F-117 Nighthawk Fast Facts

World’s First Operational Stealth Aircraft

Operational Missions

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<th>Operational Mission</th>
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Specs

- **Length:** 65 ft 11 in (20.09 m)
- **Height:** 12 ft 5 in (3.78 m)
- **Wingspan:** 43 ft 4 in (13.21 m)
- **Wing Area:** 780 sq ft (72 m²)
- **Max Takeoff Weight:** 52,500 lb (23,814 kg)
- **Empty Weight:** 29,500 lb (13,381 kg)
- **Range:** Unlimited with Aerial Refueling
- **Speed:** High Subsonic
- **Power Plant:** 2 × General Electric F404 Engines

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Owned the Skies In Operation Desert Storm

- Zero Losses and No Battle Damage
- Flew 1,271 Sorties and Achieved 80% Mission Success Rate
- Changed the Question From “How Many Aircraft are Needed to Take Out a Target?” to “How Many Targets can be Taken Out With a Single Aircraft?”
- Invaluable in Bringing the Campaign to a Successful End in just 43 Days
- Represented Only 2% of all Combat Sorties, but Covered 40% of the Strategic Targets
- Only Aircraft Allowed to Strike Targets Inside Baghdad’s City Limits

Milestones

- The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) awards Lockheed Martin Skunk Works® the contract for Have Blue, the stealth demonstrator that would lead to the F-117A Nighthawk. [April 1976]
- Have Blue takes its first flight over the Nevada skies. [December 1977]
- DARPA awards Lockheed Martin Skunk Works the contract for the F-117 Nighthawk. [November 1978]
- The F-117 takes its first flight piloted by Hal Farley, project pilot. [June 1981]
- The first F-117A unit, the 4450th Tactical Group (renamed the 37th Tactical Fighter Wing in October 1989), achieves initial operational capability. [October 1983]
- The F-117 is used in combat for the first time in Operation Just Cause when F-117s from the 37th TFW attack military targets in Panama. [December 1989]
- The program is awarded the Collier Trophy for “The Greatest Achievement in Aeronautics and Astronautics in America.” [1989]
- The F-117 Nighthawk makes its first formal public appearance at Nellis AFB in Nevada which is attended by thousands. [April 1990]
- The USAF officially retires the F-117 Nighthawk with a special flyover ceremony at Holloman AFB. [April 2008]