

Boeing Defense, Space and Security
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F/A-18E/F Super Hornet

Description and Purpose:

The F/A-18 E/F Super Hornet is the newest highly capable, affordable and available tactical aircraft in the U.S. Navy.

Operational in 10 U.S. Navy Carrier Air Wings (25 squadrons) and the Royal Australian Air Force, the combat-proven Super Hornet delivers cutting-edge, next-generation multi-role strike fighter capability, outdistancing current and emerging threats well into the future. The Super Hornet has the capability, flexibility and performance necessary to modernize the air or naval aviation forces of any country. Built by the industry team of Boeing, Northrop Grumman, GE Aviation, and Raytheon, the Super Hornet provides the warfighter with the newest advances in capability and growth in missions, roles and technology for decades to come. Its suite of integrated and networked systems provides enhanced interoperability and support for ground forces as well as the overall force commander.

Two versions of the Super Hornet – the single-seat E model and the two-seat F model – are in production today and in world-wide service with the U.S. Navy. The Royal Australian Air Force operates 24 two-seat F model Super Hornets.

Both models are true multi-role aircraft, able to perform virtually every mission in the tactical spectrum, including air superiority, day/night strike with precision-guided weapons, fighter escort, close air support, suppression of enemy air defenses, maritime strike, reconnaissance, forward air control and tanker missions.

General Characteristics:

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|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Empty weight | E: 32,100 lb (14,552 kg) F: 32,800 lb (14,876 kg) | Field landing weight | 50,600 lb (22,951 kg) |
| Max takeoff weight | 66,000 lb (29,937 kg) | Speed | Mach 1.8 |
| Carrier bringback payload | E: 9,900 lb (4,491 kg) F: 9,000 lb (4,082 kg) | Combat ceiling | 50,000+ ft (15,240+ m) |

With 11 weapons stations, the Super Hornet gives warfighters extraordinary payload flexibility by carrying over 400 configurations of air-to-air and air-to-ground ordnance. A typical basic loadout for a self-escort strike mission starts with an advanced infrared targeting pod, one AIM-120 AMRAAM, two AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles, a 20mm cannon and an external fuel tank. This leaves six under-wing weapon stations available to carry a variety of weapons and other stores.

Through an evolutionary, modular approach, including the addition of the APG-79 active electronically scanned array radar, the Super Hornet offers continuously improving overall mission capability and supportability. Integrating the APG-79 AESA radar, Advanced Targeting Forward Looking Infrared system, Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing System, Multifunctional Information Distribution System, advanced high capacity computer system, and state-of-the-art cockpit provides the warfighter with intuitive situational awareness and capability.

The F/A-18E/F has exceptional combat maneuverability, unlimited angle of attack, high resistance to spins and departures, and ease of handling and training. Its reconfigurable digital flight control system can detect damage to or full loss of a flight control and still allow safe recovery. These and other enhancements ensure the Super Hornet remains combat relevant through the coming decades and have defined it as the safest tactical aircraft in the history of Naval Aviation.

Two highly reliable General Electric F414-GE-400 engines power the Super Hornet, producing a combined 44,000 pounds of thrust. Increased airflow to the engine is provided through the Super Hornet's large, distinctively shaped inlets. A full authority digital electronics control allows for unrestricted engine response in any phase of flight.

The Super Hornet has proven to be the most cost-effective aircraft in the U.S. tactical aviation fleet, costing less per flight hour to operate than any other tactical aircraft in U.S. forces inventory, including single-engine aircraft such as the F-16.

Background:

The first operational F/A-18E/F Super Hornet squadron formed in June 2001 and deployed into combat aboard the USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) in July 2002. In April 2005, Boeing delivered the first Block II Super Hornet, complete with the world's first tactical multi-mode AESA radar, and it became fully operational at the end of 2007.

Since inception, the Super Hornet program has remained on time and on cost. Boeing is currently building Super Hornets under a third multi-year contract (MYP III) with the U.S. Navy. The U.S. Navy Super Hornet Program of record is 563 aircraft.

In May 2007, the Commonwealth of Australia ordered 24 F/A-18F Super Hornets, becoming the first international Super Hornet customer. The RAAF's aircraft were all delivered to Australia's RAAF Base Amberley, completing delivery, ahead of schedule in October 2011. In May, Australia announced plans to acquire 12 new EA-18 Growlers.

The three consecutive multi-year procurement contracts have saved the U.S. Navy \$2.3 billion over a single-year procurement process. The Super Hornet costs in the mid \$50 million range under the MYP III contract.

In August 2013, Boeing and Northrop Grumman began flight tests with a prototype of an Advanced Super Hornet aircraft with conformal fuel tanks, an enclosed weapons pod and signature enhancements. These capabilities, along with other planned advanced technologies to include enhanced engines, internal infrared search and track, and a next-gen cockpit, offer domestic and international customers a menu of next-generation capabilities that will allow Super Hornets to outpace threats in the 2030+ anti-access, area-denial (A2/AD) environment – affordably.

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