

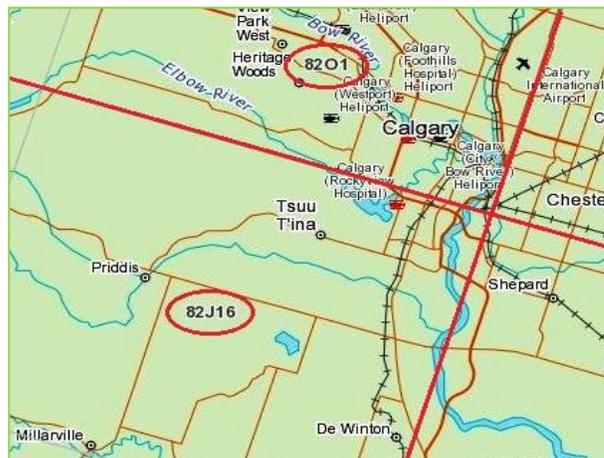
Searching for Air Photos at Spatial and Numeric Data Services

1. Find NTS Map Sheet

Air photo sets are organized according to the [National Topographic System \(NTS\)](#) map grid. Use [Toporama](#) to search for your location, then use the **Toggle NTS Grid** button  on the toolbar to identify the 1:250,000 and 1:50,000 scale numbers.

- **82 J** is a 1:250,000 scale map sheet number
- **82 J 16** is 1:50,000 scale map sheet number

➤ **Note the 1:250,000 and 1:50,000 map grid numbers.**



2. Identify Air Photo Sets

Search SANDS [air photo database](#) using your 1:50,000 scale NTS map sheet number (ex **82 O 01**) to find all air photo sets for that map sheet.

The result of searching the database is a number of air photo sets. These sets fall within the 1:50,000 map sheet, but may not necessarily cover your area of interest.

SANDS air photo sets are arranged by **Call Number** as in the following example:

82 O 7 1924 consists of photos taken within the 1:50,000 scale NTS map sheet **82 O 1**, at a scale of **1:7,000**, in **1924**.

Digital Access: about 32,000 historic photos from the SANDS collection have been digitized. If you see this: view [plotted flightline index](#), some or all of the photos in the set have been digitized and are online. Navigate to your area of interest and click on the markers to link to the scanned air photos.

If there is no [plotted flightline index](#) link, photos are only available in hard copy.

- **Note the air photo sets call numbers**, which will be used in Step 3.

Call Number	82 O 7 1924
Map Sheet	082 O/01
Scale	7000
Year	1924
Photo Type	Panchromatic
Photo Agency	National Airphoto Library
Notes	Covers Calgary
Set Coverage	Scant
Digital Access	Some airphotos from this set have been digitized view plotted flightline index and link from there to digitized airphotos.
Physical Access	Some airphotos from this set have not been digitized visit MADGIC at MacKimmie Library to view physical copies.

3. Consult Flight Line Maps

Flight line maps show exactly where the plane flew (flight lines), and the locations of each photo (photo centres). SANDS collection flight line maps are identified by call number.

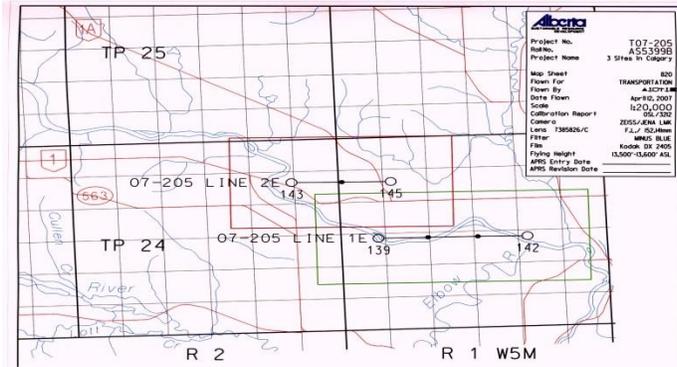
For the Calgary area, flight line maps have been organized in four black binders, arranged by year. These are kept at the SANDS TFDL location. For other areas, flight lines are arranged by the 1:250,000 NTS map sheet number.

Many of the SANDS collection flight line maps have been scanned and are available [online](#). For those areas that don't have flight line maps online, please contact maps@ucalgary.ca requesting the corresponding 1:250,000 hard copy flight line binder. These will be retrieved from storage for you to consult at SANDS.

If you know the sets of air photos that have coverage for your 1:50,000 map sheet (using the *call number* from Step 2), you can restrict your search to those flight line maps. If you only know the 1:250,000 map sheet number, you will need to look through all the flight line maps for that map sheet.

Flight line maps provide camera roll number and photo numbers. Maps are labelled with the SANDS call number (ex **82 J 30 1999**). On most maps, the air photos held by SANDS are marked in green.

- **Look through the flight line maps for your area of interest.**



4. Select Photos

It is helpful to refer to a print or online topographic map when identifying your area of interest. Once you have looked at the flight line maps and identified photo numbers, you can select the air photos.

Calgary and area air photos are at SANDS; all others are held offsite, retrievable within a few days. For retrievals, SANDS needs to know the photo set call number, roll and photo numbers.

Air photo sets are stored in boxes labelled with the same call number as the flightline maps (ex **82 J 30 1999**). Sometimes sets have multiple boxes.

Individual air photos have the camera roll number and photo number marked, usually at the bottom.

Air photos generally have a 60% overlap side to side and 30% above and below; this allows for 3D viewing with stereoscopes. SANDS has several stereoscopes for in house use.

Photos can be used at SANDS or signed out with a valid [borrowers card](#).



Louise Bridge, Calgary 1965 and 1993

last updated: February 21, 2018

<https://library.ucalgary.ca/guides/findairphotos>