The Final 747 Leaving a Legacy

Though production is ending on the 747, the first jumbo jet’s influence will endure for decades.

The final airplane is known as “1574,” as it’s the 1,574th 747. All have been assembled in Everett, Washington, since 1967.

Jeff Barlow of Boeing Creative & Digital visited the factory to capture the process in pencil, pen and paint.
INSIDE JOB
The inside of the vertical stabilizer for the last 747 in work. Ironically, the vertical stabilizer spends most of its manufacturing time lying horizontally. It’s not until it’s ready to go onto the airplane that it’s stood up into its final, vertical position.
ON THE MOVE

The partial fuselage and wings on the last 747 make their next move.
Widebody Design

As the first twin-aisle airplane, the 747 lowered the per-seat cost and made air travel more accessible. Passenger capacity was twice that of any existing commercial airplane.

Hemispherical Hump

As the 747 was also designed to be a freighter, the ideal way to load cargo was through the nose. Engineers then determined the best place for the freight deck was on its own second level, allowing the nose door to open without interference, hence the iconic hump.

Cargo Transformation

Cargo loading allowed for the transportation of huge objects. As a result, the 747 ushered in a new era in cargo shipping.

Redundancy

Triple redundancy in all major systems and quadruple redundancy in the control and hydraulics systems improved safety.

High-Bypass Turbopan Engines

These more efficient, quieter engines helped improve takeoff acceleration.

Simulators

The 747 team designed the world’s first flight-motion simulator to offer pilots immersive flight training.

Behavioral Training

The customer training organization created a new behavioral-based program, focused on end-of-training competencies. It resulted in what became colloquially known as “need-to-know” training.

ALL HAIL

The first 747 greeted the crowd on Sept. 30, 1969, outside Boeing’s then-new factory at Paine Field in Everett, Washington. The airplane now resides at the Museum of Flight in Seattle.

PHOTO: BOEING ARCHIVES
MOUNTAIN CLIMBER
The original 747 soars high above Mount Rainier in Washington state in 1974. Boeing engineer Joe Suter, known as the “Father of the 747,” said this was his favorite photo.
PHOTO: BOEING

747 Commemorative Coin

The limited-edition “Boeing 747 Forever Incredible” coins sold out in two days. The coins contain shavings from one of the last 747s built in the Boeing factory in Everett, Washington. (See under the 747 logo in the second image.)
PHOTOS: BOEING