

## Google releases free 'Google Earth' flight simulator

18th June 2026



Google has announced it will make its flight simulator available to the public. The simulator has existed since 2007, but has only been on the desktop version of Google Earth. People had to download the program and install it on their desktop.

The new version will be browser-based. Anyone can now access the flight simulator on a web browser, without having to download or install anything. On its website, Google said: "The flight simulator is designed for casual exploration rather than high-fidelity aerodynamic training." You will be able to fly all over the world using Google's map technology. Google said users may experience issues "when flying near ground level in regions below sea level".

To use the flight simulator, you will have to open the Google Earth website and click on the "Explore Earth" button in the top right corner. This will take you to a page showing a picture of Earth set against the black of space. You can then choose where in the world you want to fly to, from, or around by typing your desired location in the search bar. To start flying, you need to click on "Tools" in the menu bar and then select "Flight simulator" from the drop-down menu. The controls are shown on Google's developer website. CNET.com wrote: "Google Earth's flight simulator has access to the entire Google Earth database, so you can fly to almost anywhere on Earth and check out various landmarks."

Sources: [cnet.com](http://cnet.com) / [theverge.com](http://theverge.com) / [developers.google.com](http://developers.google.com)

## Writing

Google Earth should become part of all geography lessons at school. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

Google / Earth / flight simulators / downloads / desktop / web browser / maps / flying / explore / the black of space / locations / drop-down menus / databases / landmarks

## True / False

- 1) Google's flight simulators first came out in 2007. T / F
- 2) People will need to download an app to play the new flight simulator. T / F
- 3) Google said the simulator is more for fun than serious flight training. T / F
- 4) Google said the simulator works best when flying near ground level. T / F
- 5) You don't have to go open Google Earth to access the simulator. T / F
- 6) When have to click a location in a search bar on the simulator page. T / F
- 7) You can find the simulator controls on Google's developer site. T / F
- 8) The simulator gives you access to just 80% of Google Earth's database. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                       |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 1. <b>available</b>   | a. trips         |
| 2. <b>version</b>     | b. whole         |
| 3. <b>install</b>     | c. difficulties  |
| 4. <b>exploration</b> | d. put           |
| 5. <b>issues</b>      | e. different     |
| 6. <b>showing</b>     | f. ready for use |
| 7. <b>access</b>      | g. choose        |
| 8. <b>select</b>      | h. entry         |
| 9. <b>entire</b>      | i. edition       |
| 10. <b>various</b>    | j. displaying    |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you think when you see a picture of Earth?
- c) What is your most desired location around the world?
- d) What do you think is in the black of space?
- e) What are your experiences of flying in airplanes?
- f) What are your favourite landmarks?
- g) How difficult is it to be a pilot?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Google?

## Phrase Match

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. make its flight simulator                   | a. it on their desktop     |
| 2. The simulator has existed                   | b. Google Earth database   |
| 3. download the program and install            | c. sea level               |
| 4. The flight simulator is designed for casual | d. in the menu bar         |
| 5. in regions below                            | e. available to the public |
| 6. typing your desired location in the         | f. exploration             |
| 7. you need to click on "Tools"                | g. landmarks               |
| 8. select "Flight simulator" from the drop-    | h. since 2007              |
| 9. flight simulator has access to the entire   | i. search bar              |
| 10. check out various                          | j. down menu               |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you know about flight simulators?
- What apps are on your desktop and phone?
- Will you be trying Google's flight simulator?
- What do you know about Google Earth?
- How often do you use Google Maps?
- Where would you fly to on the flight simulator?
- Would you like to be an airline pilot?
- What do you think of flying?

## Spelling

- on the desktop rosnvei
- download the program and aintlls it
- sacesc the flight simulator on a web browser
- designed for caalsu exploration
- users may epnxeeiecr issues
- in rginose below sea level
- click on the "Explore Earth" botunt
- in the top right croenr
- typing your desired oatnoilc
- in the rscahe bar
- the teneri Google Earth database
- check out uarsoiv landmarks

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. i	3. d	4. a	5. c
6. j	7. h	8. g	9. b	10. e

## Comprehension Questions

Listen to / read the news article. Answer these questions. (Answers are on p. 27 of the 27-page PDF.)

1.	Who will Google make its flight simulator available to?
2.	When did the flight simulator first come out?
3.	What will we need to play the flight simulator?
4.	What did Google say the flight simulator was designed for?
5.	What might you experience when flying near very low below sea level?
6.	What website do you have to access first to play the flight simulator?
7.	What will people see a picture of before they reach the flight simulator?
8.	In which option on the menu bar can people find a drop-down menu?
9.	Where can people get the controls for flight simulator?
10.	What variety of things does the article say people can check out?

## Speaking – Simulators

Rank these with your partner. Put the best simulators at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| • Flight simulators   | • Surgery simulators  |
| • Racing simulators   | • Romance simulators  |
| • Space simulators    | • English simulators  |
| • Military simulators | • Policing simulators |

### Answers – True False

1	T	2	F	3	T	4	F	5	F	6	F	7	T	8	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.