC bugs and rerouting).
- Top insurance on the 737 using this method costs you very little.

# **Missions: Selecting**

Choosing the right missions and planning effectively improves your income and progression in **MSFS 2024 Career Mode**. Use filters, evaluate mission risks and rewards, and match the mission to your aircraft and capabilities.

# **Using Mission Filters Effectively**

The mission map interface provides some minimal filtering, but unfortunately, no sorting:

#### Specialization Filter:

Quickly isolate missions matching your unlocked specializations. Further refine searches using the text input to quickly locate desired mission types.

#### • Aircraft Model Filter:

Easily find missions specifically tailored to aircraft you currently own or prefer flying. Only filters the missions however, and not the aircraft on the map.

#### Difficulty Filter:

Not all that useful but can use it to hide all missions and more easily find all your aircraft.

In addition to this, you can zoom down to an individual airport and select 'Mission list' on that airport – that can show missions that exist that aren't showing up on the map view. Especially important for **Charter Service - VIP** and **Passenger - Airliner** mission types.



# **Checking Departure/Arrival Runway Lengths and Types**

Before accepting a mission check the EFB:

#### Verify Runway Length:

Ensure runways at both departure and destination airports are sufficient for your piloting skill and selected aircraft, particularly critical for jets and heavier turboprops.

#### Runway Surface Type:

Check runway type (asphalt, concrete, dirt, grass, water) to avoid selecting unsuitable landing surfaces for your aircraft. Avoid missions involving water landings unless specifically equipped for such operations. Runways that end in W indicate that it is a water runway.

Earlier on it also doesn't hurt to use the Cam mode to *fly* down and view the runways, look for obstructions (usually massive trees). Once you get into well-known airports these become less of an issue.

### **Mission Difficulty Levels and Types**

The star ratings unfortunately don't mean what they really should. Most of the 1-star and 2-star missions are the lower-level Specialization types (which doesn't mean they aren't nearly impossible to land because the runway is 300 feet long but is still a 1-star mission). Some specializations span a couple of different difficulty levels.

Here are the Specialization and Star Difficulty associations:

- 5-Star Difficulty
  - Aerial Firefighting Extended Attack
  - Agricultural Aviation
- 4-Star Difficulty
  - Aerial Construction
  - Medevac
  - Cargo Transport Medium
  - o Passenger Transport Airline
  - Search & Rescue
- 3-Star Difficulty
  - o Charter Service VIP
  - Aerial Advertising
  - Medevac
  - Cargo Transport Medium
  - Passenger Transport Airline
  - Search & Rescue
- 2-Star Difficulty
  - Ferry Flight
  - Skydive Aviation
  - Charter Service Private
  - o Charter Service VIP
  - Aerial Advertising
  - Medevac
  - Cargo Transport Light
  - Cargo Transport Medium
  - Passenger Transport Rotorcraft
  - Passenger Transport Airline
  - Search & Rescue

- 1-Star Difficulty
  - First Flight
  - o Ferry Flight
  - Flightseeing
  - Skydive Aviation
  - o Charter Service Private
  - o Cargo Transport Light
  - o Passenger Transport Rotorcraft
  - Search & Rescue

In **Freelancer Mode** always check the transfer cost for the plane you wish to fly the mission with also. Sometimes that can eat millions of Credits if you aren't careful.

# **Mission Preparation and Procedures**

Proper mission preparation ensures smoother flights, fewer failures, and more efficient operations.

## **Pre-flight Preparations**

### Finding your airplane

As you get more aircraft it will become difficult to find them on the map so you know where to look for missions. To find a specific aircraft go into the Companies menu, All companies, select the company owning the aircraft you want to find, click on the aircraft in your Aircraft list, select the Manage Aircraft menu option. It will have the location and flight hours for that aircraft in the upper left corner, as shown here we can go to LIPM to find our Cargo PC-12. On the Mission Map you can enter LIPM in the search bar (upper left), and then click the airport in the search result list and the map will swing over to that airport.



### Electronic Flight Bag (EFB) Usage

Use the EFB in the mission map view before starting any mission:

- Set your desired Cruise Altitude and choose either VFR or IFR as appropriate. (Do not attempt VFR for Passenger Transport missions.)
- Adjust **Departure** and **Arrival** procedures if needed.
- Select your preferred Approach Type. Choose ILS or RNAV when available; use VOR, NDB, or Visual approaches as backups.
- Avoid editing enroute waypoints. Deviating too far from the assigned path can cause mission failure.
- Always click Send to ATC to file your flight plan. This ensures correct ATC handling and prevents unrealistic altitude assignments (e.g., FL450 in a Cessna 172).

#### Cruise Altitude Guidelines

Set realistic altitudes based on aircraft performance:

- **PC-12**: Use **FL180** or below to avoid the pressurization bug, leading to mission failure. Can try the flightsim.to patch.
- **Jets** (**CJ4**, **PC-24**, **737**): Select altitudes at or above **FL290** for fuel-efficient cruise. Match altitude with mission length and aircraft capabilities.

### **Fuel Management**

Fuel planning differs between Employee Mode and Freelancer Mode.

- **Employee Mode**: Aircraft starts with a mission assigned fuel amount. You can add more fuel without cost and I recommend adding some free buffer.
- **Freelancer Mode**: Fuel level carries over from mission to mission. Check fuel levels before each flight and top off as needed. For tighter margins, use **SimBrief** for fuel planning and consider adding a 10–15% buffer.
- The **PC-24** has a bug where it burns twice the fuel it should, bring extra or use the "Add Fuel Quantity" work-around for now.
- In Sim Update 2 skipping phases does not consume any fuel, that is changing in Sim Update 3 which is coming soon at that point you will require sufficient fuel to be able to Skip and it will consume some computed amount of fuel when you do.

### Binding "Add Fuel Quantity"

For now, you can manually add fuel mid-flight, but this will probably go away at some point:

- Bind "Add Fuel Quantity" to a key combination (e.g., Ctrl + Alt + Shift + F).
- Be aware there are two similar bindings—verify that your chosen one works.
- **Do not use** "Refuel and Repair," as it will end your mission with an error.

### **Fast Travel**

Fast Travel helps unlock new mission markets and expand your operational area.

- In the mission map, zoom in close to view circular icons for airports, heliports, and seaports.
- Click an icon to select Fast Travel and pay a small fee based on distance.
- Fast Travel only moves your **player icon**, not your aircraft.
- Avoid excessive Fast Travel to conserve credits early on.

# **Gameplay Mechanics & Strategies**

The scoring and payout systems in **Career Mode** are only partially understood, particularly in areas like **Passenger Satisfaction** and **Airline Procedures**. However, some patterns are more clear.

The job listing displays the maximum possible payout excluding any **Bad Weather** bonus. This includes **Base Income**, **No-Skip Bonus**, and **Reputation Bonus**. Your **Reputation Bonus** is calculated from your reputation *at the start* of the mission, not when you complete it. The bonus is a percentage of the actual **Base Income** and **No-Skip Bonus** you earn, not the full listed job amount.

If a mission offers 100,000 credits, approximately 90,000 of that comes from **Base Income** and **No-Skip Bonus**, while up to 10,000 is available as a **Reputation Bonus** (e.g., 10% for **A-tier**, 20% for **S-tier**). If you only earn 50,000 in base and bonus payouts, your **A-tier** reputation would yield a 5,000 credit bonus. These percentages may vary by mission type.

### **Scoring System**

- Base Income: Core mission payout, partially based on performance
- **Reputation Bonus**: Calculated as a percentage of earned payout depending on your tier (e.g., 10% for **A-tier**, 20% for **S-tier**).
- No-Skip Bonus: Awarded for completing all flight phases without using skips. Most of this
  bonus comes from avoiding "Skip to Descent." Skipping taxi, takeoff, or parking phases has
  minimal effect. Sim Rate increases do not reduce this bonus.

### **Factors Affecting Payout**

Not complete but here are some:

- ATC compliance, including proper radio use and timely acknowledgments.
- Adherence to aircraft speed limits and correct gear/flap operation.
- Unclear factors like Passenger Satisfaction and Airline Procedures may also contribute, but remain inconsistent. Smooth flying, timely passenger communications, proper lighting and other procedures may factor in.

Tips for Maximizing Income and Reputation

- File flight plans via the EFB to avoid penalties.
- Use smooth, controlled taxi speeds and follow ATC instructions closely.
- Be aware that occasional scoring penalties may occur due to bugs, even with clean performance.

- Passenger missions with the Boeing 737 offer the highest payouts (typically 10+ million).
- High-profit routes are found largely between Eastern United States and Western Europe although it's too difficult to try to find all of them here are some I have flown successfully:
  - EDDF to FNLU
  - o EGCC to KATL
  - o **EGLL to HAAB**
  - o EGLL to KATL
  - EGLL to KCLT
  - EHAM to HTKJ
  - o **EKCH to KEWR**
  - **EKCH to KIAD**
  - FZQA to HECA
  - KATL to EGLL
  - KCLT to LEMD
  - KCLT to LFPG
  - o KIAD to EKCH
  - KJFK to LIPZ
  - KJFK to LKPR
  - KMIA to LPPT
  - KSDF to EGSS
  - LEMD to KIAD
  - LEMD to KPHL
  - LEMD to TAPA
  - LFPG to KMSP
- Be cautious of bugs; consider testing new airports first in Employee mode.

# Zen and the Art of Aircraft Maintenance

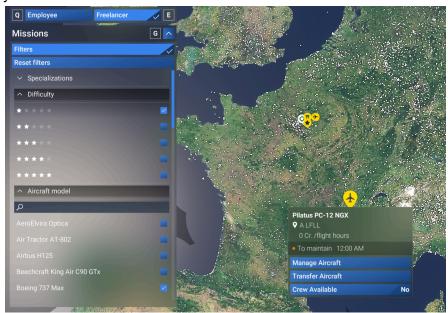
In **Freelancer Mode**, aircraft maintenance is essential. If you delay required checks, your planes may suffer mission failures or become unflyable. If you've enabled **Crew** on an aircraft, expect additional wear and tear.

# **Regular Maintenance Checks**

- **Required Maintenance**: These are scheduled and must be completed to keep the aircraft operational. You'll get warnings on aircraft when they're due, every 25 hours of flight.
- Recommended Checks: Even if not required, inspect your aircraft after any hard landings or if
  you receive any in-flight damage or failure notices.

## **Repairing Aircraft**

- Repair really means Replace, you pay full price no matter how worn the part is.
- Repair costs vary by aircraft part. High wear items are usually less expensive.
- Drilling down into details and only repairing what is needed can save you money because it can replace parts early that don't really need it yet.
- Keep some spare Credits available to cover unexpected repairs.
- You can get to the Manage Aircraft menu from the Mission map screen also, to make it easier you can select a mix of mission filters that hide all or most of the missions



Always buy the Top insurance or have enough spare planes or money to self-insure. Yes, it's expensive but game bugs are common.

# **Gameplay Features**

Career Mode includes several advanced systems that enhance gameplay and increase efficiency when used correctly.

### **Passive Income**

- Set **Crew = On** for aircraft you own to earn additional "passive" income while you are flying other Employee or Freelancer missions (but not time over in Free Flight).
- It does not earn anything when you aren't flying.
- Passive earnings depend on the aircraft and company (for example, a Cessna 172 will earn different amounts in Flightseeing company from a Cargo company, but the differences are not significant).
- Insurance is not charged on the planes that are earning passively, you only pay for insurance on the plane you are flying.
- Not all aircraft earn well this way—you may want to monitor performance and disable crew on low-profit aircraft with high maintenance costs. See the <u>Google spreadsheet</u> with earnings and repair cost data. The 737 seems to be the worst investment for Passive income but it seems to still earn a profit overall.

### **Co-Pilot Communications**

The co-pilot doesn't do much actively but will make some automated callouts such as:

- V1 Rotate
- o Passing 10,000 feet
- Check altimeter setting above FL180
- Gear down
- Flaps overspeed

These are informational only. You are still responsible for systems, ATC, and procedures.

## Planes from Deluxe or Premium packages

NAME	PACKAGE
Beechcraft King Air C90 GTx	PREMIUM
Boeing 787-10 Dreamliner	PREMIUM
Boeing B747-400 LCF (Dreamlifter)	PREMIUM
Boeing CH-47D Chinook	PREMIUM
Cessna 172 Skyhawk (Basic)	DELUXE
Cessna C408 SkyCourier	DELUXE
Cirrus SR22T	PREMIUM

Diamond Aircraft DA40 TDI	DELUXE
Pilatus PC-24	PREMIUM
Pipistrel Virus SW121	PREMIUM
Saab 340	PREMIUM
Textron Aviation Beechcraft Baron G58	DELUXE
Zlin Aviation Norden	PREMIUM
Zlin Aviation Shock Ultra	PREMIUM

### **Notes On Various Missions/Aircraft**

### Skipping to Taxi in Helicopters

• The Collective will often start fully raised, so even if you are going to skip, hop into the helicopter and lower the collective. Then you can Skip to Taxi more safely.

### Crashing On Takeoff - Do Not Skip Cutscenes

Seems to be mostly related to leaving a door or window open. Don't skip cutscenes, as that can
cause this. Leaving and reentering the aircraft can APPEAR to have closed the door but not
actually closed the door.

### Medevac

 Make sure you file an IFR flight plan and, if needed, manually file that with ATC once airborne (if departing from non-Towered airports). If the mission seems to not be proceeding after takeoff this could be the issue.

#### Autoland on the 737

- The 737 can autoland under the right conditions:
  - ILS runway with working glideslope
  - Stable approach with gear down, flaps set
  - FLARE is armed on the PFD
- Reduce throttle gradually starting at 30 feet AGL to avoid hard landings
- Autoland may fail in gusty conditions or at misaligned airports. Monitor closely

#### ES-30 Notes

- Will instantly crash on spawn, do not recommend
- Set takeoff trim to 20-30 (Skip will set it to 30)
- LV EXT may give you unlimited battery power (verify in case it changes)
- Go easy on the throttle, be careful about overspeed and overtorque

- Full reverse thrust can cause fatal tail strike, use with caution
- Autobrake works even though it says INOP

### King Air 350i Notes

- Airspeed Indicator is INOP in SU2 (is fixed in SU3 beta)
- Yaw Dampener is INOP
- Has no engine instruments and will overtorque easily
- Costs more than PC-24 for less range and speed

### Sim Rate

- Use Sim Rate Increase and Sim Rate Decrease bindings to speed up or slow down time. This
  can greatly speed up longer missions if you are inclined to do so.
- Available rates: ¼x, ½x, 1x (normal), 2x, 4x, 8x, 16x.
- Higher Sim Rate multipliers can be dangerous.
- Sim rate affects ATC and control input timing. Use ½x when you are going to Skip to Descent or when you have little time to avoid missing key radio communications (on final after Skip to Descent).
- The EFB stopwatch helps estimate current sim rate, the game doesn't tell you what it is at.

# **Understanding Airspeeds**

- IAS (Indicated Airspeed): Used for aircraft control and limits. Directly affected by altitude and air density.
- TAS (True Airspeed): Actual speed through the air, used for flight planning.
- Ground Speed: TAS plus wind effects. Determines arrival time.

Use IAS for aircraft handling, TAS for planning (in combination with wind data), and Ground Speed to estimate time over the ground.

The game cares about Ground Speed when you are taxiing, don't exceed about 22 knots while on a taxi way. Under 10,000 feet you need to maintain under 250 knots IAS, because of wind gusts you usually want to stay closer to 240.

### **Dirt and Wear Effects**

Aircraft accumulate visual wear and dirt over time. These effects are (mostly?) cosmetic and vary by aircraft:

- Faded Paint I could not detect any effect of this one
- Regular Dirt Bug splatter on windows and leading edges
- Leaks Stains that come out of various seams and rivets, does not wash off
- Runway Smudges and grime on undercarriage and lower fuselage from paved runways
- Mud Clumps of dirt on lower surfaces such as from rough-field operations
- Dust Fine coating over surfaces, most visible on GA aircraft like the C172

Developer Mode has a control where you can set these for your current aircraft and see the effects.

### **Paint & Cosmetic**

Repainting currently does nothing and it doesn't affect passenger satisfaction in my testing. In the future it might allow you to select alternative Livery but it currently does not.

## **Headquarters**

Your HQ will upgrade itself over time, I think it has to do with your Level (e.g., you get an office at level 3) and/or which aircraft you own, but I'm not certain. Just level up and buy bigger planes and you'll get the Executive Suite eventually (might require owning a 737).

### **Dealing with Mission Stuck States**

Mission progression can get stuck due to bugs.

If the option is available try to talk to ATC, request a different arrival or runway. If there is a mission objective try to do it, even if you have to take back off.

Sometimes the mission just won't complete and you have to Abort it and try another one.

# Can't Buy Company/Access Missions

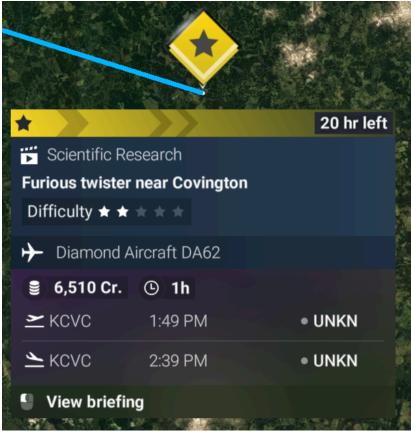
There are several things that all need to be lined up correctly.

- To buy into a company you must have the required <u>Specialization</u>, PLUS sufficient funds for the <u>Company</u>, PLUS sufficient funds for your first Aircraft in that company.
- Check that all prerequisites are met on the Specialization you need.
- Once the Specialization prerequisites are met, look for the <u>Golden Mission</u> and complete it, if you haven't.
- Once you buy the company you need to buy a compatible aircraft for that specific kind of
  mission for those missions to show up on your map (e.g., you cannot do Charter Service VIP
  missions in a Vision Jet G2).

# **Special Missions**

I do not know what causes these to appear, possibly reputation related. This is not a complete list but are some of the missions I have seen.

```
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | KSFO-KLAX | Los Angeles
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | CYYZ-EGNR | Chester
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | KBOS-EGGP | Liverpool
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | DTTA-EGNR | Chester
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | DTNH-EGNR | Chester
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | DERK-EGNR | Chester
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | KIAD-KMYF | San Diego
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | KSLC-KSAN | San Diego
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | KAUS-MMTJ | Tijuana
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | PHNL-MMTJ | Tijuana
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | KBHM-EGLL | Hounslow
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | KCLT-EGLL | Hounslow
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | KRDU-EGLL | Hounslow
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | KBOS-EGLL | Hounslow
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | HLGD-EGLL | Hounslow
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | DTNH-EGLL | Hounslow
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | DTTA-EGLL | Hounslow
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | LEBL-EGLL | Hounslow
Charter Service - VIP Airliner | 737 MAX 8 | LEMD-EGLL | Hounslow
Scientific Research | C208B | KPRC-KPRC | Tornado vortex over Arizona
Scientific Research | DA62 | KCVC-KCVC | Furious twister near Covington
```



#### **Unknown Missions**

Military Plane / Scientific Base / KMGE-KXTA "expected ASAP by the scientific team stationed near Nevada"

Unknown / EGTC→LFML / maybe some heavy aircraft Aerospace / KATL-KXMR / Cape Canaveral Afs Skid Strip Nordfriesland, US, EDXJ

### Starting Process Quick Reference

- 1. Choose your Home airport
- 2. Fly the introductory flight
- 3. Get your Private Pilots License (PPL)
- 4. Fly Ferry Flight Golden Mission from your Home airport
- 5. Fly a couple of Ferry Flights (no pay yet!)
- 6. Get your Commercial Pilots License (CPL), fly missions for pay and to level up
- 7. Level 3 unlocks Ferry Flight, Fly the Golden Mission out of Germany
- 8. Level 5 unlocks Flightseeing, Fly the Golden Mission out of Venice, Italy
- 9. Advise against buying the Flightseeing company, recommend to save for Cargo Transport
- 10. Level 8 unlocks Skydive Aviation, Fly the Golden Mission out of Spain (airport LEAP)
- 11. Level 10 unlocks Cargo Transport Light, Fly the Golden Mission out of Madagascar
- 12. When you have 35,950 Cr Purchase your Cargo Company for 10,000 Cr and your first plane for 25,950 Cr (or can try to save up for Charter Service if you prefer).

## **Bugs**

Please Help to Vote Up major bug reports on the forum if you can, for example:

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/career-passenger-transport-airline-mission-failures-on-arrivals-landings/734223

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/pc12-pressurization-oxygen-system-broken/681568/44

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/career-atc-is-buggy-and-will-get-stuck/714072

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/entering-taxiway-penalty-at-landing-in-career-su2/722355

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/737-passenger-career-youve-left-the-parking-stand-before-completing-ground-handling-procedures/688147

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/skipping-to-shutdown-crashes-the-plane/733151

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/catastrophic-skip-to-descent/687225/30

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/career-missions-start-with-aviator-performance-g-force-exceeded/70 0456

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/passenger-mission-737-max-crashes-at-start/703293

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/catastrophic-skip-to-descent/687225

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/heart-es30-is-unplayable-in-career/675718

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/atc-career-mode/728787

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/plane-crashes-at-beginning-of-mission-or-loads-me-in-a-building/67 4252

 $\underline{https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/career-mode-mission-failure-straying-too-far-from-flight-plan/678721}$ 

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/saab-340-impossible-for-missions/706043

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/medvac-missions-pan-pan-requests-dont-redirect-you-to-closest-airp

### ort/721712

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/pilatus-pc24-and-alt-n-function-problems-since-su2/722291

# Minor Bugs

https://forums.flightsimulator.com/t/pc-12-aviator-penalty-for-no-landing-lights-in-career/694880