



by  
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The earliest aircraft takeoff and landing sites were grassy fields. A slight improvement was the dirt-only field, which eliminated the drag from grass. However, these functioned well only in dry conditions. Later, concrete surfaces would allow landings regardless of weather conditions.

The title of "world's oldest airport" is disputed. College Park Airport in Maryland, established in 1909 by Wilbur Wright, is generally agreed to be the world's oldest continuously operating airfield, although it serves only general aviation traffic.

Beijing Nanyuan Airport in China, which was built to accommodate planes in 1904, and airships in 1907, opened in 1910. It was in operation until September 2019. Pearson Field Airport in Vancouver, Washington, was built to accommodate planes in 1905 and airships in 1911, and is still in use as of March 2021.

Hamburg Airport opened in January 1911, making it the oldest commercial airport in the world which is still in operation. Bremen Airport opened in 1913 and remains in .

Following the war, some of the military airfields added civil facilities for handling passenger traffic. One of the earliest such fields was Le Bourget Airport at Le Bourget, near Paris. The first airport to operate

scheduled international commercial services was Hounslow Heath Aerodrome in August 1919, but it was closed and supplanted by Croydon Airport in March 1920. In 1922, the first permanent airport and commercial terminal solely for commercial aviation was opened at Flughafen Devau near what was then Königsberg, East Prussia. The airports of this era used a paved "apron", which permitted night flying as well as landing heavier aircraft.

The first lighting used on an airport was during the latter part of the 1920s; in the 1930s approach lighting came into use. These indicated the proper direction and angle of descent. The colors and flash intervals of these lights became standardized under the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

After World War II, airport design became more sophisticated. Passenger buildings were being grouped together in an island, with runways arranged in groups about the terminal. This arrangement permitted expansion of the facilities. But it also meant that passengers had to travel further to reach their planes.

An improvement in the landing field was the introduction of grooves in the concrete surface. These run perpendicular to the direction of the landing aircraft and serve to draw off excess rainwater that could build up in front of the plane's wheels.

Airport construction boomed during the 1960s with the increase in jet aircraft traffic. Runways were extended out to 9,800 ft. The fields were constructed out of reinforced concrete. The early 1960s also saw the introduction of jet bridge systems to modern airport terminals, an innovation which eliminated outdoor passenger boarding. These systems became commonplace in the United States by the 1970s. [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Airport#History\\_and\\_development](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Airport#History_and_development)]

1. What's the busiest airport in the world? Going by most passengers per year, that title would go to Chicago's O'Hare, which also boasts the most take-offs and landings. When it comes to international travelers, Dubai takes the cake. Meanwhile, Hong Kong International Airport handles the most cargo traffic annually.
2. The world's tallest air traffic control tower is Thailand's New Bangkok International Airport. At 434 feet, it's as tall as a 40-story skyscraper.
3. King Fahd International Airport in Dammam, Saudi Arabia, is massive. It sits on 192,000 acres of land—that's bigger than the entire country of Bahrain.
4. Smallest airport in the world? Look to the Caribbean island of Saba, whose Juancho E. Yrausquin Airport has the shortest commercial runway on Earth. At 1,299 feet long, it's way too short for jets, and airlines must get special permission to fly there.
5. Jeddah's King Abdulaziz International Airport specializes in accommodating travelers visiting Mecca, during which time it briefly becomes the world's busiest airport by far. During pilgrimage, the Hajj Terminal can handle 80,000 passengers at a time.
6. The Hong Kong International Airport boasts a nine-hole USGA-approved course next to Terminal 2, and it is open to travelers.
7. Schiphol Amsterdam Airport features an annex of the Rijksmuseum, one of the very best art museums in the world.

8. One of the weirdest airport amenities can be found in Sao Paulo/Guarulhos International Airport in Brazil. Travelers can head to Terminal 2 to visit its in-house dentist, who offers cleaning, whitening, and other services.

9. Nashville International Airport just got a property-wide liquor license, meaning travelers can take their cocktails with them wherever they go.

10. The Colorado Springs Airport features a “pot amnesty box” for travelers to dump their unused stash, no questions asked.

11. Singapore’s Changi Airport boasts a nature trail and a butterfly garden with over 1000 butterflies.

12. For a different approach to nature, London’s Heathrow Airport uses cars equipped with loudspeakers that blast distress calls of different bird species to scare them away from the runways. [<https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/62172/15-incredible-behind-scenes-airport-facts/>]

13. The worst airport in the world...The criteria? Security checks, hygiene, service, waiting areas and restaurant and shopping facilities. The result: Casablanca in Morocco was deemed the most likely to be the worst airport in the world. Similarly, Rome-Ciampino was rated almost as low.

14. The most dangerous airport in the world...probably Juliana International Airport in St. Maarten. Strong winds, extremely short runways, poor visibility. It’s so close to the beach that those nearby can easily see planes from above, as they’re only 10 to 20 meters away. And if the feeling of vertigo overwhelms you, then you’ll be sure to dislike the added swirls of stones that the planes encourage, potentially leading to injuries! [<https://horizn-studios.com/en/journal/report/airport-facts/>]

