

Topic 1: FAQs

1. When was the first flight made in Alberta? 1911 Hugh A. Robinson in a Curtiss Pusher Biplane.
2. Who flew the first flight in Canada? John A.D. McCurdy in the A.E.A. Silver Dart, a plane he had designed on February 23, 1909, with Alexander Graham Bell looking on.
3. What were some of the things Alberta civilians did to help during the first and second world wars?
 - a. Trained pilots mechanics and nurses
 - b. Repaired airplanes
 - c. Sewed uniforms
 - d. Prepared food packages and bandages
4. Who was the famous Alberta bush pilot who was the first to fly across the Arctic? "Punch" Dickins September 1928
5. Which famous Albertan assisted the police by using his airplane to help search for a criminal? "Wop" May 1931
6. When did the first official passenger service begin in Alberta? July 1st, 1920, Keith Taylor, who flew an Avro 504K
7. Name one airport that was used to train pilots for World War 1 and World War II. Edmonton Municipal Airport
8. When did jets start to land at Edmonton International Airport? 1960
9. Where is Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame located? Wetaskiwin, Alberta
10. Who was the first Alberta woman to get her pilot's licence? Gertrude De La Vergne on December 4, 1928.
11. What is the name of the first Canadian astronaut? Marc Garneau
12. What is the name of the first woman astronaut? Roberta Bondar
13. What contributions has Chris Hadfield made towards the advancement of Canadian aviation? First Canadian to operate the Canada-arm in space, first Canadian Mission Specialist, and the only Canadian to visit MIR.

14. What is the sound barrier and who was the first pilot to break it? The sound barrier refers to the speed at which sound waves travel. If you stand a distance away from a friend and say something to your friend, the sound waves of your voice will travel very quickly to the ear of your friend. The speed of sound is the speed at which those sound waves travelled. A speed (velocity) greater than sound is referred to as supersonic. The speed threshold for airplanes is 1223 kilometres per hour (761 mph) at sea level.

Retired Air Force Brigadier General Charles E. “Chuck” Yeager gained fame as the first man to fly faster than the speed of sound. This historic flight in the Bell X-1 aircraft took place on October 14, 1947 at Muroc Dry Air Field (now Edwards Air Force Base) California, USA. Yeager was chosen from several volunteers to test-fly the secret, experimental X-1 aircraft, built by the Bell Aircraft Company. The Bell X-1 was designed to test human pilots and fixed wing aircraft against the severe stresses of flight close to the speed of sound, and to see if a straight wing plane could fly faster than the speed of sound (approximately 1223 kilometres per hour (761 mph), in air at sea level). No one knew if a pilot could safely control a plane under the effects of the shock waves produced as the plane’s speed neared Mach 1.

On October 14, 1947, over dry Rogers Lake in California, Yeager rode the X-1, attached to the belly of a B-29 bomber, to an altitude of 25 000 feet. After releasing from the B-29, he rocketed to an altitude of 8 200 metres (25 000 feet). After releasing from the B-29, he rocketed to an altitude of 13 200 metres (40 000 feet). He became the first person to break the sound barrier, safely taking the X-1 to a speed of 1061 km/h (662 mph), faster than the speed of sound at this altitude.

15. What contribution has Major Deana Brasseur made to Canadian Aviation? Became one of two first women to fly the CF-18 Hornet jet fighter airplane.
16. When was the first hot-air balloon launched? In 1783 by the Montgolfier brothers, Paris, France. The first passengers were a duck, a sheep, and a rooster.
17. In 1849, who built a glider and made the first ‘heavier-than-air’ flight? Sir George Cayley from England. Cayley is referred to as the “father of aerial navigation.”
18. Who built the first practical glider for long flights? In 1891, Otto Lilienthal built the first practical glider.
19. When was the first passenger airplane flown? In 1933, a Boeing 247 (USA) became the first passenger airplane.
20. Who flew the first jet airplane and when? In 1939, Pabst von Ohain of Germany and Frank Whittle of England flew the first jet airplane.
21. What is an ornithopter? An ornithopter is a wing-flapping aircraft. In 1490, Leonard da Vinci designed an ornithopter.
22. Who was the first person to fly across the Atlantic Ocean, nonstop? In 1927, Charles Lindbergh flew across the Atlantic Ocean, nonstop.
23. Who was the first person to fly solo across the Pacific Ocean from Hawaii to California? In 1935, Amelia Earhart flew solo across the Pacific Ocean from Hawaii to California.