257th FIGHTER GROUP
TALONS
VIRTUAL SIM SQUADRON

Talons' Falcon 4.0 base/1.08us patch install procedures

System Requirements

Minimum system configuration:

- 300 MHz PII (or equivalent) CPU
- 64 MB RAM
- Direct3D capable graphics card with 12 MB video RAM
- 100 MB free hard drive space
- Sound card with full-duplex capability for use with Roger Wilco
- DirectX 6

Recommended system configuration:

- 600 MHz or faster CPU
- 128 MB RAM
- Direct3D capable graphics card with 32 MB video RAM
- 600 MB free hard drive space (for full install)
- Sound card with full-duplex capability for use with Roger Wilco
- DirectX 8.0a

You will also need the following items and files in order to complete the process:

- Your Falcon 4.0 CD
- The 'f4108us.exe' file (This file is widely available on the net.)

Backup all your existing pilot data and log book, TEs, campaigns, ACMIs, and multiplayer connection phone book, if you wish. The pilot data and log books are found in the 'Falcon4\config' folder, while the TEs and saved campaigns are found in the folder 'Falcon4\campaign\save' folder. The ACMIs are found in the 'Falcon4\acmibin' folder, and the multiplayer connection phone book is the file named phonebk.dat in the Falcon4 root folder. If you don't back these things up, you're going to have to start over from square one after the reinstall. All of your flight hours will be gone, your game-specific configuration will be gone, etc. You get the idea. We can't possibly cover every variant of the potential types of installs. We will not cover anything but known, working installs.

VERY IMPORTANT NOTE!!!!

DO NOT, **DO NOT** "blanket" restore these backed up files to your new Falcon4 installations. This will cause you no end of headaches. Copy over only KNOWN configuration files and TE files. If you don't know, ask someone. If THEY don't know, ask someone else. Some files that are known to cause problems if you restore them from an older installation are: \Falcon4\config\keystrokes.key, \Campaign\Save\validac.act, and \Campaign\Save\falcon4.aii

Please make sure your computer is prepared for installation by having your virus scan software off and close (CTRL/ALT/DEL) all open programs with the exception of SYSTRAY and EXPLORER. You will need to perform this step EACH and EVERY time you reboot the machine!![1]

If you already have Falcon 4.0 Installed

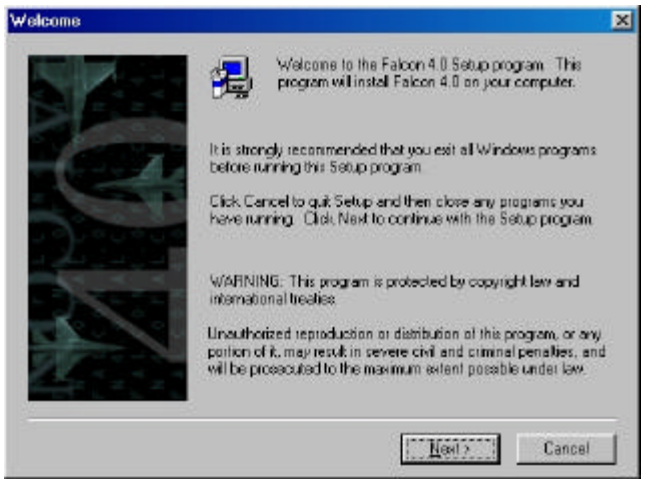
Navigate to 'Control Panel', 'Add/Remove Programs', and then highlight Falcon 4.0. Click the 'Add/Remove' button. After the program has been removed, start Windows Explorer and navigate to the folder where your Falcon 4.0 program was installed. Get rid of the folder completely. Period. After you've done that, use the program of your choice to defragment the drive where your Falcon 4.0 install was located. Reboot the system. Delete any folders or files in your '\Windows\Temp' folder. Now we're ready to begin the base install, and then patch to 1.08us.

New, or after Falcon 4.0 has been uninstalled, procedure

Ok, we're assuming that you've followed the uninstall steps outlined above, or that you haven't installed Falcon 4.0 yet. This is straightforward, and unless you deviate from the procedures, you'll be up and flying with the Talons, and you'll know that you're flying the same setup everyone else is flying. I'm sure we'll test more add-ons and patches in the future, but we're going to need to do it in an orderly and logical fashion. We ask that for initial testing purposes, you follow these instructions to the letter. We'll post messages on the board concerning add-on testing; and provide procedural documentation for testing the add-ons. Thanks for your assistance, and we all hope that this will get us where we all want to be, in the fastest manner possible.

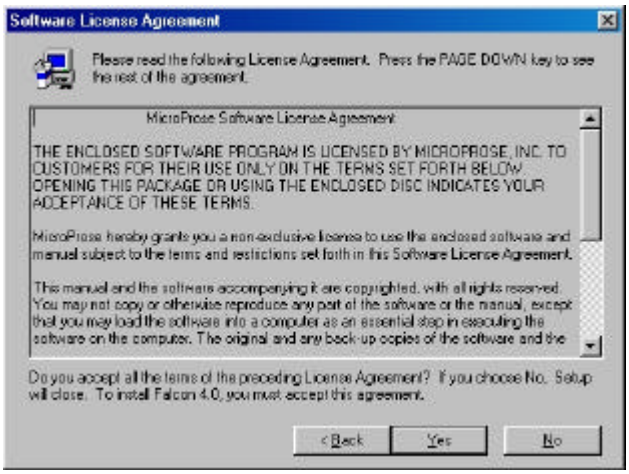
Start the basic Falcon 4.0 install process

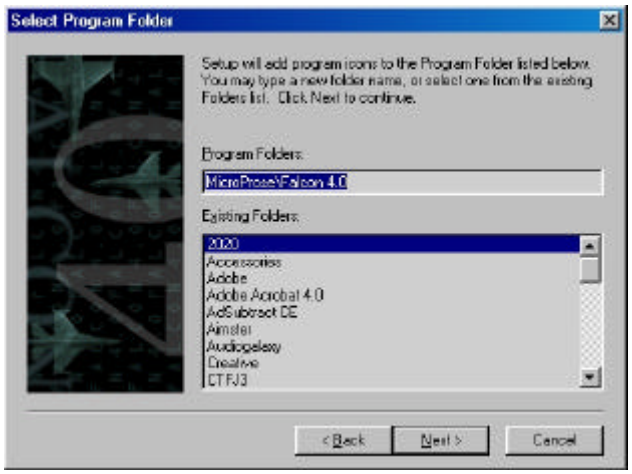
Grab your Falcon 4.0 CD, and start the install process. If auto-insert notification is enabled on your PC, just insert the CD into the CDROM drive, and you'll see the screen on the left, below. Or you can navigate to your CDROM drive with Windows Explorer, and double-click on the 'Setup.exe' file and you'll see the screen on the right, below.



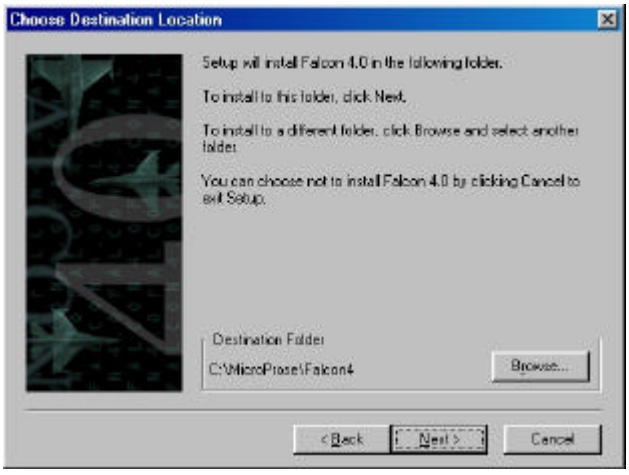
If you have the screen on the left, click on the 'Set Up Falcon 4.0' button, and you'll then see the screen on the right. Once you see the screen on the right, click the 'Next' button.

The screen on the left is the license agreement. You have to click on ‘Yes’ to continue the installation. Once you click the ‘Yes’ button, you’ll see the screen on the right. This screen will determine where, in your Start menu, (accessed by clicking on the ‘Start’ button on the lower left of your windows desktop.) the Falcon 4.0 program will reside.





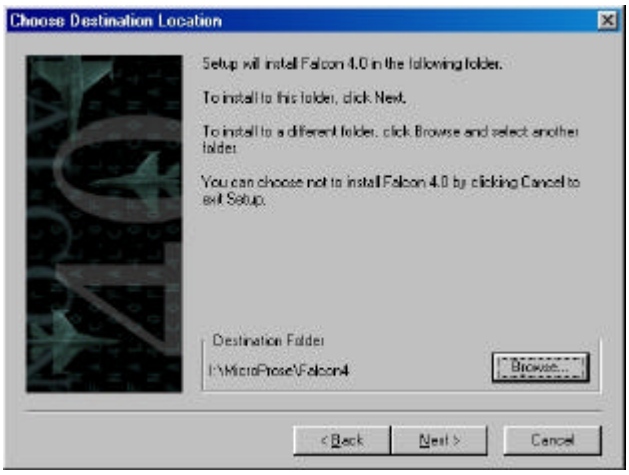
The screen on the left (below) allows you to select where on you hard drive you want to install the Falcon 4.0. If you click the ‘Browse’ button, you’ll see the screen on the right.

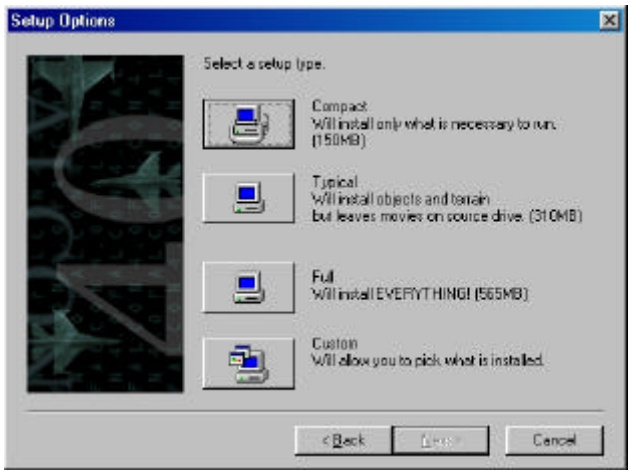


The screen on the right (above) displays the default installation folder for Falcon 4.0. If you want to install the sim into this folder, click the ‘OK’ button.

We chose to install the sim in a different location on our system. As you can see from the picture on the left (below,) we've installed the sim on drive 'I'. After clicking the 'OK' button on the left screen, you'll see the confirmation box on the right. If you chose the default installation location earlier, the second line in the confirmation box will be 'C:\MicroProse\Falcon4'. Click the 'Yes' button to continue.

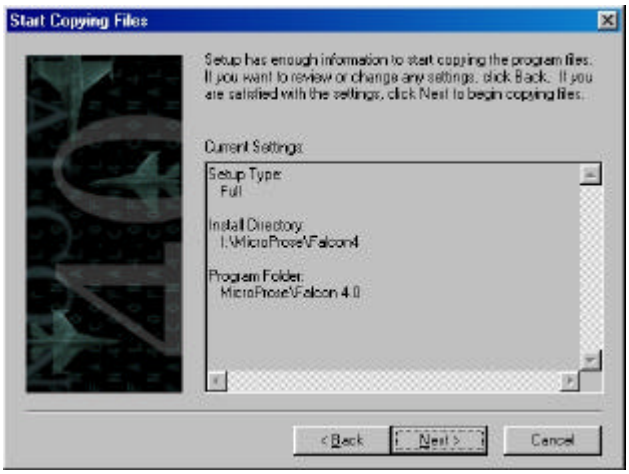
You will now see the screen on the left (below.) This is another opportunity to change the installation location of the sim. The screen on the right will allow you to choose which setup options you use. If at all possible, use the 'Full' option. The performance of the game will be best with the 'Full' option.



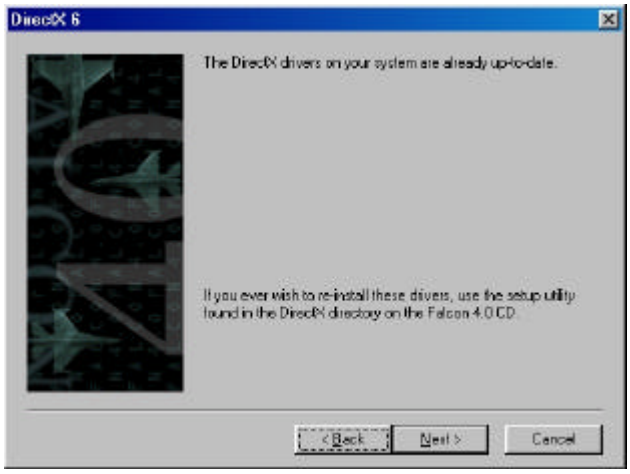


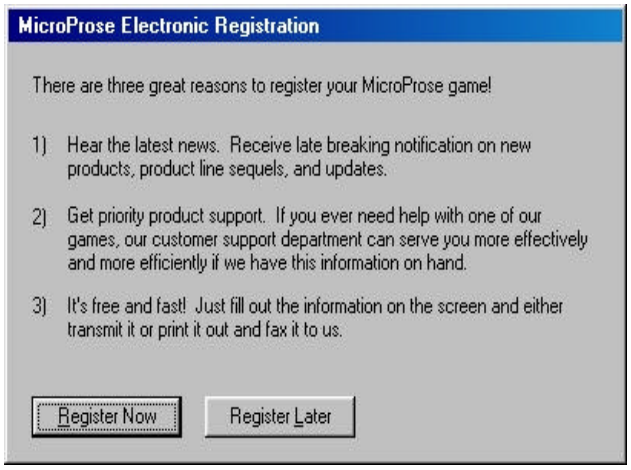
Click the appropriate setup type button, and the click the 'Next' button. It will not be grayed out after you choose a setup type.

This is the last opportunity you will have to change any of the installation details you have provided to this point. Once you click the ‘Next’ button, you will see the screen on the right, showing the progress of the installation process.

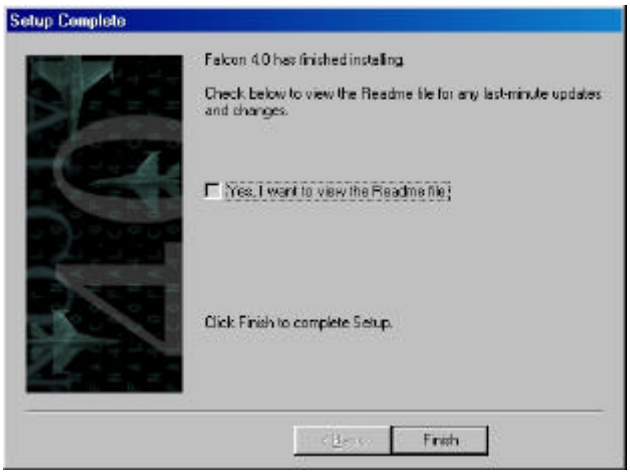


When the installation program completes the process of copying files to your computer, it will check your DirectX drivers to see if they’re the minimum required by Falcon 4.0. At the time of this document, the latest DirectX drivers are 8.0a. They are available at Microsoft’s web site. Click the ‘Next’ button and you’ll see the screen on the right. Am I the only one who sees the irony in this? No need to register, so click the ‘Register Later’ button.





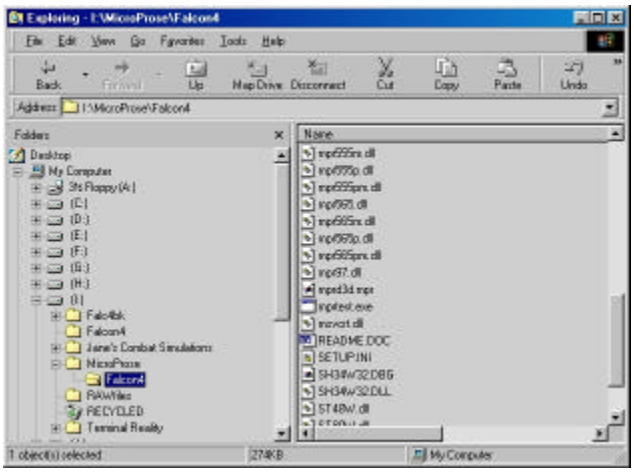
You will now see the following screen. If you've never read the 'Readme' file, go ahead and take a few minutes a look over it. Then click the 'Finish' button.

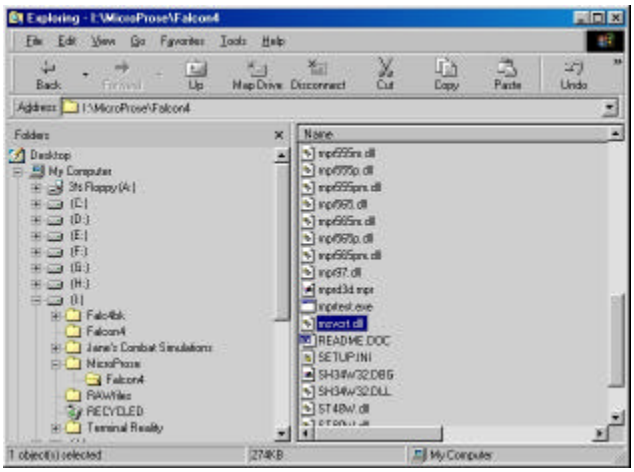


Reboot the machine, and then delete any folders or files in the '\Windows\Temp' folder. This concludes the basic Falcon 4.0 installation.

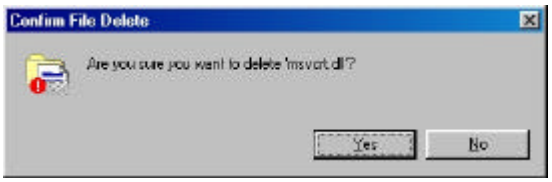
Standard 1.08us patch installation

The first thing we need to do is delete one file in your Falcon 4.0 root directory. The file is named 'msvcrt.dll'.[2] As you recall, we installed Falcon 4.0 on the 'I' drive. Using Windows Explorer, we navigate to your chosen Falcon 4.0 install folder. With this folder highlighted, you can then scroll down the right-hand side of the explorer window until you see the file. Highlight it, and then hit the 'Delete' key.

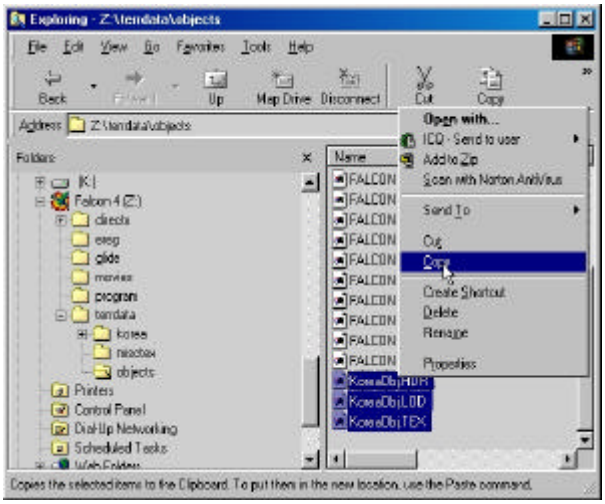


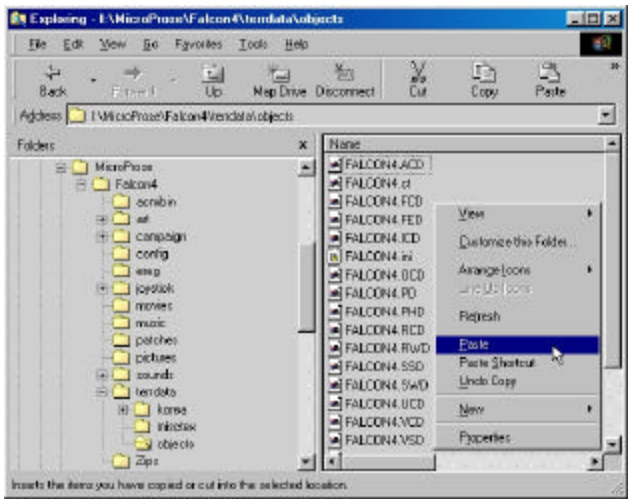


You will now see a 'Confirm File Delete' window as seen below. Click the 'Yes' button to delete the file.

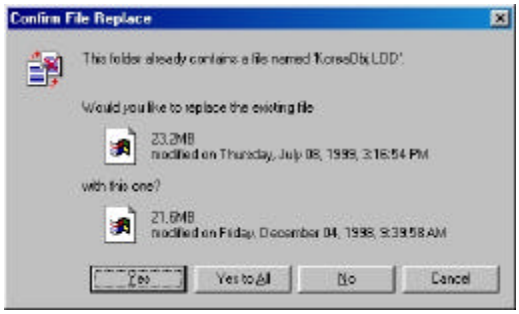


From your Falcon 4 CD, copy the following files from the \terradata\objects folder: KoreaObj.hdr, KoreaObj.lod, KoreaObj.tex and place them in the same folder in your Falcon 4 folder and overwrite the similar files.[3] The screen on the left shows us copying the files from the CD, while the one on the right shows us pasting them into the folder where we installed Falcon 4.0.



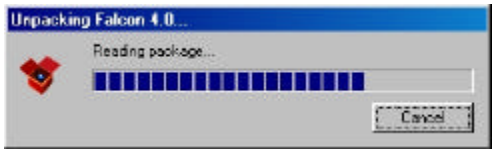


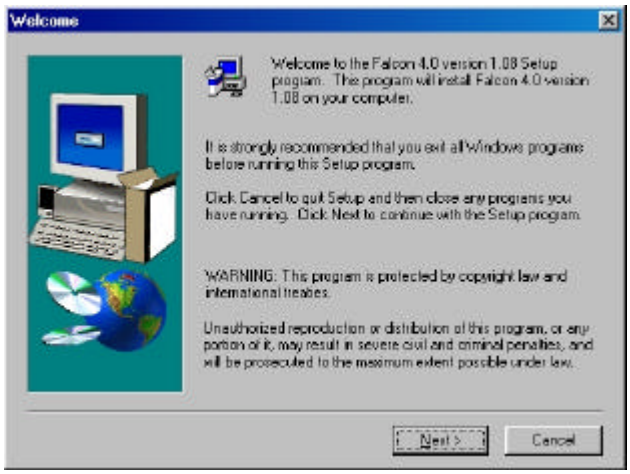
If you use the copy and paste method, you'll see a screen that resembles the one below. Click the 'Yes to All' button, and the files will be written to the folder on the hard drive.



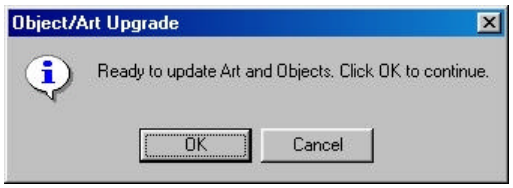
Make a backup copy of the tacrdata.zip file found in the \Falcon4\Zip folder.[4] Copy the file to your hard drive somewhere other than inside your '\MicroProse\Falcon4' folder. Locate the file named 'f4108us.exe' that you downloaded earlier. Double-click the file to start the update process.

You will briefly see the screen on the left, while the update program unpacks the files necessary to complete the update. You will then see the screen to the right. Click the 'Next' button to continue.

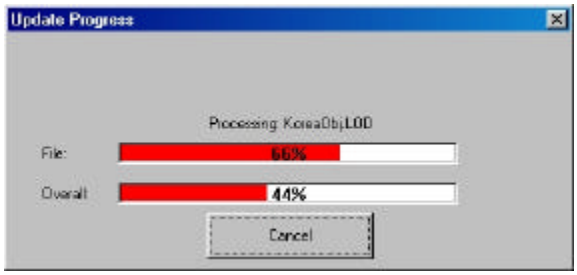




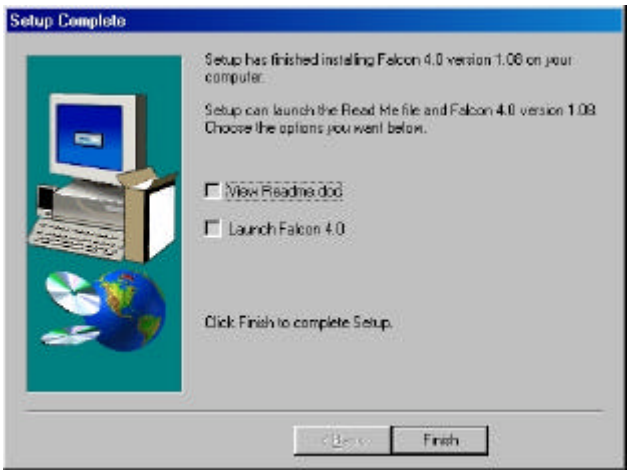
You will now see the screen on the left, which tracks the progress of the patch update. When this is completed, you will see the screen on the right. Click the 'OK' button to continue.



You will now see the windows shown below. When the update completes, click the 'OK' button you see on the right-hand screen below.



If all has gone well to this point, you'll see the following window. The README file may or may not have information you need or want, but reading it WILL avoid having someone say, in a rather sarcastic tone, "it's in the README file". So, give it a glance. Your Falcon 4.0 simulation is now patched to the 1.08 version.



Click the 'Finish' button to complete the patch update. Copy the 'tacrdata.zip' file you backed up earlier into your '\Falcon4\Zips' folder. You'll notice that there isn't one there.[4] Reboot your system, and then delete any folders or files in the '\Windows\Temp' folder.

At this point you may proceed to the Talons' RP5/110 Installation document to finish bringing your Falcon 4 installation up to Talons' specifications. You will find this document at www.members.home.net/257th-talons/install110RP5.pdf

The instructions below show you how to back up your new "clean" Falcon4 + 1.08us installation. We highly recommend this backup. Also below, you will find instructions on the simplest way to accomplish a multiple-configuration installation of Falcon4, should you be interested in doing so.

At this point we recommend you make a backup of your work. What you have done so far is the hardest part of this whole process – making sure that you have an absolutely clean installation of Falcon 4 from disk plus the 1.08us patch. Simply copy your entire Falcon 4 folder from your Microprose folder to any other safe place on your system. (That's copy, not move!)

In the future, should you wish to reinstall Falcon for whatever reason, all you need to do is:
a. Uninstall Falcon (see page 3 - If you already have Falcon 4.0 Installed)
b. Reinstall Falcon from CD
c. Delete resulting Falcon4 folder from the Microprose folder.
d. Copy your backup Falcon4 folder from wherever you put it back to your Microprose folder, and VOILA! You now have a clean Falcon4+1.08us install again.

Multiple installations

This will assume that your Falcon 4.0 root folder was named 'Falcon4' during the installation process. This will allow you to have multiple variants of the Falcon 4.0 patches installed, so you can switch back and forth between structured Talons' patches, and any variant that you may want to fly. It's the easiest way to accomplish this, but it does require 600 MB of hard drive space PER variant.

Just as soon as you complete your 1.08us patch upgrade, right click on the Falcon4 folder, and click 'Copy'. In the same folder, right click, (away from any files or folders) and click 'Paste'. You should now have two folders. One is named 'Falcon4', and the other is named 'Copy of Falcon4'. Right click on the 'Copy of Falcon4' folder, and then click 'Rename'. Call it 'Talons'. Remember that in the Windows registry, the only thing that counts is the 'Falcon4' folder. That's the only install it's going to care about.[5] So, after you've renamed the copy of your folder, here's what you do. Rename the 'Falcon4' folder to 'Falcon108'. Be consistent with your naming convention, and this will be very easy to keep track of. Okay, you now have two folders, one called 'Talons', and one called 'Falcon108'. If you tried to launch the sim right now, it would not run, because the Windows registry is looking for a folder called 'Falcon4', and you've renamed it. Therein lies the beauty of this process. The patches do not modify the registry. This is what allows you to patch multiple variants of the sim, without affecting others. Okay, rename your 'Talons' folder to 'Falcon4'. Now, using the steps outlined in the Talons' RP5/110 installation instructions (see URL at bottom of this document,) patch the sim accordingly. You now have a compliant, functioning install that will allow you to fly the standard patch that the Talons are using. Now that you've done that, rename the 'Falcon4' folder back to 'Talons'. Rename the 'Falcon108' folder to 'Falcon4'. Now you can patch the game to whatever specs you want to test, like to fly, or whatever you want to do with it. Any patches you apply at this point will only affect the original 'Falcon108' folder. The real beauty of this is that, if you make a mistake, and you've backed up the original folder (page 10 - At this point we recommend….), the contents of the backed up folder can be copied into a 'Falcon4' folder, (after it is emptied) and you will immediately have a pristine version of the 1.08us patched Falcon 4.0 install. You can then repeat the process as necessary.

Proceed to finish your Talons' Falcon4 installation by reading the document found at www.members.home.net/257th-talons/install110RP5.pdf

1 - Anti-virus programs tend to be overly protective. They can prevent an installation program from completing all the tasks it needs to perform to complete the installation cleanly. This is simply one of the easiest things you can do to assure an easy install process.

2 - This file has been the cause of problems with certain Windows operating systems. The simplest thing to do is to get rid of it, as the Falcon 4.0 install will replace it with a later version.

3 - This procedure was added after some people found that they could not upgrade to patch 1.08us. The 1.08us patch in some cases refused to acknowledge the installed versions of these files as upgradable. This seemed limited to VIA/Athlon style setups.

4 - There is a bug in patch 1.08us. It deletes the tacrdata.zip file during installation.

5 - The Windows registry keeps track of EVERY piece of software installed on the PC. It 'registers' (hence the name) the location and details of everything needed to run the operating system, and ancillary programs. If you rename a folder, under most circumstances, the registry will not know about it. (This is NOT true for Windows system folders and files.) As far as the registry is concerned, all of the patches are going into the same folder, 'Falcon4'. It doesn't know that you've renamed them, and that's why the multiple installation procedure works as it does. That's also why it's easy to return to the pristine 1.08us Falcon 4.0 install.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Many thanks to Thumper and Panther for working so hard on these documents.