Who Were The Wright Brothers

Wright brothers

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The Wright brothers, Orville Wright (August 19, 1871 – January 30, 1948) and Wilbur Wright (April 16, 1867 – May 30, 1912), were American aviation pioneers generally credited with inventing, building, and flying the world's first successful airplane. They made the first controlled, sustained flight of an engine-powered, heavier-than-air aircraft with the Wright Flyer on December 17, 1903, four miles (6 km) south of Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, at what is now known as Kill Devil Hills. In 1904 the Wright brothers developed the Wright Flyer II, which made longer-duration flights including the first circle, followed in 1905 by the first truly practical fixed-wing aircraft, the Wright Flyer III.

The brothers' breakthrough invention was their creation of a three-axis control system, which enabled the pilot to steer the aircraft effectively and to maintain its equilibrium. Their system of aircraft controls made fixed-wing powered flight possible and remains standard on airplanes of all kinds. Their first U.S. patent did not claim invention of a flying machine, but rather a system of aerodynamic control that manipulated a flying machine's surfaces. From the beginning of their aeronautical work, Wilbur and Orville focused on developing a reliable method of pilot control as the key to solving "the flying problem". This approach differed significantly from other experimenters of the time who put more emphasis on developing powerful engines. Using a small home-built wind tunnel, the Wrights also collected more accurate data than any before, enabling them to design more efficient wings and propellers.

The brothers gained the mechanical skills essential to their success by working for years in their Dayton, Ohio-based shop with printing presses, bicycles, motors, and other machinery. Their work with bicycles, in particular, influenced their belief that an unstable vehicle such as a flying machine could be controlled and balanced with practice. This was a trend, as many other aviation pioneers were also dedicated cyclists and involved in the bicycle business in various ways. From 1900 until their first powered flights in late 1903, the brothers conducted extensive glider tests that also developed their skills as pilots. Their shop mechanic Charles Taylor became an important part of the team, building their first airplane engine in close collaboration with the brothers.

The Wright brothers' status as inventors of the airplane has been subject to numerous counter-claims. Much controversy persists over the many competing claims of early aviators. Edward Roach, historian for the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park, argues that the Wrights were excellent self-taught engineers who could run a small company well, but did not have the business skills or temperament necessary to dominate the rapidly growing aviation industry at the time.

Wright Brothers National Memorial

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Wright Brothers National Memorial (originally the Kill Devil Hill Monument), located in Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina, commemorates Wright Flyer; the first successful, sustained, powered flights in a heavier-than-air machine. From 1900 to 1903, Wilbur and Orville Wright came to North Carolina from Dayton, Ohio, based on information from the U.S. Weather Bureau about the area's steady winds. They also valued the privacy provided by this location, which in the early twentieth century was remote from major population centers.

Wright Company

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The Wright Company was the commercial aviation business venture of the Wright brothers, established by them on November 22, 1909, in conjunction with several prominent industrialists from New York and Detroit with the intention of capitalizing on their invention of the practical airplane. The company maintained its headquarters office in New York City and built its factory in Dayton, Ohio.

Katharine Wright Haskell

pioneers Wilbur and Orville Wright. She worked closely with her brothers, managing their bicycle shop in Dayton, Ohio when they were away; acting as their right-hand

Katharine Wright Haskell (née Wright; August 19, 1874 – March 3, 1929) was an American teacher, suffragist, and the younger sister of aviation pioneers Wilbur and Orville Wright. She worked closely with her brothers, managing their bicycle shop in Dayton, Ohio when they were away; acting as their right-hand woman and general factotum in Europe; assisting with their correspondence and business affairs; and providing a sounding board for their ideas. She pursued a professional career as a high school teacher in Dayton and became an international celebrity. A significant figure in the early-twentieth-century women's movement, she worked on behalf of woman suffrage in Ohio and served as the third female trustee of Oberlin College.

Wright Flyer III

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The Wright Flyer III is the third powered aircraft by the Wright Brothers, built during the winter of 1904–05. Orville Wright made the first flight with it on June 23, 1905. The Wright Flyer III had an airframe of spruce construction with a wing camber of 1-in-20 as used in 1903, rather than the less effective 1-in-25 used in 1904. The new machine was equipped with the engine and other hardware from the scrapped Flyer II and, after major modifications, achieved much greater performance than Flyers I and II.

The Wright Brothers (book)

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The Wright Brothers is a 2015 non-fiction book written by the popular historian David McCullough and published by Simon & Schuster. It is a history of the American inventors and aviation pioneers Orville and Wilbur Wright. The book was on The New York Times Non-Fiction Best Sellers list for seven weeks in 2015.

Lyle and Erik Menendez

Menendez (born November 27, 1970), commonly referred to as the Menendez brothers, are American brothers convicted of killing their parents, José and Mary Louise

Joseph Lyle Menendez (born January 10, 1968) and Erik Galen Menendez (born November 27, 1970), commonly referred to as the Menendez brothers, are American brothers convicted of killing their parents, José and Mary Louise "Kitty" Menendez, at their Beverly Hills home in 1989.

Following the murders, Lyle and Erik claimed that unknown intruders were responsible for the murders, framing it as a potential mob killing. Police initially investigated this claim, but grew suspicious when they discovered the brothers' extravagant spending sprees following the murders, and the fact that they had hired a computer expert to delete their father's recently updated will. Erik confessed to the murders in sessions with his psychologist, citing a desire to be free of a controlling father with high standards, which led to their arrests months later.

Lyle and Erik were charged with two counts of first-degree murder with special circumstances for lying in wait, making them eligible for the death penalty, and charges of conspiracy to murder. During their first trial, the defense argued that the brothers killed their parents in self-defense after years of alleged sexual, emotional, and physical abuse. The prosecution argued that the murders were premeditated, that allegations of sexual abuse were fabricated, and that the brothers were motivated by hatred and a desire to receive their father's multimillion-dollar estate after being disinherited from his will. The juries were unable to reach a verdict, resulting in mistrials for both brothers. In a second trial, they were convicted for first-degree murder and sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

Beginning in 1998, the brothers began numerous successive legal appeals of their convictions, which were reviewed and rejected by judges. In October 2024, Los Angeles district attorney George Gascón recommended a resentencing after reviewing a habeas corpus petition. After Gascón's loss in the November 2024 election, newly elected district attorney Nathan Hochman opposed the habeas petition, calling the brothers' self-defense claims "lies." In May 2025, a judge resentenced the brothers to 50 years to life, making them eligible for parole. In August 2025, however, Erik and Lyle were both denied parole.

The highly publicized trials received international media attention, inspiring numerous documentaries, dramatizations, books, and parodies.

Wright brothers patent war

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The Wright brothers patent war centers on the patent that the Wright brothers received for their method of airplane flight control. They were two Americans who are widely credited with inventing and building the world's first flyable airplane and making the first controlled, powered, and sustained heavier-than-air human flight on December 17, 1903.

In 1906, the Wrights received a U.S. patent for their method of flight control. In 1909, they sold the patent to the newly-formed Wright Company in return for $100,000 in cash, 40% of the company's stock, and a 10% royalty on all aircraft sold. Investors who contributed $1,000,000 to the company included Cornelius Vanderbilt, Theodore P. Shonts, Allan A. Ryan, and Morton F. Plant. That company waged a patent war, initially in an attempt to secure a monopoly on U.S. aircraft manufacturing. Unable to do so, it adjusted its legal strategy by suing foreign and domestic aviators and companies, especially another U.S. aviation pioneer, Glenn Curtiss, in an attempt to collect licensing fees.

In 1910, they won their initial lawsuit against Curtiss, when Federal Judge John Hazel ruled:

It further appears that the defendants now threaten to continue such use for gain and profit, and to engage in the manufacture and sale of such infringing machine, thereby becoming an active rival of complainant in the business of constructing flying-machines embodying the claims in suit, but such use of the infringing machine it is the duty of this Court on the papers presented to enjoin.

Of the nine suits brought by them and three against them, the Wright brothers eventually won every case in U.S. courts.

Even after Wilbur Wright had died, and Orville Wright had retired in 1916 (selling the rights to their patent to a successor company, the Wright-Martin Corp.), the patent war continued, and even expanded, as other manufacturers launched lawsuits of their own—creating a growing crisis in the U.S. aviation industry.

Many historians believe the patent war stalled development of the U.S. aviation industry, but others dispute this claim. Perhaps as a consequence, airplane development in the United States fell so far behind Europe that in World War I, American pilots were forced to fly European combat aircraft instead. After the war began, the U.S. Government pressured the aviation industry to form an organization to share patents.

Wright Flyer

1903. Invented and flown by brothers Orville and Wilbur Wright, it marked the beginning of the pioneer era of aviation. The aircraft is a single-place

The Wright Flyer (also known as the Kitty Hawk, Flyer I or the 1903 Flyer) made the first sustained flight by a manned heavier-than-air powered and controlled aircraft on December 17, 1903. Invented and flown by brothers Orville and Wilbur Wright, it marked the beginning of the pioneer era of aviation.

The aircraft is a single-place biplane design with anhedral (drooping) wings, front double elevator (a canard) and rear double rudder. It used a 12 horsepower (9 kilowatts) gasoline engine powering two pusher propellers. Employing "wing warping", it was relatively unstable and very difficult to fly.

The Wright brothers flew it four times in a location now part of the town of Kill Devil Hills, about 4 miles (6 kilometers) south of Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. The airplane flew 852 ft (260 m) on its fourth and final flight, but was damaged on landing, and wrecked minutes later when powerful gusts blew it over.

The brothers shipped the wreckage back to Dayton, and the aircraft never flew again. Orville later restored it and displayed it on several occasions. The Flyer joined the Smithsonian Institution's collection of historic aircraft in 1948 after the end of a long and bitter dispute between Orville and the Institution over its refusal to recognize the Flyer as the first successful airplane. Today, it is on display in a place of honor in the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

Wright Brothers flights of 1909

Inc.' group, with a replica of the Wright airplane as a part of the celebrations of the anniversary of the Wright brothers' first flight. Smithsonian Air

Airplane inventors Wilbur and Orville Wright are famed for making the first controlled, powered, heavier-than-air flights on 17 December 1903 at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Lesser-known are other flights of theirs which played an important role at the dawn of aviation history. In 1909 Wilbur was invited by the Hudson-Fulton Celebration Committee to make paid exhibition flights to help mark 300 years of New York history, including Henry Hudson discovering Manhattan and Robert Fulton starting a successful commercial steamboat service on the Hudson River. The committee wanted the Wrights to demonstrate flights over the water around New York City. Orville was making flights for customers in Germany, so Wilbur, who had just finished training U.S. Army pilots, accepted the job.

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