



## DID YOU KNOW THAT?

- ★ All the Wright airplanes are covered with cotton fabric called muslin (the “plane clothes”).
- ★ Many of the silver parts of the Wright airplanes are wood painted with a mixture of shellac and aluminum.
- ★ All Wright airplanes use a chain-and-sprocket transmission to link the engine and the propellers.
- ★ The first powered, heavier-than-air, sustained flights with a pilot were made on December 17, 1903, by Orville and Wilbur Wright.
- ★ The 1909 Wright Military Flyer was flight tested at Fort Myer in Arlington, Virginia.
- ★ When the elevators are in front of the wings, it is called a canard configuration.
- ★ The Wright brothers’ patent was for the 1902 glider, not a powered airplane.
- ★ The 1911 Wright EX *Vin Fiz* was the first to fly across the United States. It took 49 days.

Learn more about the Wright brothers on the Museum’s web site,  
[www.nasm.si.edu/wrightbrothers](http://www.nasm.si.edu/wrightbrothers)



Smithsonian  
National Air and Space Museum

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Be a “Plane Clothes” Detective

## ON THE WRIGHT BROTHERS’ FLIGHT PATH



Be on the look out for

PROPELLERS ★ TAILS ★ WINGS

(But don’t be surprised if the **propellers** are in the **back!**)

# READY DETECTIVES?

**Look at the Wright brothers' three airplanes.**  
**Discuss what you observe.**

*(Use the picture on the back page for clues.)*

**Record your observations on the checklist below.**  
*How are they alike? How are they different?*



## 1903 WRIGHT FLYER

*The Wright Brothers & the Invention of the Aerial Age*  
 Gallery 209, second floor



## 1911 WRIGHT EX 'VIN FIZ'

*Pioneers of Flight* Gallery 208, second floor



## 1909 WRIGHT MILITARY FLYER

*Early Flight* Gallery 107, first floor

	1903 Wright Flyer	1911 Wright EX Vin Fiz	1909 Wright Military Flyer
elevators			
pilot position			
propeller			
rudder			
seats			
tail with rudder and elevator			
rudder art/wing art			
wings			
other			