



MetroAir Virtual Airlines

FLIGHT PLAN GUIDE V 1.0



Photo by Mike Adamo

NOT FOR REAL WORLD AVIATION

GETTING STARTED

In this short guide you will learn how to file a flight plan via the VATSIM website and by using the two pilot clients Squawkbox and FSInn. You will also find out some of the various websites and tools that will help you generate an appropriate route for your flight. You should always file a flight plan when flying IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) whether or not a controller is present. However a flight plan is not necessary when flying VFR (Visual Flight Rules) although any active ATC controller will appreciate it.

FILING A FLIGHT PLAN

Regardless of the method you choose to enter your flight plan, it is important to enter as much detail as possible. The more information provided the better service that ATC can provide you. It is important to remember that you should only file a flight plan that you understand how to fly.

Here are some examples of helpful remarks / comments that can be added to your flight plan:

- MetroAir, and a link to the MetroAir website – This helps indicate to the controller what the airline's name is to better correlate to the callsign, and provides information to other pilots about our VA as well.
- If you're new to VATSIM, indicating you're a "NEWBIE" in the plan is helpful to controllers so they know you may need additional assistance.
- If you have all the charts available for your flight, indicating so with "Charts on Board", or "Have Charts" can be helpful to controllers as well.

USING THE VATSIM WEBSITE

The VATSIM website has a tool in which you can file a flight plan for up to two hours before your planned departure. This form can be found here <http://www.vatsim.net/fp/>.

You need to fill out all the boxes below with as much detail as possible.

		<input type="button" value="Lookup Plan"/>		<input type="button" value="File Flight Plan"/>		
		<input type="button" value="Cancel Plan"/>		<input type="button" value="Clear Form"/>		
1. TYPE	2. CALLSIGN	3. AIRCRAFT TYPE/ SPECIAL EQUIPMENT	4. TRUE AIRSPEED (KTS)	5. DEPARTURE POINT	6. DEPARTURE TIME PROPOSED (Z)	7. CRUISING ALTITUDE
<input type="radio"/> VFR <input checked="" type="radio"/> IFR	<input type="text" value="MET123"/>	<input type="text" value="A319"/>	<input type="text" value="470"/>	<input type="text" value="KMCI"/>	<input type="text" value="1500"/>	<input type="text" value="36000"/>
8. ROUTE OF FLIGHT						
<input type="text" value="ROYAL3 JTHRO JRK MOTIF3"/>						
9. DESTINATION	10. EST TIME ENROUTE HOURS / MINUTES	11a. VOICE CAPABILITIES	11. REMARKS (optional)			
<input type="text" value="KMDW"/>	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="30"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Full Voice <input type="radio"/> Receive Only <input type="radio"/> Text Only	<input type="text" value="METROAIR / NEWBIE
WWW.METROAIRVIRTUAL.COM"/>			
12. FUEL ON BOARD HOURS MINUTES	13. ALTERNATE AIRPORT (optional)	14. PILOT'S NAME & AIRCRAFT HOME BASE	15. VATSIM ID	16. VATSIM PASSWORD		
<input type="text" value="2"/> <input type="text" value="15"/>	<input type="text" value="KORD"/>	<input type="text" value="BOB HOPE"/>	<input type="text" value="1234567"/>	<input type="text" value="*****"/>		

It is important to note that any flight plan you file here will automatically be associated with you when you connect to the VATSIM network. You will not need to file your flight plan again when you connect with your pilot client. However, you should use the File Flight Plan function in your pilot client before you pushback to set your aircraft type correctly so that others can see it.

FILING VIA SQUAWKBOX

Below is an example of the Flight Plan function for those pilots using Squawkbox. As with the previous example you need to fill in all the boxes as best you can.

FILING VIA FSINN

Below is the Flight Plan function within the FSInn pilot client. Once again you should try to fill in as much information as you can.

Departure Time Estimated	2100	
Departure Time Actual	0000	
Estimated Time Enroute	0130	Zulu Time (GMT)
Fuel on board	0200	

FINDING AN APPROPRIATE FLIGHT PLAN

All pilots that fly on VATSIM on an IFR flight must provide a flight plan. In most cases Direct GPS or the Microsoft Flight Simulator generated routes are not appropriate. There are several options available to you.

1. Use a flight plan database for approved routes
2. Use a third party program that can generate accurate routes, such as FSBuild, FSNavigator, etc. Most of these programs are payware and require purchasing up to date navigation data to keep them current as well.
3. If you feel confident enough you can use the default Microsoft Flight Simulator flight planner to construct an accurate route.

The easiest option is the first to pull an existing route that others have used previously. Below is a list of available resources for finding existing routes that others have used:

- SimRoutes: <http://simroutes.com>
- FlightAware: <http://flightaware.com/statistics/ifr-route/>
- Route Finder: <http://rfinder.asalink.net/free/>
- vRoute: <http://www.vroute.net/content/view/79/52/>
- Vataware: <http://vataware.com/>
- MetroAir's bid page: <http://www.metroairvirtual.com/schedule.php>