Airports

Images and Diagrams

An airport is a location where aircraft such as fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters, and blimps take off and land. Aircraft may be stored or maintained at an airport. An airport consists of at least one surface such as a runway for a plane to take off and land, a helipad, or water for takeoffs and landings, and often includes buildings such as control towers, hangars and terminal buildings. Larger airports may have fixed base operator services, seaplane docks and ramps, air traffic control, passenger facilities such as restaurants and lounges, and emergency services. A military airport is known as an airbase or air station.

Airports are divided into landside and airside areas. Landside areas include parking lots, public transportation train stations and access roads. Airside areas include all areas accessible to aircraft, including runways, taxiways and ramps. Access from landside areas to airside areas is tightly controlled at most airports. Passengers on commercial flights access airside areas through terminals, where they can purchase tickets, clear security check, or claim luggage and board aircraft through gates. The waiting areas which provide passenger access to aircraft are typically called concourses, although this term is often used interchangeably with terminal.
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