

The Aces High View System

by Hammer

Knowing how to use your views in Aces High is critical. Without the proper use of views, you will not be able to track a target or watch for danger around you. The more views you have immediate access to, and the better you are at using them, the more successful you will be in combat.

The View System

There are four parts of the view system which you can control in Aces High: View Mode, View Direction, View Transition, and Head Position.

View Mode

The view mode is the perspective which you are viewing from. The view mode is controlled using the F1 - F6 keys on your keyboard. The default mode is internal, i.e. the pilot's/driver's seat. The view modes and the associated Function key are:

[F1] Default View- Internal view with snap mode of transition (discussed below).

[F2] Internal View Mode- Internal view without changing your transition mode.

The following view modes (F3 - F6) are only available on bombers or in the training arena during on-line play.

[F3] External View- Perspective keeps its position relative to the plane. This view is also available in fighters while they are on the ground.

[F4] Chase View- Like External View, but with a lag.

[F5] Fixed View- Takes you to an external view that is fixed in space.

[F6] Bomb Sight- Takes you to the bombardier position on planes that have them.

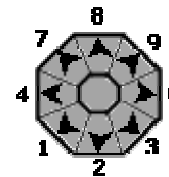
View Direction

The view direction in Aces High, like most flight simulations, is based around the keypad on your keyboard. You can change the direction you are looking by pressing the key corresponding to the direction you want to look. The view keys are

Num Lock	/	*	-	
7	8	9	+	7 = Look Front Left
4	5	6		8 = Look Forward
1	2	3	Enter	9 = Look Front Right
0 Ins	.	Del		4 = Look Left
				5 = Look Up
				6 = Look Right
				1 = Look Back Left
				2 = Look Back
				3 = Look Back Right
				0 = Look Down

These keys can be combined to give you combinations. Pressing the 5 and 2 key simultaneously would result in Look Back Up.

Views can also be controlled using hat switches or buttons on your controllers. Most hat switches on joysticks are 8-way hats. The 8 directions your hat moves correspond to the outside keys on your keypad as shown by the illustration to the right. You can also map different views or functions to your hat or hats. Your controller functions can also be used in conjunction with the number-pad to create combinations. For example, moving your hat to the right (Look Right - the direction of the 6) and pressing the 5 key (Look Up) on your keypad would result in Look Up Right.



View Transition

The view transition controls what happens when you switch from one view direction to another. There are 3 ways to transition. You select the transition using the F7 - F9 keys on your keyboard. The default transition is the "snap" mode, which does a quick pan of the camera, emulating you turning your head, until the desired view is reached. The transitions and their associated Function key are:

[F7] Snap Mode- The camera quick-pans between each of your views. Useful in keeping your orientation of where you are looking.

[F8] Pan Mode- Camera pans using the view keys. When you release the key, the view stops moving. Most useful in external views.

[F9] Instant- Views shift instantly without the pan of the snap mode. Quickest transition between views.

Head Position

The view from a plane, ground vehicle, or boat represents the view from a head position which is adjustable. The default views represent a "central" head position and are usually not the best. You will want to adjust them to maximize your field of view and to look around obstructions such as canopy frames. The bad news is you will have to do this for every view you use and you will have to do it in every aircraft. The good news is how much difference a little adjustment can make AND you only need to make the changes once since you can easily save each modified view.

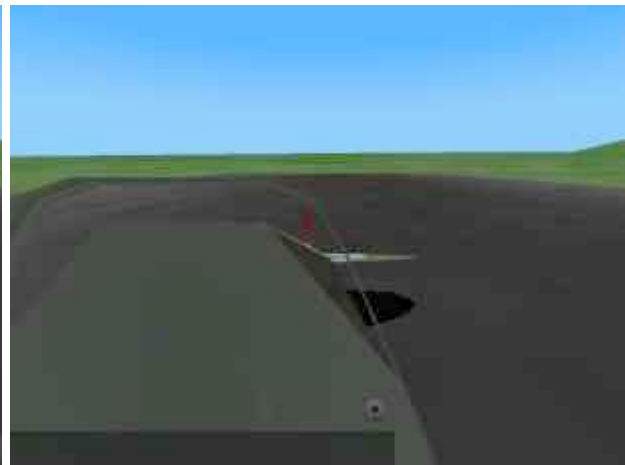
Views are adjusted using the arrow keys and the Page Up and Page Down keys. The arrow keys move your head position backwards, forwards, and side to side while the Page Up and Page Down keys move your head position up and down.

To adjust your head position, select the view direction you wish to adjust by pressing and holding the appropriate key (or key combination) on your keypad. Once you are "looking" in the right direction, you can move your head position using the arrow keys for direction, up with [Page Up], and down with [Page Down]. Once you have the view you want, save it using the [F10] key. Repeat this for each view in each plane you fly. To take a view back to its default position, press the [Home] key.

As an example, in the Spitfire Mk V, the default view to the rear is fairly obscured by the headrest. When you use the Look Back view (2 key on number-pad) you find yourself staring at the headrest with almost no visibility to the rear of your aircraft. Now, while holding down the rearview key, move your head position around using the arrow keys and the [page up]/ [page down] keys. Continue to hold the Look Back key and notice how you can position your head higher and over to one side so as to see to the rear better. Before releasing the 2 key, press F10 to save the adjusted head position. Now, at any time when you use the Look Back view, you will see your customized head position rather than the default. You can do this with any view, modifying it to your own liking and often being able to fine-tune your head position to remove any obtrusive canopy framing or other items that might block your view.



Spitfire Mk V Default 6 o'clock View



Spitfire Mk V Adjusted 6 o'clock View

Now that you understand how to adjust your views in Aces High, you can save yourself some time by downloading [Murdr's Head Positions](#). These cover most of the planes in the set. To use them, simply copy the .hps files into your Aces High II\settings\planes folder.

Optimizing Your View System for Combat

Understanding what view options are available is the first step in optimizing your system for the way you want it to work for you when you are in your ride of choice. How you set up your controllers will depend on what you have and your personal preferences. Your main goal is to find a setup that is comfortable for you and which will allow you to concentrate on the fight without having to look down to see what button you should push. The most common methods, along with some tips to using them, are listed below.

Keypad

The least desirable method for tracking views is using the keypad. It is, however, the only real option available to those using a mouse or a joystick without a hat and there are those who have used this method for years with great success even when they have hat switches available.

One of the keys to success when using your keypad to control your views is to fly with one hand on the keypad almost all of the time. You must be able to press the appropriate key and/or key combination

Num Lock	/	*	-
7	8	9	+
4	5	6	
1	2	3	Enter
Q Ins	.		

without looking down at the keyboard. You don't have to spend a lot of time deciding how you are going to set up your keypad - the default works fine. There are, however, a couple of options you might want to consider when using the keypad.

- Map Extra Keypad Keys to Common Flight Controls. While this strays a bit from how to control your views, it will really help you maintain your views if you keep your hands on your keypad most of the time. Use [Keyboard Mapping](#) to map the commands below to the keys around your keypad. (If they are not already on your joystick or other controller).
 - Flaps Raise
 - Flaps Lower
 - Trim Elevator Up
 - Trim Elevator Down
 - Autopilot Level Mode
 - Autopilot Speed Mode (Auto-Climb)
- Alternate View for Look Forward (8 key). The default view (no input given) is directly forward. This frees the Look Forward view (8 on keypad) for a different view such as [improving your view over the nose](#), looking down at your instruments, or you can set it for some combination such as the often used Look Front Up. Simply reposition your view while holding the 8 on your keypad, then save it. Now, when you release the 8 key, you will have your normal forward view. When you press the 8 key, you will have your adjusted view.

Single Hat Switch



A joystick with a single 8-way hat switch is probably the most common setup in the game. By default, the hat switch gives you the level view of each of the directions available in the game. The critical part to using the hat switch is deciding how you are going to get the "up" view in each direction.

There are several ways you can add "up" to a single hat switch view. You can use the up button (5 on keypad) on your keyboard, map an up button to your joystick or other controller, or use a different control mode. Let's go through some ways to get a left/up view as an example.

- Keypad. To get a left/up view using your hat switch and keypad, simply move your hat switch left and press the [5] on your keypad.
- Trigger as Up Button. While this may sound odd at first, it is actually a very effective and efficient way of using a single joystick with a single hat. To use this method, you must first map your trigger as "Look Up" and one of your thumb buttons as "Fire All" (see [Controller Setup and Calibration](#) for instructions on how to do this). Now, to look up and left, press the trigger with your finger and push the hat switch left. Simple! You don't have to worry about using the hat when you're shooting (the target should be in your forward view!) so your thumb is free to press the thumb button you have set to fire your weapons. This method also frees up your other hand for other plane controls such as the throttle, flaps, trim, landing gear, etc.

- Different Control Modes. Another efficient method for getting up views is to set a button on your joystick to toggle between different control modes and then set one control mode for level views and the other for the Up views. In this example, we'll again use the trigger as an available button:

Control Mode 1

Trigger = Mode 2 Select (or Mode 3 or Mode 4)

- 7 = Look Front Left
- 8 = Look Forward
- 9 = Look Front Right
- 4 = Look Left
- 5 = Look Up
- 6 = Look Right
- 1 = Look Back Left
- 2 = Look Back
- 3 = Look Back Right
- 0 = Look Down

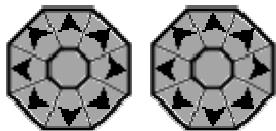
Mode 2 (or 3 or 4)

Trigger = Select Mode 1

- 7 = Look Front Up Left
- 8 = Look Front Up
- 9 = Look Front Up Right
- 4 = Look Up Left
- 5 = Look Up
- 6 = Look Up Right
- 1 = Look Back Up Left
- 2 = Look Back Up
- 3 = Look Back Up Right
- 0 = Look Down

With this setup, pressing the trigger changes your views from level to up without having to hold the trigger down.

Multiple Hat Switches



Many players use more advanced joysticks or HOTAS (Hands on Throttle and Stick) systems which allow them to control most plane functions without moving their hands from their controllers (hence the name!).

The advantage to these systems is you have multiple hat switches as well as extra buttons which allow you to control a lot more things from your controllers. You have to be smart in how you set them up to ensure find yourself needing the same finger to do too many things at once during a fight.

With multiple hat switches, you still have all of the options available with a single hat switch plus you have the option of assigning a totally different hat switch for your up views.

- Keypad. Same as above.

- Trigger (or other button) as Up Button. Same as above with a twist. With all the extra buttons available on HOTAS setups, it is easy to find an available one on your throttle or joystick. The key is to make sure you can easily transition views while keeping the enemy in sight and still be able to do the other things necessary to fly and fight.
- Different Control Modes. Same as above with the same advantage of having lots of extra buttons on your controllers to choose from for your mode toggle.
- Different Hat Switch. With extra hat switches available, you have the option of actually assigning up views (up left, up right, etc) to a totally different hat switch. This is done by mapping those views to the hat. This is a fairly inefficient use of your controllers, though, as you could use those 8 hat positions for other functions such as flaps, trim, gear, etc.

Track IR

Track IR (TIR for short) is a system which translates your head movements into changes of your view in the game. As you turn your head or move your head position up, down, left or right, your game-view will correspond. Many people in the Aces High community are using Track IR with great success. There are some issues and some work-arounds that you should be aware of if using Track IR.

Notes by Mace:

When using TIR the normal hat-switch or keyboard commands will override the view angle commanded by the TIR; however, TIR will still allow you slide to side, raise up, move forward/aft, etc. So, let's say you're looking up and forward with TIR and move your POV hat switch to the right. Your view will change to your 3 o'clock position looking directly out your right wing; however, you can still slide closer to the canopy or slide left or right for a better view. This works for all of the previous views programmed into your POV hat or keyboard; however the head position is the standard default one, any head positions saved by using the F10 button do not work.

The most important use for this function is gunnery. By pushing the hat switch forward (or kp8) your view ANGLE is slaved forward and perfectly aligned with the forward axis of the plane. In addition to this you're now aligned with the firing line of your guns, regardless of whether or not you can see the pipper in the gunsight. You can slide to the side and forward a bit to see better while setting up a high-angle deflection shot or move to the side to see around the canopy bows. In either case if you fire your rounds will go directly to the center of your screen. It's a very useful (some would say essential) capability. In addition to having outstanding forward views you can also quickly release the POV switch to check six or scan around and then by simply hitting the POV switch again go right back to perfect forward alignment.

One of the biggest problems people can have with TIR is setting the way TIR orients it's views, unfortunately it gets complicated. There are two situations. In both of these situations changes in viewing angle always works the same way, i.e., you rotate your head left and look up and your view angle rotates left and up; however, there is sometimes a difference in how TIR and AH handles movements such as sliding from side to side, sitting

up higher, moving your head forward, etc. These are called "translations" and they're very different from the viewing angle. There are two possible ways for TIR and AH to interpret translations, one is relative to your viewing angle and the other is relative to your aircraft. The correct way is relative to your view angle. When translations are correctly referenced movements appear to go in the direction you would expect. Say you're looking forward and slide your head to the left. Your head position slides toward the left side of the plane. When you turn around and look out your six and slide your head to the left it should again move to the left RELATIVE TO YOUR VIEW. In other words, since you're turned around looking behind the plane, a movement of towards your head's left means you head should actually move toward the RIGHT side of the plane. Make sense? The problem arises when TIR and AH are setup such that all translations are done RELATIVE TO THE AIRPLANE. TIR acts as if you're always looking forward and any time you slide your head to the left it will move toward the left side of the plane, regardless of where you're actually looking. So, look forward and slide left and everything looks fine but look out your six and slide left and your head appears to move RIGHT since a left translation will always move your head toward the left SIDE OF THE AIRPLANE just as if you're looking ahead. If this is happening to you, you need to check two control settings (one in TIR software and one in AH's) that affect this. The latest TIR software has a setting called "TrueView" and AH has "TrackIR Object Relative Move". Start out by turning both of these controls OFF. If your rear views are fine you're good to go, if they're not then turn just TrueView on in the TIR software. There is no reason to have AH's TrackIR Object Relative Move turned on. If you do it'll not only reverse whatever setting you have in the TIR software but it disables the latest movement algorithms in TIR.