

Objective:

The objective for today's flight is a simple exchange pilot familiarization flight in the F-16C/Block 40/42 covering basic maneuvers.

Planning/preflight:

So let us dive right in. Our flight starts out today with an abbreviated look at the briefing and planning screens. The power and information provided by the Falcon 4.0/SP3 (hereafter referred to simply as F4) screens is overwhelming. It is the starting point for every mission and it has a wealth of information critical to your mission success. Since I am merely in the training phase I will gloss over most of the details regarding these screens, but we will revisit them in detail once campaign mission planning becomes necessary.

You can see in this screen I have a map depicting my route for today. If I wanted to I could manipulate the waypoints at will, changing speeds, altitudes, etc.. By clicking on the map I can also pull up various targets in the entire theater for recon imagery. Additionally the target list (in this case the Pusan textile mill) shows both the condition and value the target holds in the grand scheme of the campaign. I'm sure this will be important in later target planning during the campaign. The recon window shows a view of the target area that you can pan, zoom and tilt to give you an excellent idea of what your sight picture should look like on your attack run.



Debrief:

So here she is. The F-16 Fighting Falcon. The cockpit is dominated by the Integrated Control Panel (ICP) in the center (similar to the UFC in the F-15) flanked by 2 multi-function displays (MFD) on either side. Below the ICP are analog airspeed, altitude and navigation instruments. Since this is merely a familiarization flight we'll keep the cockpit switchology to a minimum and paint with broad strokes.



Looking out of cockpit over my left shoulder the green pastures of South Korea unroll off into the distance:



Looking out front through the 3D pit you can see my flight path appears on the right MFD in the Horizontal Situation Display (HSD) mode while the left MFD displays my air-to-air radar data. Though you can't read it in the HUD due to re-sizing the screen shots we are doing 550 knots (Mach .95) at an altitude of 7500 feet:



Looking down to the right sub-panel the fuel display totalizer shows 6300 lbs of fuel remaining. The fuel remaining and fuel flow counter are two of the most important gauges in ANY aircraft:



Reaching one of the turns points I put some G on the aircraft. Without external stores the F-16 is a very spry performer with very rapid roll rates and crisp roll authority:



Glancing down into the head-down pit view zooms in a bit further on the MFDs and analog flight instruments:



Passing over an airfield:



Switching to the Air-To-Ground radar mode brings up the A2G radar in the left MFD. Curious about the dot well offshore I slew the radar cursors over the blip and lock the area which puts a yellow triangle on my right MFD display:



I search through the cockpit trying to find out how to get steering data on the HUD for my designated ground target, but am unable to find out how to switch from waypoint NAV steering to target steering. Instead I just point my nose at the target and fly at it. Eventually an island comes into site and the reflected radar blip proves to be a cluster of large buildings:



Glancing again down at the right sub-panel I see my fuel is down to 3400 lbs so I climb up to a more fuel efficient altitude for the flight back to base:





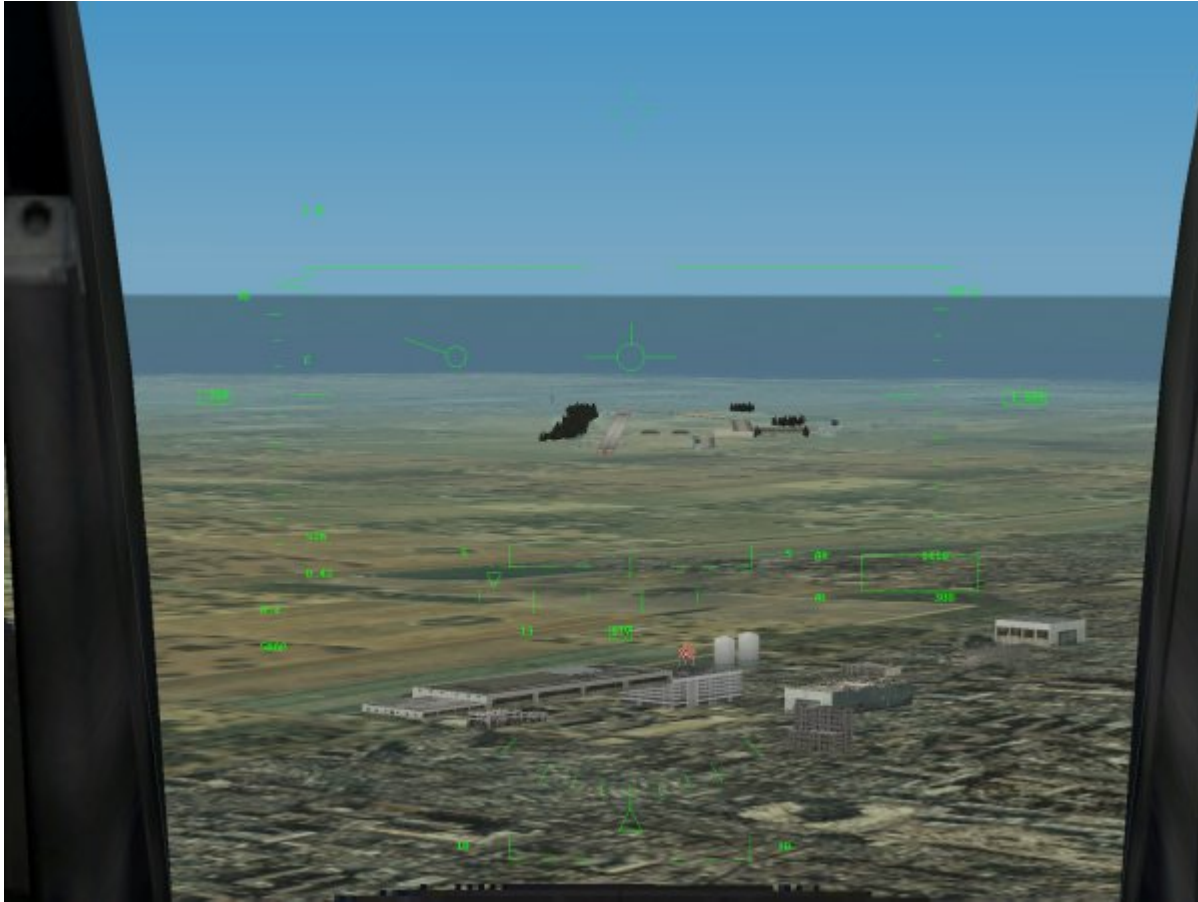
Calling the tower the controller gives me instructions to descend to 2500 feet, slow to 220 knots and fly a 230 heading, vectors for runway 14. I thumb out the speed brakes and nose over to comply:



Stabilized on the altitude, airspeed and heading the controller gives me the final heading to intercept the runway centerline:



Peering through the HUD in the zoom view I see the runway in the distance:



The tower clears me to land and I throw out my gear and turn on my landing lights:



Using the AOA indexer and the velocity vector on the HUD makes for easy approaches in the F-16, much like the F-18:



Crossing the threshold:



