

A Brief History of GPS in Aviation

GPS, or Global Positioning System, is a system that helps an individual determine where he is located as well as where other things are located. GPS has become incredibly popular over the years with even more mobile devices available. However, GPS in aviation has been around longer. As long ago as 1978 GPS was being experimented with and a satellite was sent into space to test the technology. That has been almost 30 years ago and today GPS is in many people's cars! Nevertheless, aviation was one of the first industries to become involved with GPS because location and speed are very important in the field of aviation.

The United States Department of Defense handles GPS, but allows the public to use it for free. The GPS in an airplane basically has a map of the route from the original location to the destination. Information is programmed into the GPS and it helps for autopilot and things of that nature. It also tells the pilot where they are headed, how far away they are from the destination, as well as the height of the plane. GPS is invaluable to pilots and it is very helpful.

One popular option is the Garmin aviation GPS. This GPS system is designed specifically for the use in aircraft. Not all GPS systems will work in an aircraft like they would in a car, so buying a specialized aircraft GPS is important. An aviation headset is still important even with the use of the GPS because you will need to communicate with the tower not to mention you will need to protect your hearing.

Of course, GPS has been around since the '70s, but it has not been fully operational in aircrafts that long. It was not until the mid 1990s that GPS became fully functional with 24 satellites and aviation accepted the new technology and put it to work. Since the mid 1990s the GPS system has become incredibly important for pilots and all airplanes are now outfitted with this device. It helps pilots stay on course and if something happens the system lets them know how to get back on the right path. GPS isn't just important for pilots, but also for every day drivers. And, although GPS has been around for quite some time it is just gaining popularity and understanding with the general public.