

Review of  
**T.Flight U.S. Air Force Edition Headset**

Manufactured by ThrustMaster

*Intro*

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The experience of flight simulation will often be better when using hardware on your home setup – this even more when using high quality hardware that really creates a better atmosphere, an extra feeling of realism and an enhanced authenticity.

I have for several years been on a quest of testing a variety of hardware, here both replica and non-replica hardware and now I have come across some very interesting hardware from the manufacturer ‘ThrustMaster’. This review covers their aviation headset named the T.Flight U.S. Air Force Edition.

ThrustMaster creates hardware for several different segments here included for flight simulation and this review is the first in a series of hardware reviews of ThrustMaster flight simulation products.



## *Packaging, Delivery & Assembly*

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I received the headset directly from ThrustMaster in France, and the delivery was very fast, only about 3-4 business days. The forwarder was FedEx and the package was delivered directly to my home address without any signs of hard handling or similar.

The packing starts with an outer box made of hard and thick cardboard and featuring polystyrene foam pieced inside for absorbing potential hard handling. Inside I found the actual sales box which is a thin cardboard box and inside this box I found the headset packed within a thin plastic bag and some more cardboard.

The headset is delivered in several pieces that need to be assembled before being able to use. You have the primary headset featuring the ear cups and head bracket, you then have the microphone and the extension cord together with the extra changeable faceplates for each ear cup. The assembly was quickly completed and was without any problems. There are no tools included for performing the assembly since none is needed.

Included in the package is of course a manual/guide for assembly featuring 1x A4 size piece of paper with a quick start on the front side and a more detailed picture-by-picture description of the assembly and the possibilities of adjusting this headset on the back side. The assembly is very user friendly but still I would of course recommend reading the guide prior to the assembly because it shows in great detail, the various adjustments and possibilities in the pictures. Even though I, probably like many others, just jumps right in and try to assemble before reading the manual.



## *Look & Feel*

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After assembly I had a closer look at the headset – this absolutely is a very beautiful, authentic and high quality headset that really represents itself perfectly. The look is very aviation minded, the construction is high quality featuring metal brackets for each ear cup and metal bracket for the head rest which certainly provides a better sturdiness, a better quality and probably also an increased durability.

The size of the headset is adjustable and can very easily be adjusted by untightening the two small screws located over each ear cup. Now you can adjust the size to fit your head before tightening the two screws again. You don't need any tools for this – only your fingers, which is more than enough to tighten the screws properly.

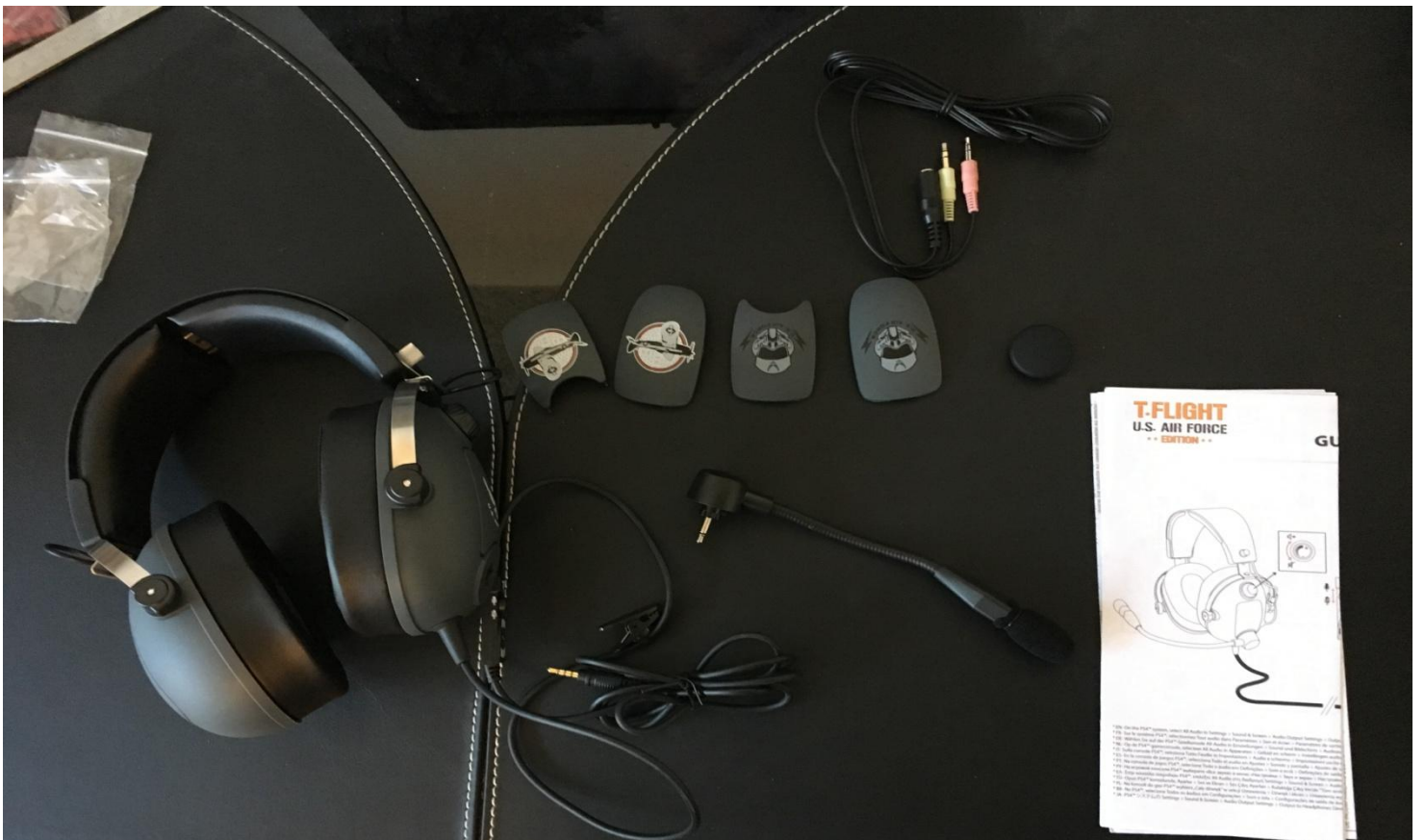
The microphone is connected to the left ear cup and cannot be placed on the right. You can adjust the microphone in five major positions and the microphone neck can be twisted and bended in all directions to fine tune the correct position. The microphones neck is sturdy and will remain in the correct position without dropping or being loose.

You can connect and disconnect the microphone as you wish meaning that if you do not need the microphone you can either dis-connect it from the headset or simply just flip it away in the upright position. Unfortunately you cannot flip the microphone over so that it can be used as a right ear cup headset. This could have been superb since some are in favor of left ear cup microphone and some for the right ear cup, but for me it is same/same. If you disconnect the microphone there is included a small patch that can be placed in the connection hole of the microphone on the ear cup – nice detail.

On the left ear cup you also have a volume control placed which is nicely integrated with the ear cup it self and adds to the aviation look. The volume control features 0-100% volume and is firmly tightened so the precision of selecting the right sound level is easily fine tuned. Of course the volume control is depending on the output volume to the headset, so given that the output is 100% you have full scale control with the volume control on the headset.

For each ear cup you have three different faceplates which you can change as you wish – this does not provide better quality of the headset but more an extra look and experience of the headset. Quite nice and you all have different opinions on which ones will fit you the best – my selection was the default faceplates already mounted, but if you would like to change the faceplates, then this is also very easily performed by a click-system. The ear cup itself is made of hard plastics with a professional paint job.

Each ear cup features a 1-inch (25mm) thick cushion with a gel layer for better isolation as well as memory foam. This works beautifully and the ear cup adapts perfectly to your ear performing an almost 100% isolation for external sound sources. The head rest also features a soft cushion with a respectable good thickness supporting a super soft feeling when using the headset for both a short but also a longer period of time.



## *Connection & Performance*

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The headset is connected to the computer using a cable, meaning that the headset is not a wireless headset. Normally I would prefer to have a wireless headset as my Logitech G930, but that said, I think it does fit this headset perfectly with a wire connection and this is very well in accordance to real life to have a cable connected headset in an aircraft. This is normally found on aviation headset in real life, so I think it is perfect for a headset built for flight simulation.

The cable from the headset is not that long but only consists of one cable. Thereafter the headset pack features a 9 feet extension split cable to support the connectivity to the computer with a mini jack for both the sound in the ear cups and a mini jack for the microphone. This means that the entire length of the cable is about 3-4 meter providing the simmer plenty of cable to place nicely out of sight in the home cockpit.

In my opinion I would have liked the cable to be of a soft fabric, but this cable is plastic/pvc or similar which however is very well in accordance to a real life headset cable. The volume control and mute for the microphone is placed on the cable (inline volume/mute control) together with a clip for attaching the cable to your clothes or similar.

I have often experienced noise in a cord connected headset when the cord touched e.g. your clothes or other objects – this is however not what I found using this headset. The noise is reduced to almost 0 on that part and is absolutely a great flight simulation headset.

The microphone features noise cancelling which basically means a feature created to secure a better sound from the primary microphone source – e.g. the sound of the pilot's voice, where the ambient sound detected by the microphones secondary / back port is reduced. There are several ways of doing this and here I would recommend a visit to the Wiki for a more technical walkthrough.

The headset is a plug and play device meaning no need for installing software. It works straight out of the box. The sound quality is high however restricted to stereo and not e.g. 5.1 or even 7.1 surround sound as found on other gaming headset. This is no problem in my opinion because first of all, this headset is a replica aviation headset and the stereo fits perfectly here – I have never heard about a real aviation headset featuring either 5.1 or 7.1 quality. Secondly, the quality of the stereo is superb and is enhanced by the large ear cups closing perfectly around your ears. The measurements of each ear cup is externally 105 mm / 80 mm and internally 55 mm / 40 mm giving the ear cups an oval look as also found on other headsets both aviation and non-aviation versions.

The performance on the audio in the ear cups are up to 116DB and the microphone is a 56DC signal-to-noise ratio providing the headset with an awesome and certainly high quality performance.

## *Conclusion*

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To wrap up my experience of this replica aviation headset, then my verdict can only be awesome, superb, authentic and great quality. This is really great craftsmanship performed by ThrustMaster.

This is not a regular gaming headset featuring a variety of G-buttons as found on other gaming headsets, but this headset is instead an aviation replica headset with a focus on detail, authenticity and quality.

This headset features great sound quality for both the ear cups and the microphone; ear cups that align with your ears perfectly and hereby eliminating about 95% of all external sound; a real size and light weight construction still featuring various metal brackets for better sturdiness and quality and of course super soft cushions providing the user with an experience of high comfort.

The purchase price is very reasonable – a little less than USD100,- which absolutely is a very fair price for a headset of this quality.

I really love the look of the headset where it is very easy to see that ThrustMaster has kept a high focus on the details and created a beautiful and authentic aviation headset. Even though this headset does not feature G-buttons or 7.1 surround sound like my G-930, then this will certainly be my preferred headset for future use within flight simulation for sure.

One thing that could put this over the top would in my opinion be, that the mini jack on the headset cord would be changed to a standard size jack, and also that the female mini jack on the extension cord would be a standard size female jack featuring a bracket for easy mounting into the home cockpit. This because real life aviation headsets normally feature a real size jack and not the mini jack, and providing the female jack with a mounting bracket, could just add to the realism connecting the headset prior to a flight in the home cockpit simulator. Just an idea...

Rating for this headset is of course a full 5/5-stars – keep up the awesome work ThrustMaster!

## **Rays Aviation**



## *Review Computer Specifications (primary test-bed)*

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- Windows 10 (64-bit)
- Windows 7 (32-bit) (secondary system)
- Intel Core™ i7-4790K 4x4.00GHz (Turbo 4x4.40GHz)
- Asus Maximus VII Ranger (ROG-series)
- Antec Kuhler H20 650 Water Cooler
- Kingston HyperX Beast-series 32Gb DDR3-2133 RAM
- 500Gb Samsung 850 EVO SSD
- 3Tb Seagate Barracura (7200rpm, 6Gb/s)
- Asus GeForce GTX 980 Strix OC 4Gb
- 150/150Mbit Fiber Internet Connection

## *Tested on (games)*

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### Flight Simulation

- Lockheed Martin Prepar3Dv4+
- Laminar Research Xplane11
- Microsoft Flight Simulation FSX incl. Acceleration Pack
- Gaijin Wings of Prey
- Eagle Dynamics DCS World 2.5 Open Beta

### FPS games

- Medal of honor Tier One and Warfighter
- Star Wars Battle Front 1
- Wolfenstein The Old Blood and The New Colossus