



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



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			