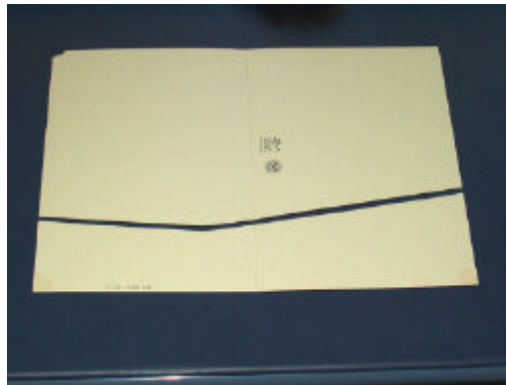# Create an Instrument Hood

Want to fly instruments? Tired of menus and downloading weather generating software? Here's a simple approach that allows you to "go on instruments" anytime you want, in 5 seconds or less. I don't have any third person weather programs, but I'm sure they work somewhat like Real Weather in FS2002. I've used Real Weather, and more times than not, the weather is way above minimums. To fly a low visibility approach, I need to reset the cloud deck in the menu system. Skip all that fuss and create a simulated instrument hood.

The only material you need is a standard size manila file folder (U.S. - for 8 1/2" by 11" papers). Measure your screen and cut away. Below is my file folder with "instrument hood" section cut away.

Now, I need to keep my instrument hood handy. Put a piece of masking tape on the top corners. I "stow" it on the bottom of my monitor. If you look closely, you can just make out the masking tape in the picture below.

In this digital photo above, I'm flying N1776. Looking out the window to the right of the monitor, you can see the piney woods of Arkansas, USA. When I get tired of looking outside (the airplane that is), I peel the hood from its stowed position and put it over the monitor "outside" view in the flight simulator.

With the hood in place, I can see virtually all the instruments as well as the overhead panel. The only instrument not visible is the magnetic compass.

This method of flying instruments is much like the instrument hood I wore on instrument check rides in multi-engine airplanes. It was similar to a welder's helmet, but it did not have a window. The instrument hood didn't come down over the face. It was worn like a large visor and it did an excellent job of obscuring the view outside the airplane.
No outlay to buy software. No software to download and install. No menus. Give this one a shot and fly instruments anytime you want. When you get to minimums, pull the hood off and complete your landing.

Just remember, if you crash because of weather, your funeral will be held on a sunny day. Thanks to Jim Marion for this gem.

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