**United States Navy**

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*"USN" redirects here. For other uses, see* [*USN (disambiguation)*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USN_(disambiguation))*.*

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| --- | --- |
| **United States Navy** | |
| [United States Navy portal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:United_States_Navy) | |
| **Active** | October 13, 1775 – 1790 1797–present |
| **Country** | [United States of America](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) |
| **Type** | [Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Navy) |
| **Size** | 323,733 active duty personnel 284 ships 3,700+ aircraft 11 [aircraft carriers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aircraft_carriers) 9 [amphibious assault ships](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amphibious_assault_ship) 8 [amphibious transport docks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amphibious_transport_dock) 12 [dock landing ships](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dock_landing_ship) 22 [cruisers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cruiser) 60 [destroyers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Destroyer) 27 [frigates](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frigate) 71 [submarines](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Submarine) 2 [littoral combat ships](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Littoral_combat_ship) |
| **Part of** | [Department of the Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Department_of_the_Navy) |
| **Headquarters** | [Arlington, Virginia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arlington,_Virginia) |
| **Motto** | "Honor, Courage, Commitment"  "Non sibi sed patriae" *(Not self but country) (unofficial)* |
| **Colors** | [Blue](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue), [Gold](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gold_(color)) |
| **March** | "[Anchors Aweigh](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anchors_Aweigh)" [Play](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d9/AnchorsAweigh.ogg) |
| **Engagements** | [Revolutionary War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Revolutionary_War) [Quasi-War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quasi-War) [Barbary Wars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbary_Wars) [War of 1812](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_of_1812) [Mexican-American War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mexican-American_War) [American Civil War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Civil_War) [Spanish-American War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish-American_War) [World War I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I) [World War II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II) [Korean War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean_War) [Vietnam War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam_War) [Persian Gulf War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf_War) [Kosovo War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Allied_Force) [Afghanistan War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_in_Afghanistan_(2001-present)) [Iraq War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iraq_War) [Somali War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Enduring_Freedom_%E2%80%93_Horn_of_Africa) [2011 Libyan Civil War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Odyssey_Dawn) |
| **Decorations** | [Presidential Unit Citation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presidential_Unit_Citation_(United_States))  [Navy Unit Commendation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Navy_Unit_Commendation)  [Meritorious Unit Commendation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meritorious_Unit_Commendation) |
| **Commanders** | |
| [**Secretary**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Secretary_of_the_Navy) | Hon. [Ray Mabus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ray_Mabus) |
| [**Chief of Naval Operations**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chief_of_Naval_Operations) | ADM [Jonathan W. Greenert](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonathan_W._Greenert) |
| [**Vice Chief of Naval Operations**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vice_Chief_of_Naval_Operations) | ADM [Mark E. Ferguson III](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_E._Ferguson_III) |
| [**Master Chief Petty Officer**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Master_Chief_Petty_Officer_of_the_Navy) | MCPON [Rick D. West](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rick_D._West) |
| **Insignia** | |
| [**Naval Jack**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Jack) |  |
| **Aircraft flown** | |
| [**Attack**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attack_aircraft) | [F/A-18A/B/C/D](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F/A-18_Hornet), [F/A-18E/F](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F/A-18E/F_Super_Hornet)< , [F-35C](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F-35_Lightning_II) |
| [**Electronic warfare**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electronic_warfare) | [E-2C](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-2_Hawkeye), [EP-3E](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EP-3E_Aries_II), [E-6](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-6_Mercury), [EA-6B](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EA-6B_Prowler), [EA-18G](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EA-18G_Growler) |
| [**Fighter**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fighter_aircraft) | [F/A-18A/B/C/D](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F/A-18_Hornet#A.2FB), [F/A-18E/F](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F/A-18E/F_Super_Hornet) |
| [**Helicopter**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helicopter) | [UH-1](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UH-1_Iroquois), [SH-3](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SH-3_Sea_King), [CH-53D](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CH-53_Sea_Stallion), [MH-53E](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CH-53E_Super_Stallion), [SH-60B/F](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SH-60_Seahawk), [HH-60H](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SH-60_Seahawk), [MH-60R/S](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SH-60_Seahawk) |
| [**Patrol**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrol_aircraft) | [P-3](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P-3_Orion), [P-8](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P-8_Poseidon) |
| [**Reconnaissance**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Surveillance_aircraft) | [RQ-2](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RQ-2_Pioneer), [MQ-8B](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MQ-8_Fire_Scout), [RQ-4](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RQ-4_Global_Hawk#United_States_Navy_version) |
| [**Trainer**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trainer_(aircraft)) | [F-5](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northrop_F-5), [F-16N](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General_Dynamics_F-16_Fighting_Falcon), [T-2C](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T-2_Buckeye), [T-6](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T-6_Texan_II), [T-34](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T-34_Mentor), [T-39](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_American_Sabreliner), [T-44](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beechcraft_King_Air), [T-45](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T-45_Goshawk), [TH-57](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bell_206) |
| [**Transport**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cargo_aircraft) | [C-2](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-2_Greyhound), [C-9](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-9_Skytrain_II), [C-12](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-12_Huron), [C-20](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulfstream_III), [C-40](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-40_Clipper), [C-130](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-130_Hercules) |

The **United States Navy** (**USN**) is the [naval warfare](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_warfare) service branch of the [United States Armed Forces](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Armed_Forces) and one of the seven [uniformed services of the United States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uniformed_services_of_the_United_States). The U.S. Navy is the largest in the world; its battle fleet [tonnage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tonnage) is greater than that of the next 13 largest navies combined. The U.S. Navy also has the world's largest carrier fleet, with [11 in service](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_aircraft_carriers_in_service), [one](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Gerald_R._Ford_(CVN-78)) under construction (two planned), and one in reserve. The service had 328,516 personnel on active duty and 101,689 in the [Navy Reserve](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Navy_Reserve) in January 2011. It operates 286 [ships](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ship) in [active service](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Active_service) and more than 3,700 [aircraft](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aircraft).

The Navy traces its origins to the [Continental Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Continental_Navy), which was established during the [American Revolutionary War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Revolutionary_War) and was essentially disbanded as a separate entity shortly thereafter. The [United States Constitution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Constitution) provided the legal basis for a military force by giving [Congress](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Congress) the power "to provide and maintain a navy".

Depredations against U.S. shipping by [Barbary Coast](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbary_Coast) [pirates](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pirates) in the [Mediterranean Sea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mediterranean_Sea) spurred Congress to employ this power by passing the [Naval Act of 1794](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Act_of_1794) ordering the construction and manning of [six frigates](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Six_original_United_States_frigates). These ships were used to [end most pirate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbary_Wars) activity off the [Barbary Coast](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbary_Coast). In the 20th century, American [blue-water navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue-water_navy) capability was demonstrated by the 1907–1909 world tour of the [Great White Fleet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_White_Fleet).

The 21st century United States Navy maintains a sizable global presence, deploying in such areas as [East Asia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Asia), the [Mediterranean](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mediterranean), and the [Middle East](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_East). It is a [blue-water navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue-water_navy) with the ability to [project force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Power_projection) onto the [littoral regions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Littoral_zone) of the world, engage in forward areas during peacetime, and rapidly respond to regional crises, making it an active player in U.S. foreign and defense policy.

The Navy is administratively managed by the [Department of the Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Department_of_the_Navy), which is headed by the civilian [Secretary of the Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Secretary_of_the_Navy). The Department of the Navy is itself a division of the [Department of Defense](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Department_of_Defense), which is headed by the [Secretary of Defense](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Secretary_of_Defense). Traditionally, the highest ranking naval officer is the [Chief of Naval Operations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chief_of_Naval_Operations), a position currently held by [Admiral](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Admiral_(United_States)) [Jonathan Greenert](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonathan_W._Greenert), however one naval officer currently outranks him. The highest ranking naval officer is the [Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vice_Chairman_of_the_Joint_Chiefs_of_Staff), Admiral [James Winnefeld](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_A._Winnefeld,_Jr.).

**Mission**

The mission of the Navy is to maintain, train and equip combat-ready Naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression and maintaining freedom of the seas.

—Mission statement of the United States Navy

From the New Recruits Handbook:

The mission of the United States Navy is to protect and defend the right of the United States and our allies to move freely on the oceans and to protect our country against her enemies.

The United States Navy serves as a seaborne branch of the [Military of the United States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_of_the_United_States). [10 U.S.C.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Title_10_of_the_United_States_Code) [§ 5062](http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/10/5062.html) prescribes the Navy's three primary areas of responsibility:

* "The preparation of naval forces necessary for the effective prosecution of war"
* "The maintenance of naval aviation, including land-based naval aviation, air transport essential for naval operations and all air weapons and air techniques involved in the operations and activities of the Navy"
* "The development of aircraft, weapons, tactics, technique, organization, and equipment of naval combat and service elements".

U.S. Navy training manuals state the mission of the U.S armed forces is "to prepare and conduct prompt and sustained combat operations in support of the national interest". As part of that establishment, the U.S. Navy's functions comprise [sea control](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sea_control), [power projection](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Power_projection) and [nuclear deterrence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massive_retaliation), in addition to "[sealift](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sealift)" duties.

**History**

Main article: [History of the United States Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_United_States_Navy)

**Origins**

It follows then as certain as that night succeeds the day, that without a decisive naval force we can do nothing definitive, and with it, everything honorable and glorious.

—[George Washington](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Washington)

In the early stages of the [American Revolutionary War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Revolutionary_War), the establishment of an official navy was an issue of debate among the members of the [Continental Congress](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Continental_Congress). Supporters argued that a navy would protect shipping, defend the coast, and make it easier to seek out support from foreign countries. Detractors countered that challenging the British [Royal Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Navy), then the world's preeminent naval power, was a foolish undertaking.

[Commander in Chief](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commander_in_Chief) [George Washington](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Washington) commissioned seven ocean-going cruisers to interdict British supply ships, and reported the captures to the Congress. This effectively ended the debate in Congress as to whether or not to "provoke" the British by establishing a Navy as Washington's ships had already captured British ships, somewhat a provocation.

While Congress deliberated, it received word that two unarmed British supply ships from [England](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/England) were heading towards [Quebec](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quebec) without escort. A plan was drawn up to intercept the ships—however, the armed vessels to be used were owned not by Congress, but by individual colonies. Of greater significance then was an additional plan to equip two ships that would operate under the direct authority of Congress to capture British supply ships. This was not carried out until 13 October 1775, when [George Washington](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Washington) announced that he had taken command of three armed [schooners](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schooner) under Continental authority to intercept any British supply ships near [Massachusetts](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massachusetts). With the revelation that vessels were already sailing under Continental control, the decision to add two more was made easier; the resolution was adopted and 13 October would later become known as the U.S. Navy's official birthday.

The Continental Navy achieved mixed results; it was successful in a number of engagements and raided many British merchant vessels, but it lost 24 of its vessels and at one point was reduced to two in active service. As Congress turned its attention after the conflict towards securing the western border of the new United States, a standing navy was considered to be dispensable because of its high operating costs and its limited number of roles.

**From reestablishment to the Civil War**

We ought to begin a naval power, if we mean to carry on our commerce.

—[Thomas Jefferson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Jefferson)

The United States would be without a navy for nearly a decade—a state of affairs that exposed its merchant ships to a series of attacks by [Barbary pirates](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbary_pirates). The sole armed maritime presence between 1790 and the launching of the U.S. Navy's first warships in 1797 was the [U.S. Revenue Cutter Service](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Revenue_Cutter_Service) (USRCS), the primary predecessor of the [U.S. Coast Guard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Coast_Guard). Although USRCS Cutters conducted operations against these pirates, the depredations far outstripped the abilities of the USRCS and Congress ordered the construction and manning of [six frigates](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Original_six_frigates_of_the_United_States_Navy) on 27 March 1794; three years later the first three were welcomed into service: the [USS *United States*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_United_States_(1797)), [USS *Constellation*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Constellation_(1797)) and [USS *Constitution*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Constitution).



[USS *Constitution*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Constitution) battles [HMS *Guerriere*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Guerriere_(1806)) in the [War of 1812](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_of_1812).

Following an undeclared [Quasi-War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quasi-War) with France, the U.S. Navy saw substantial action in the [War of 1812](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_of_1812), where it was victorious in numerous single-ship duels with the Royal Navy. The Navy drove all significant British forces off of [Lake Erie](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Erie) and [Lake Champlain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Champlain) and prevented them from becoming British controlled zones of conflict. Despite this, the U.S. Navy was unable to prevent the British from blockading American ports and landing troops on American soil. After the war, the U.S. Navy again focused its attention on protecting American shipping assets, sending squadrons to the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, South America, Africa, and the Pacific.

During the [Mexican-American War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mexican-American_War) the U.S. Navy contributed by instituting blockades of Mexican ports, capturing or burning the Mexican fleet in the [Gulf of California](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf_of_California) and capturing all major cities in [Baja California](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baja_California) peninsula—later returned. In 1846-1848 the navy successfully used the [Pacific Squadron](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific_Squadron) under Commodore (Rear Admiral) [Robert Stockton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Stockton) and its marines and blue-jackets to facilitate the capture of California with large scale land operations coordinated with the local militia organized in the [California Battalion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_Battalion). The navy conducted the U.S. military's first large-scale amphibious joint operation by successfully landing 12,000 army troops with their equipment in one day at [Veracruz, Mexico](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veracruz,_Veracruz). When larger guns were needed to bombard Veracruz Navy volunteers landed large navy guns and manned them in the successful bombardment of the city and its surrender. This successful landing and capture of Veracruz eventually opening the way for the capture of Mexico City and the end of the war. The United States Navy established itself as a player in American foreign policy through the actions of [Commodore](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commodore_(USN)) [Matthew Perry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_Perry_(naval_officer)) in Japan, which resulted in the [Convention of Kanagawa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convention_of_Kanagawa) in 1854.

Naval power would play a significant role during the [American Civil War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Civil_War), where the [Union](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union_(American_Civil_War)) had a distinct advantage over the [Confederacy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confederate_States_of_America) on the seas. A [Union blockade](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union_blockade) on shipping handicapped the Southern effort throughout the conflict. The two American navies would help usher in a new era in world naval history by putting [ironclad warships](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ironclad_warship) into combat for the first time. The [Battle of Hampton Roads](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Hampton_Roads) in 1862, which pitted [USS *Monitor*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Monitor) against [CSS *Virginia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CSS_Virginia), became the first engagement between two steam-powered ironclads. Soon after the war, however, the U.S. Navy's fleet slipped into obsolescence because of neglect.

**20th century**



The [Great White Fleet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_White_Fleet) demonstrates U.S. naval power in 1907; it was proof that the US Navy had [blue-water capability](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue-water_navy).

Our ships are our natural bulwarks.

—[Woodrow Wilson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodrow_Wilson)

A modernization program beginning in the 1880s with the first steel hulled warships stimulated the American steel industry and "the new steel navy" was born. This rapid expansion of the US Navy and its easy victory over the [Spanish Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_Navy) in 1898 brought a new respect for American technical quality. Rapid building of at first pre-dreadnoughts, then dreadnoughts brought the U.S. in line with the navies of countries such as Britain and Germany. In 1907, most of the Navy's battleships, with several support vessels, dubbed the [Great White Fleet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_White_Fleet), were showcased in a 14-month circumnavigation of the world. Ordered by President [Theodore Roosevelt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodore_Roosevelt), it was a mission designed to demonstrate the Navy's capability to extend to the global theater. By 1911, the US had begun building the super-dreadnoughts at a pace to eventually become competitive with even Britain.



[Columbia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Columbia_(name)), personification of the United States, wearing a warship bearing the words "World Power" as her "Easter bonnet" on the cover of [*Puck*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puck_(magazine)), April 6, 1901.

The Navy saw little action during [World War I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I), but nevertheless the strength of the United States Navy grew under an ambitious ship building program associated with the [Naval Act of 1916](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Act_of_1916). Naval construction, especially of [battleships](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battleships) was later limited by the [Washington Naval Conference](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_Naval_Conference) of 1921-22. Saratoga and Lexington were built on the hulls of partially built battle cruisers that had been canceled by the treaty. Construction of [aircraft carriers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aircraft_carriers) continued however, accelerating after the [New Deal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Deal), which provided funding for the construction of the [USS *Yorktown* (CV-5)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Yorktown_(CV-5)) and [USS *Enterprise* (CV-6)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Enterprise_(CV-6)). These ships would not have been built had it not been for the demonstrations of the capability of aircraft against ships by Gen Billy Mitchell. By 1936, with the completion of the [USS *Wasp* (CV-7)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Wasp_(CV-7)), the U.S. Navy possessed a carrier fleet of 165,000 tons [displacement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Displacement_(ship)), although this figure was nominally recorded as 135,000 tons to comply with treaty limitations.

**World War II**

Main article: [United States Navy in World War II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Navy_in_World_War_II)



A recruitment poster from 1917, emphasizing the U.S. Navy's transport function

The U.S. Navy grew into a formidable force in the years prior to [World War II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II), with battleship production being restarted in 1937, commencing with the [USS *North Carolina* (BB-55)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_North_Carolina_(BB-55)). Though ultimately unsuccessful, Japan attempted to allay this strategic threat with the 1941 surprise [attack on Pearl Harbor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attack_on_Pearl_Harbor). Following American entry into the war, the U.S. Navy grew tremendously as the United States was faced with a two-front war on the seas. It achieved notable acclaim in the [Pacific Theater](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific_War), where it was instrumental to the Allies' successful "[island hopping](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leapfrogging_(strategy))" campaign. The U.S. Navy participated in many significant battles, including the [Battle of the Coral Sea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Coral_Sea), the [Battle of Midway](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Midway), the [Solomon Islands Campaign](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solomon_Islands_Campaign), the [Battle of the Philippine Sea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Philippine_Sea), the [Battle of Leyte Gulf](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Leyte_Gulf), and the [Battle of Okinawa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Okinawa). By 1943, the Navy's size was larger than the combined fleets of all the other combatant nations in World War II. By war's end in 1945, the United States Navy had added hundreds of new ships, including 18 aircraft carriers and 8 battleships, and had over 70% of the world's total numbers and total tonnage of naval vessels of 1,000 tons or greater. At its peak, the U.S. Navy was operating 6,768 ships on [V-J Day](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V-J_Day) in August 1945.

Doctrine had significantly shifted by the end of the war. The United States Navy had followed in the footsteps of the navies of Great Britain and Germany which favored concentrated groups of battleships as their main offensive naval weapons. The development of the aircraft carrier and its devastating utilization by the Japanese against the U.S. at Pearl Harbor however shifted U.S. thinking. The Pearl Harbor attack destroyed or took out of action a significant number of U.S.N. battleships. This placed much of the burden of retaliating against the Japanese on the small number of aircraft carriers.

**Cold War**

The potential for armed conflict with the [Soviet Union](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_Union) during the [Cold War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cold_War) pushed the U.S. Navy to continue its technological advancement by developing new weapons systems, ships, and aircraft. United States naval strategy changed to that of forward deployment in support of U.S. allies with an emphasis on carrier battle groups.

The Navy was a major participant in the [Vietnam War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam_War), blockaded Cuba during the [Cuban Missile Crisis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuban_Missile_Crisis), and, through the use of [ballistic missile submarines](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ballistic_missile_submarines), became an important aspect of the United States' [nuclear strategic deterrence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mutual_assured_destruction) policy. The United States Navy conducted various combat operations in the Persian Gulf against Iran in 1987 and 1988, most notably [Operation Praying Mantis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Praying_Mantis). The Navy was extensively involved in [Operation Urgent Fury](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Urgent_Fury), [Operation Desert Shield](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Desert_Shield_(Gulf_War)), [Operation Desert Storm](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Desert_Storm), [Operation Deliberate Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Deliberate_Force), [Operation Allied Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Allied_Force), [Operation Desert Fox](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Desert_Fox) and [Operation Southern Watch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Southern_Watch).

The U.S. Navy has also been involved in Search and Rescue/Search and Salvage operations, sometimes in conjunction with vessels of other countries as well as with U.S. Coast Guard ships. Two examples are the [1966 Palomares B-52 crash](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1966_Palomares_B-52_crash) incident and search for the nuclear bombs, and the Task Force 71 of the Seventh Fleet operation in search for [Korean Air Lines Flight 007](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean_Air_Lines_Flight_007) shot down by the Soviets on Sept. 1, 1983.

**21st century**

When a crisis confronts the nation, the first question often asked by policymakers is: 'What naval forces are available and how fast can they be on station?'

—Admiral [Carlisle A. H. Trost](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlisle_A._H._Trost)



Six modern [amphibious assault ships](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amphibious_assault_ship) of the US Navy in formation

The United States Navy continues to be a major support to U.S. interests in the 21st century. Since the end of the [Cold War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cold_War), it has shifted its focus from preparations for large-scale war with the [Soviet Union](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_Union) to special operations and strike missions in regional conflicts. The Navy participated in [Operation Enduring Freedom](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_in_Afghanistan_(2001-present)), [Operation Iraqi Freedom](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Iraqi_Freedom), and is a major participant in the ongoing [War on Terror](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_on_Terror), largely in this capacity. Development continues on new ships and weapons, including the [*Gerald R. Ford* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerald_R._Ford_class_aircraft_carrier) aircraft carrier and the [Littoral combat ship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Littoral_combat_ship). Because of its size, weapons technology, and ability to project force far from U.S. shores, the current U.S. Navy remains a potent asset for the United States [Commander-in-Chief](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commander-in-Chief) (the [President of the United States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_the_United_States)).

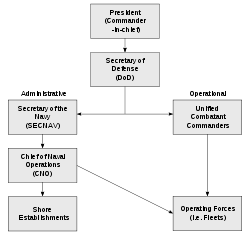
In 2007, the U.S. Navy joined with the [U.S. Marine Corps](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Marine_Corps) and [U.S. Coast Guard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Coast_Guard) to adopt a new maritime strategy called [A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Cooperative_Strategy_for_21st_Century_Seapower) that raises the notion of prevention of war to the same philosophical level as the conduct of war. The strategy was presented by the [Chief of Naval Operations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chief_of_Naval_Operations), the [Commandant of the Marine Corps](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commandant_of_the_Marine_Corps) and [Commandant of the Coast Guard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commandant_of_the_Coast_Guard) at the International Sea power Symposium in [Newport, R.I.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newport,_Rhode_Island) on 17 October 2007. The strategy recognized the economic links of the global system and how any disruption due to regional crises—man made or natural—can adversely impact the U.S. economy and quality of life. This new strategy charts a course for the Navy, [Coast Guard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coast_Guard) and [Marine Corps](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marine_Corps) to work collectively with each other and international partners to prevent these crises from occurring or reacting quickly should one occur to prevent negative impacts on the United States.

In 2010, Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Gary Roughead noted that demands on the Navy have grown as the fleet has shrunk and that in the face of declining budgets in the future, the US Navy must rely even more on international partnerships.

In its 2013 budget request, the Navy has focused on retaining all eleven big deck carriers, at the expense of cutting numbers of smaller ships and delaying the SSBN replacement.

**Organization**

Main article: [Structure of the United States Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Structure_of_the_United_States_Navy)



Simplified flowchart of U.S. Navy command structure

The Navy falls under the administration of the [Department of the Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Department_of_the_Navy), under civilian leadership of the [Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Secretary_of_the_Navy). The most senior naval officer is the [Chief of Naval Operations (CNO)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chief_of_Naval_Operations), a four-star admiral who is immediately under and reports to the Secretary of the Navy. At the same time, the Chief of Naval Operations is one of the [Joint Chiefs of Staff](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joint_Chiefs_of_Staff), which is the second-highest deliberatory body of the armed forces after the [United States National Security Council](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_National_Security_Council), although it only plays an advisory role to the President and does not nominally form part of the chain of command. The Secretary of the Navy and Chief of Naval Operations are responsible for organizing, recruiting, training, and equipping the Navy so that it is ready for operation under the command of the [Unified Combatant Commanders](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unified_Combatant_Command).

**Operating forces**

Main article: [List of units of the United States Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_units_of_the_United_States_Navy)

There are nine components in the operating forces of the U.S. Navy: the [United States Fleet Forces Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Fleet_Forces_Command), [United States Pacific Fleet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Pacific_Fleet), [United States Naval Forces Central Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Naval_Forces_Central_Command), [United States Naval Forces Europe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Naval_Forces_Europe), [Naval Network Warfare Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Network_Warfare_Command), [Navy Reserve](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Navy_Reserve), [United States Naval Special Warfare Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Naval_Special_Warfare_Command), [Operational Test and Evaluation Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operational_Test_and_Evaluation_Force), and [Military Sealift Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_Sealift_Command). Fleet Forces Command controls a number of unique capabilities, including Military Sealift Command, [Naval Expeditionary Combat Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Expeditionary_Combat_Command), and [Navy Cyber Forces](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Navy_Cyber_Forces).

The United States Navy has six active numbered fleets — [Third](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Third_Fleet), [Fifth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Fifth_Fleet), [Sixth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Sixth_Fleet), [Seventh Fleet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Seventh_Fleet) and [Tenth Fleets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Tenth_Fleet) are each led by a three-star [vice admiral](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vice_admiral_(United_States)), and the [Fourth Fleet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Fourth_Fleet) is led by a [rear admiral](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rear_admiral_(United_States)). These six fleets are further grouped under Fleet Forces Command (the former Atlantic Fleet), Pacific Fleet, Naval Forces Europe-Africa, and Naval Forces Central Command, whose commander also doubles as Commander Fifth Fleet; the first three commands being led by four-star full admirals. The [United States First Fleet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_First_Fleet) existed after the Second World War from 1947, but it was redesignated Third Fleet in early 1973. In early 2008, the Navy reactivated the [United States Fourth Fleet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Fourth_Fleet) to control operations in the area controlled by Southern Command, which consists of US assets in and around Central and South America.

**Shore establishments**



[USS *Kitty Hawk* (CV-63)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Kitty_Hawk_(CV-63)) docks at the U.S. Navy base in [Yokosuka, Japan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yokosuka,_Kanagawa).

Shore establishments exist to support the mission of the fleet through the use of facilities on land. Among the commands of the shore establishment, as of April 2011, are the [Naval Education and Training Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Education_and_Training_Command), the [Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commander,_Naval_Meteorology_and_Oceanography_Command), the [Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_and_Naval_Warfare_Systems_Command), the [Naval Facilities Engineering Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Facilities_Engineering_Command), the [Naval Supply Systems Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Supply_Systems_Command), the [Naval Air Systems Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Air_Systems_Command), the [Naval Sea Systems Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Sea_Systems_Command), the [Bureau of Medicine and Surgery](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bureau_of_Medicine_and_Surgery), the [Bureau of Naval Personnel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bureau_of_Naval_Personnel), the [United States Naval Academy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Naval_Academy), the [Naval Safety Center](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Safety_Center), the [Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Strike_and_Air_Warfare_Center), and the [United States Naval Observatory](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Naval_Observatory). Official Navy websites list the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations and the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) as part of the shore establishment, but these two entities effectively sit superior to the other organizations, playing a coordinating role.

**Relationships with other service branches**

**United States Marine Corps**



A [Marine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/US_Marine_Corp) [F/A-18](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F/A-18) from [VMFA-451](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/VMFA-451) prepares to launch from the [USS *Coral Sea* (CV-43)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Coral_Sea_(CV-43))

In 1834, the Marines came under the [Department of the Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Department_of_the_Navy). Historically, the United States Navy has had a unique relationship with the [United States Marine Corps](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Marine_Corps) (USMC), partly because they both specialize in seaborne operations. Together the Navy and Marine Corps form the Department of the Navy and report to the [Secretary of the Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secretary_of_the_Navy). However, the USMC is considered to be a distinct, separate service branch with its own uniformed service chief - the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC), a four star general.

The Navy and Marine Corps have a distinct relationship, the USMC depends on the Navy for religious support (i.e. chaplains) and medical support (i.e., dentists, medical doctors, medics known as "Corpsmen" and medical service staff); thus officers and enlisted sailors from the Navy fulfill these roles. When attached to Marine Corps units deployed to an operational environment they generally wear Marine camouflage uniforms, but otherwise they wear Navy [dress uniforms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dress_uniform) unless they opt to conform to USMC grooming standards (appearance).

In the operational environment, as an expeditionary force specializing in amphibious operations, Marines often embark on Navy ships in order to conduct operations from beyond territorial waters. Marine units deploying as part of a Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) operate under the command of the existing Marine chain of command. Although Marine units routinely operate from amphibious assault ships the relationship has evolved over the years much as the "CAG" (Commander of the Carrier Air Group/Wing) does not work for the carrier Commanding Officer (CO), but coordinates with the ship's CO and staff. Some Marine aviation squadrons, usually fixed-wing assigned to Carrier Air Wings (CVW) train and operate alongside Navy squadrons, flying similar missions and often flying sorties together under the cognizance of the "CAG". Aviation is where the Navy and Marine share the most common ground, since aircrews are guided in their use of aircraft by standard procedures outlined in series of publications known as NATOPS manuals.

**United States Coast Guard**

Main article: [United States Coast Guard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Coast_Guard)

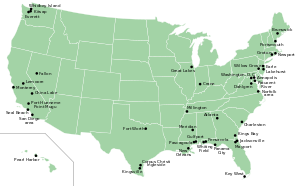
Although the [Posse Comitatus Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Posse_Comitatus_Act), which prevents federal military personnel from acting in a law enforcement capacity, applies only to the Army and Air Force, Department of Defense rules effectively require the Navy and Marine Corps to act as if Posse Comitatus did apply, preventing them from enforcing Federal law. The [United States Coast Guard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Coast_Guard) fulfills this law enforcement role in naval operations. It provides [Law Enforcement Detachments](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_Enforcement_Detachments) (LEDETs) to Navy vessels, where they perform arrests and other law enforcement duties during Navy boarding and interdiction missions. In times of war, or when directed by the President, the Coast Guard operates as a service in the Navy and is subject to the orders of the Secretary of the Navy until it is transferred back to the [Department of Homeland Security](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Department_of_Homeland_Security). At other times, Coast Guard [Port Security Units](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Port_Security_Unit) are sent overseas to guard the security of ports and other assets. The Coast Guard also jointly staffs the Navy's Naval Coastal Warfare Groups and Squadrons (the latter of which were known as Harbor Defense Commands until late-2004), which oversee defense efforts in foreign littoral combat and inshore areas. Additionally, Coast Guard and Navy vessels sometimes operate together in [search and rescue](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Search_and_rescue) operations.

**Personnel**

Main article: [Personnel of the United States Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personnel_of_the_United_States_Navy)

**Bases**

Main article: [List of United States Navy installations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_Navy_installations)



Map of Navy bases in the United States

The size, complexity, and international presence of the United States Navy require a large number of navy installations to support its operations. While the majority of bases are located inside the United States itself, the Navy maintains a significant number of facilities abroad, either in U.S.-controlled territories or in foreign countries under a [Status of Forces Agreement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Status_of_Forces_Agreement) (SOFA).

**Eastern United States**

The second largest concentration of installations is in [Hampton Roads](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hampton_Roads), [Virginia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virginia), where the Navy occupies over 36,000 acres (146 km²) of land. Located in Hampton Roads are [NS Norfolk](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NS_Norfolk), homeport of the Atlantic Fleet, [NAS Oceana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NAS_Oceana), a [Master Jet Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Master_Jet_Base&action=edit&redlink=1), [Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Amphibious_Base_Little_Creek), as well as a number of Navy and commercial shipyards that service Navy vessels. There is also a Naval base in Charleston, SC. This is home to the Nuclear A-School. The state of [Florida](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florida) is the location of three major bases, [Naval Station Mayport](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Station_Mayport), the Navy's fourth largest, in [Jacksonville, Florida](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacksonville,_Florida), [Naval Air Station Jacksonville](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Air_Station_Jacksonville), a Master Air Anti-submarine Warfare base, and [Naval Air Station Pensacola](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Air_Station_Pensacola), home of the [Naval Education and Training Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Education_and_Training_Command), the Naval Air Technical Training Center that provides specialty training for enlisted aviation personnel, and the primary flight training base for Navy and Marine Corps [Naval Flight Officers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Flight_Officer) and enlisted [Naval Aircrewmen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Aircrewman). There is also Naval Support Activity in Panama City Beach, Florida which is home to the Navy Diving and Salvage Training Center. The main U.S. Navy [submarine bases](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Submarine_base) on the east coast are located in [Groton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groton,_Connecticut), [Connecticut](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Connecticut) and [Kings Bay, Georgia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kings_Bay,_Georgia). There are also naval bases in [Portsmouth, New Hampshire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portsmouth,_New_Hampshire). [Naval Station Great Lakes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Station_Great_Lakes), north of [Chicago](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chicago), [Illinois](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illinois) is the home of the navy's [boot camp](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Navy_Recruit_Training) for enlisted sailors.

**Western United States and Hawaii**

The Navy's largest complex is [China Lake](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Air_Weapons_Station_China_Lake), [California](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California), which covers 1.1 million acres (4,500 km²) of land, or approximately 1/3 of the United States Navy's total land holdings.

[Naval Base San Diego](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Base_San_Diego), [California](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California) is principal home to the Pacific Fleet (although the [headquarters](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Headquarters) is located in [Pearl Harbor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pearl_Harbor)). [NAS North Island](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NAS_North_Island) is located on the north side of [Coronado](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coronado,_California), and is home to Headquarters for Naval Air Forces and Naval Air Force Pacific, the bulk of the Pacific Fleet's helicopter squadrons, and part of the West Coast [aircraft carrier](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aircraft_carrier) fleet. The [Naval Special Warfare Center](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Special_Warfare_Center) is the primary training center for [SEALs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SEAL), and is also located on Coronado. The other major collection of naval bases on the west coast is in [Puget Sound](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puget_Sound), [Washington](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_(U.S._state)). Among them, [Naval Station Everett](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Station_Everett) is one of the newer bases and the Navy states that it is its most modern facility. [NAS Fallon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NAS_Fallon), Nevada serves as the primary training ground for Navy Strike aircrews, and is home to the [Naval Strike Air Warfare Center](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Strike_Air_Warfare_Center). [Master Jet Bases](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Master_Jet_Base&action=edit&redlink=1) are also located at [NAS Lemoore](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NAS_Lemoore), California and [NAS Whidbey Island](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NAS_Whidbey_Island), Washington, while the carrier-based airborne early warning aircraft community and major air test activities are located at [NAS Point Mugu](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NAS_Point_Mugu), California. The naval presence in [Hawaii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii) is centered on [Pearl Harbor Naval Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pearl_Harbor), which hosts the headquarters of the Pacific Fleet and many of its subordinate commands.

**United States territories**

[Guam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guam#Villages_and_military_bases), an island strategically located in the Western Pacific Ocean, maintains a sizable U.S. Navy presence, including [Naval Base Guam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Base_Guam). The westernmost U.S. territory, it contains a natural deep water harbor capable of harboring even aircraft carriers in emergencies. Its [naval air station](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_air_station) was deactivated in 1995 and its flight activities transferred to nearby [Andersen Air Force Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andersen_Air_Force_Base). [Puerto Rico](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puerto_Rico) in the Caribbean formerly housed [Roosevelt Roads Naval Station](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roosevelt_Roads_Naval_Station), which was shut down in 2004 shortly after the controversial closure of the live ordnance training area on nearby [Vieques Island](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vieques,_Puerto_Rico).

**Foreign countries**

The largest overseas base is in [Yokosuka](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Fleet_Activities_Yokosuka), [Japan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japan), which serves as the homeport for the Navy's largest forward-deployed fleet and is a significant base of operations in the Western Pacific. European operations revolve around facilities in [Italy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italy) ([Sigonella](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Air_Station_Sigonella) and [Naples](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Computer_and_Telecommunications_Station_Naples,_Italy)), [Spain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Station_Rota,_Spain) and [Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece) with Naples as the homeport for the [Sixth Fleet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Sixth_Fleet) and CNRE Command Naval Region Europe, which are based in [Gaeta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaeta). In the Middle East, naval facilities are located almost exclusively in countries bordering the [Persian Gulf](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persian_Gulf), with [Manama, Bahrain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manama,_Bahrain) serving as the headquarters of [U.S. Naval Forces Central Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Naval_Forces_Central_Command) and [U.S. Fifth Fleet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Fifth_Fleet). [Guantánamo Bay](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guantanamo_Bay_Naval_Base) in [Cuba](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuba) is the oldest overseas facility and has become known in recent years as the location of a [detention camp](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guantanamo_Bay_detention_camp) for suspected [al-Qaeda](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Qaeda) operatives.

**Equipment**

Main article: [Equipment of the United States Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equipment_of_the_United_States_Navy)

The Navy operates 290 ships, 3,700 aircraft, 50,000 non-combat vehicles and owns 75,200 buildings on 3,300,000 acres (13,000 km2). The Navy plans to slash the dependence on [fossil fuels](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fossil_fuel).

**Ships**

Main article: [United States Navy ships](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Navy_ships)

See also: [List of United States Navy ships](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_Navy_ships) and [List of current ships of the United States Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_current_ships_of_the_United_States_Navy)

The names of commissioned ships of the U.S. Navy are prefixed with the letters "USS", designating "United States Ship". Non-commissioned, civilian-manned vessels of the Navy have names that begin with "USNS", standing for "United States Naval Ship" The names of ships are officially selected by the [Secretary of the Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Secretary_of_the_Navy), often to honor important people or places. Additionally, each ship is given a letter-based [hull classification symbol](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hull_classification_symbol) (for example, CVN or DDG) to indicate the vessel's type and number. All ships in the Navy inventory are placed in the [Naval Vessel Register](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Vessel_Register), which is part of "the Navy List" (required by article 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea). The Register tracks data such as the current status of a ship, the date of its commissioning, and the date of its decommissioning. Vessels that are removed from the register prior to disposal are said to be *stricken* from the register. The Navy also maintains a [reserve fleet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Navy_reserve_fleets) of inactive vessels that are maintained for reactivation in times of need.

The U.S. Navy was one of the first to install [nuclear reactors](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_reactor) aboard naval vessels; today, nuclear energy powers all of U.S. active aircraft carriers and [submarines](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Submarine). In the case of the [*Nimitz*-class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nimitz_class_aircraft_carrier) carrier, two [naval reactors](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Naval_reactor) give the ship almost unlimited range and provide enough electrical energy to power a city of 100,000 people. The U.S. Navy previously operated nuclear-powered cruisers and destroyers, but all have been decommissioned.

The U.S. Navy has identified a need for 313 combat ships, but under the current plans will only be able to afford 232 to 243.

**Aircraft carriers**



[USS *Nimitz* (CVN-68)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Nimitz_(CVN-68)), a [*Nimitz*-class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nimitz_class_aircraft_carrier) aircraft carrier

The Navy has established a minimum requirement for 11 aircraft carriers, but will drop to 10 when the *Enterprise* retires before the *Gerald R. Ford* is ready for service. Former defense Secretary [Robert Gates](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Gates) has questioned this need.

A carrier is typically deployed along with a host of additional vessels, forming a [carrier strike group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carrier_strike_group). The supporting ships, which usually include three or four [Aegis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aegis_combat_system)-equipped cruisers and destroyers, a frigate, and two attack submarines, are tasked with protecting the carrier from air, missile, sea, and undersea threats as well as providing additional strike capabilities themselves. Ready logistics support for the group is provided by a combined ammunition, oiler, and supply ship.

* [*Enterprise* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Enterprise_(CVN-65)) (1 in commission)
* [*Nimitz* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nimitz_class_aircraft_carrier) (10 in commission)
* [*Gerald R. Ford* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerald_R._Ford_class_aircraft_carrier) (1 under construction, at least 2 more planned)

**Amphibious warfare vessels**



[USS *Bataan* (LHD-5)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Bataan_(LHD-5)), a [*Wasp* class amphibious assault ship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wasp_class_amphibious_assault_ship)

[Amphibious assault ships](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amphibious_assault_ship) are the centerpieces of US amphibious warfare and fulfill the same power projection role as aircraft carriers except that their striking force comprises land forces instead of aircraft. They deliver, command, coordinate, and fully support all elements of a 2200-strong [Marine Expeditionary Unit](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marine_Expeditionary_Unit) in an amphibious assault using both air and amphibious vehicles. Resembling small aircraft carriers, amphibious assault ships are capable of [V/STOL](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V/STOL), [STOVL](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/STOVL), [VTOL](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/VTOL), tiltrotor, and rotary wing aircraft operations. They also contain a [well deck](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Well_deck) to support the use of [Landing Craft Air Cushion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landing_Craft_Air_Cushion) (LCAC) and other amphibious assault watercraft. Recently, amphibious assault ships have begun to be deployed as the core of an [expeditionary strike group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Expeditionary_strike_group), which usually consists of an additional amphibious transport dock and dock landing ship for amphibious warfare and an Aegis-equipped cruiser and destroyer, frigate, and attack submarine for group defense. Amphibious assault ships are typically named after World War II aircraft carriers.

* [*Tarawa* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarawa_class_amphibious_assault_ship) (1 in commission, 4 decommissioned)
* [*Wasp* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wasp_class_amphibious_assault_ship) (8 in commission)
* [*America* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/America_class_amphibious_assault_ship) (1 under construction, at least 3 more planned)

[Amphibious transport docks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amphibious_transport_dock) are warships that embark, transport, and land Marines, supplies, and equipment in a supporting role during amphibious warfare missions. With a landing platform, amphibious transport docks also have the capability to serve as secondary aviation support for an expeditionary group. All amphibious transport docks can operate helicopters, LCACs, and other conventional amphibious vehicles while the newer *San Antonio* class of ships has been explicitly designed to operate all three elements of the Marines' "mobility triad": [Expeditionary Fighting Vehicles](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Expeditionary_Fighting_Vehicle) (EFVs), the [V-22 Osprey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V-22_Osprey) tiltrotor aircraft, and the previously mentioned LCACs. Amphibious transport docks are named for cities, except for [USS *Mesa Verde* (LPD-19)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Mesa_Verde_(LPD-19)), named for [Mesa Verde National Park](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mesa_Verde_National_Park) in [Colorado](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colorado), and three *San Antonio* class ships named in memory of the [September 11, 2001 attacks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/September_11,_2001_attacks).



[USS *San Antonio* (LPD-17)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_San_Antonio_(LPD-17)), a [*San Antonio* class amphibious transport dock](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Antonio_class_amphibious_transport_dock)

* [*Austin* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Austin_class_amphibious_transport_dock) (2 in commission, 10 decommissioned)
* [*San Antonio* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Antonio_class_amphibious_transport_dock) (5 in commission, 4 under construction, 1 more planned)

The [dock landing ship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dock_landing_ship) is a medium amphibious transport that is designed specifically to support and operate [Landing Craft Air Cushions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landing_Craft_Air_Cushion) (LCACs), though it is able to operate other amphibious assault vehicles in the United States inventory as well. Dock landing ships are normally deployed as a component of an expeditionary strike group's amphibious assault contingent, operating as a secondary launch platform for LCACs. All dock landing ships are named after locations in the United States.

* [*Whidbey Island* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whidbey_Island_class_dock_landing_ship) (8 in commission)
* [*Harpers Ferry* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harpers_Ferry_class_dock_landing_ship) (4 in commission)

**Surface vessels**



[USS *Port Royal* (CG-73)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Port_Royal_(CG-73)), a [*Ticonderoga* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ticonderoga_class_cruiser) [cruiser](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cruiser)

[Cruisers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cruiser) are large surface combat vessels that conduct anti-air/anti-missile warfare, surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, and strike operations independently or as members of a larger task force. Modern guided missile cruisers were developed out of a need to counter the anti-ship missile threat facing the United States Navy. This led to the development of the [AN/SPY-1](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AN/SPY-1) phased array radar and the [Standard missile](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RIM-67_Standard) with the [Aegis combat system](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aegis_combat_system) coordinating the two. *Ticonderoga*-class cruisers became the first to equip Aegis and were put to use primarily as anti-air and anti-missile defense in a battle force protection role. Later developments of [vertical launch systems](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vertical_launch_system) and the [Tomahawk missile](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BGM-109_Tomahawk) gave cruisers additional long-range land and sea strike capability, making them capable of both offensive and defensive battle operations. All cruisers since CG-47 have been named for famous battles with [USS *Thomas S. Gates* (CG-51)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Thomas_S._Gates_(CG-51)) as the only exception. Previously, cruisers were either named for cities (until CG-12), former important navy figures (CG-15 to CG-35), or states (CGN-36 to CGN-41).

* [*Ticonderoga* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ticonderoga_class_cruiser) (22 in commission, 5 decommissioned)

[Destroyers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Destroyers) are multi-mission medium surface ships capable of sustained performance in anti-air, anti-submarine, anti-ship, and offensive strike operations. Like cruisers, the guided missile destroyers of the Navy are primarily focused on surface strikes using [Tomahawk missiles](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BGM-109_Tomahawk) and fleet defense through Aegis and the [Standard missile](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RIM-67_Standard). Destroyers additionally specialize in anti-submarine warfare and are equipped with [VLA rockets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ASROC) and [LAMPS Mk III Sea Hawk](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sikorsky_SH-60_Seahawk) helicopters to deal with underwater threats. When deployed with a carrier strike group or expeditionary strike group, destroyers and their fellow Aegis-equipped cruisers are primarily tasked with defending the fleet while providing secondary strike capabilities. Destroyers have been named for important navy personnel and heroes since the [USS *Bainbridge* (DD-1)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Bainbridge_(DD-1)).

* [*Arleigh Burke* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arleigh_Burke_class_destroyer) (60 in commission, one awaiting commissioning, one under construction, at least three more planned)



[USS *Bainbridge* (DDG-96)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Bainbridge_(DDG-96)), an [*Arleigh Burke*-class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arleigh_Burke_class_destroyer) [guided missile destroyer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Destroyer)

Modern U.S. [frigates](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frigate) mainly perform anti-submarine warfare for carrier strike groups and amphibious expeditionary groups and provide armed escort for supply convoys and merchant shipping. They are designed to protect friendly ships against hostile submarines in low to medium threat environments, using torpedoes and LAMPS helicopters. Independently, frigates are able to conduct counterdrug missions and other maritime interception operations. The U.S. Navy expects to retire and replace its current class of frigates by 2020 as the [Littoral Combat Ships](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Littoral_Combat_Ship) are introduced into operation. As in the case of destroyers, frigates are named after naval heroes.

* [*Oliver Hazard Perry* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oliver_Hazard_Perry_class_frigate) (19 in commission, 8 in active reserve, 24 decommissioned)

**Submarines**

Main article: [Submarines in the United States Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Submarines_in_the_United_States_Navy)



[USS *Kentucky* (SSBN-737)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Kentucky_(SSBN-737)), an [*Ohio* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ohio_class_submarine) [ballistic missile submarine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ballistic_missile_submarine)

The primary missions of submarines in the U.S. Navy are peacetime engagement, surveillance and intelligence, special operations, precision strikes, battlegroup operations, and control of the seas. The U.S. Navy operates two types: ballistic submarines and attack submarines. Ballistic submarines have only one mission: to carry and launch the nuclear [Trident missile](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trident_missile). Attack submarines have several tactical missions, including sinking ships and other subs, launching [cruise missiles](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cruise_missile), gathering intelligence, and assisting in special operations. Earlier attack submarines (such as the [*Los Angeles* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Los_Angeles_class_submarine)) are typically named for cities while [*Ohio* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ohio_class_submarine) and later attack submarines are typically named for states. Attack submarines prior to the *Los Angeles* class were named for "denizens of the deep", while pre-*Ohio* class ballistic missile submarines were named for "famous Americans" (including foreigners with notable connections to the United States).

* [*Ohio* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ohio_class_submarine) ballistic missile submarines (18 in commission, with 4 converted into guided missile submarines)
* [*Los Angeles* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Los_Angeles_class_submarine) attack submarines (43 in commission, 2 in reserve, 17 decommissioned)
* [*Seawolf* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seawolf_class_submarine) attack submarines (3 in commission)
* [*Virginia* class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virginia_class_submarine) attack submarines (7 in commission, 3 under construction, 4 ordered, at least 4 more planned)

**Aircraft**



Four Navy [F/A-18F Super Hornets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F/A-18E/F_Super_Hornet).

Main articles: [List of United States naval aircraft](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_naval_aircraft) and [List of military aircraft of the United States (naval)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_military_aircraft_of_the_United_States_(naval))

See also: [List of United States Navy aircraft squadrons](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_Navy_aircraft_squadrons)

Carrier-based aircraft are able to strike air, sea, and land targets far from a carrier strike group while protecting friendly forces from enemy aircraft, ships, and submarines. In peacetime, aircraft's ability to project the threat of sustained attack from a mobile platform on the seas gives United States leaders significant diplomatic and crisis-management options. Aircraft additionally provide [logistics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Logistics) support to maintain the Navy's readiness and, through helicopters, supply platforms with which to conduct [search and rescue](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Search_and_rescue), [special operations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_operations), [anti-submarine warfare](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-submarine_warfare) (ASW), and [anti-surface warfare](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-surface_warfare) (ASuW).

The U.S. Navy began to research the use of aircraft at sea in the 1910s, with Lt Theodore G. “Spuds” Ellyson becoming the first Naval aviator on 28 January 1911, and commissioned its first aircraft carrier, [USS *Langley*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Langley_(CV-1)), in 1922. United States naval aviation fully came of age in World War II, when it became clear following the [Attack on Pearl Harbor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attack_on_Pearl_Harbor), the [Battle of the Coral Sea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Coral_Sea), and the [Battle of Midway](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Midway) that aircraft carriers and the planes that they carried had replaced the battleship as the greatest weapon on the seas. Leading Navy aircraft in World War II included the [Grumman F4F Wildcat](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grumman_F4F_Wildcat), the [Grumman F6F Hellcat](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grumman_F6F_Hellcat), the Chance [Vought F4U Corsair](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vought_F4U_Corsair), the [Douglas SBD Dauntless](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_SBD_Dauntless), and the [Grumman TBF Avenger](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grumman_TBF_Avenger). Navy aircraft also played a significant role in conflicts during the following Cold War years, with the [F-4 Phantom II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F-4_Phantom_II) and the [F-14 Tomcat](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F-14_Tomcat) becoming military icons of the era. The Navy's current primary fighter and attack airplanes are the multi-mission [F/A-18C/D Hornet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F/A-18_Hornet) and its newer cousin, the [F/A-18E/F Super Hornet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F/A-18E/F_Super_Hornet). The [F-35 Lightning II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F-35_Lightning_II) is presently under development and is scheduled to replace the C and D versions of the Hornet beginning in 2012.

The Aircraft Investment Plan sees Naval aviation growing from 30 percent of current aviation forces to half of all procurement funding over the next three decades.

**Weapons**

Main article: [List of United States Navy weapons](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_Navy_weapons)

Current U.S. Navy shipboard weapons systems are almost entirely focused on missiles, both as a weapon and as a threat. In an offensive role, missiles are intended to strike targets at long distances with accuracy and precision. Because they are unmanned weapons, missiles allow for attacks on heavily defended targets without risk to human pilots. Land strikes are the domain of the [BGM-109 Tomahawk](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BGM-109_Tomahawk), which was first deployed in the 1980s and is continually being updated to increase its capabilities. For anti-ship strikes, the Navy's dedicated missile is the [Harpoon missile](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harpoon_missile). To defend against enemy missile attack, the Navy operates a number of systems that are all coordinated by the Aegis combat system. Medium-long range defense is provided by the [Standard Missile 2](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RIM-67_Standard), which has been deployed since the 1980s. The Standard missile doubles as the primary shipboard anti-aircraft weapon and is undergoing development for use in theater ballistic missile defense. Short range defense against missiles is provided by the [Phalanx CIWS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phalanx_CIWS) and the more recently developed [RIM-162 Evolved Sea Sparrow Missile](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ESSM). In addition to missiles, the Navy employs [Mark 46](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_46_torpedo) and [Mark 50 torpedoes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_50_torpedo) and various types of naval mines.



Aviation Ordnancemen loading [GBU-12](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GBU-12_Paveway_II) bombs.

Naval fixed-wing aircraft employ much of the same weapons as the [United States Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Force) for both air-to-air and air-to-surface combat. Air engagements are handled by the heat-seeking [Sidewinder](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AIM-9_Sidewinder) and the radar guided [AMRAAM](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AIM-120_AMRAAM) missiles along with the [M61 Vulcan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M61_Vulcan) cannon for close range dogfighting. For surface strikes, Navy aircraft utilize a combination of missiles, smart bombs, and dumb bombs. On the list of available missiles are the [Maverick](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AGM-65_Maverick), [SLAM-ER](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Standoff_Land_Attack_Missile) and [JSOW](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AGM-154_Joint_Standoff_Weapon). Smart bombs include the GPS-guided [JDAM](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/JDAM) and the laser-guided [Paveway](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paveway) series. Unguided munitions such as dumb bombs and [cluster bombs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cluster_bomb) make up the rest of the weapons deployed by fixed-wing aircraft.

Rotary aircraft weapons are focused on anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and light to medium surface engagements. To combat submarines, helicopters use Mark 46 and Mark 50 torpedoes. Against small watercraft, they utilize [Hellfire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AGM-114_Hellfire) and [Penguin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penguin_missile) air to surface missiles. Helicopters also employ various types of mounted anti-personnel machine guns, including the [M60](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M60_machine_gun), [M240](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M240_machine_gun), [GAU-16/A](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GAU-16), and [GAU-17/A](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minigun).

Nuclear weapons in the U.S. Navy arsenal are deployed through ballistic missile submarines and aircraft. The [*Ohio*-class submarine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ohio_class_submarine) carries the latest iteration of the [Trident missile](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trident_missile), a three stage, underwater launched, nuclear [ICBM](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ICBM) with [MIRV](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MIRV) capability; the current Trident II (D5) version is expected to be in service past 2020. The Navy's other nuclear weapon is the air-deployed [B61 nuclear bomb](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/B61_nuclear_bomb). The B61 is a thermonuclear device that can be dropped by strike aircraft such as the F/A-18 Hornet and Super Hornet at high speed from a large range of altitudes. It can be released through free-fall or parachute and can be set to detonate in the air or on the ground.

**Naval Jack**



Former U.S. Naval Jack



[*The Lone Sailor*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lone_Sailor) at the [United States Navy Memorial](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Navy_Memorial) in [Washington D.C.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_D.C.)

The current [naval jack](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maritime_flags#Jacks) of the United States is the [First Navy Jack](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Navy_Jack), traditionally regarded as having been used during the American Revolutionary War. On 31 May 2002, [Secretary of the Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secretary_of_the_Navy) [Gordon England](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gordon_England) directed all U.S. naval ships to fly the First Navy Jack for the duration of the "[War on Terror](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_on_Terror)". Many ships chose to shift colors later that year on the first anniversary of the [September 11, 2001 attacks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/September_11,_2001_attacks). The previous naval jack was a blue field with 50 white stars, identical to the canton of the [ensign](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ensign) (the [flag of the United States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_of_the_United_States)) both in appearance and size, and continues to remain in use with vessels of the [U.S. Coast Guard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Coast_Guard) and [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Oceanic_and_Atmospheric_Administration). A jack of similar design was used in 1794, though with 13 stars arranged in a 3–2–3–2–3 pattern. When a ship is moored or anchored, the jack is flown from the [bow](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bow_(ship)) of the ship while the ensign is flown from the [stern](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stern). When underway, the ensign is raised on the mainmast. The First Naval Jack, however, has always been flown on the oldest ship in the active American fleet, currently the [USS *Constitution*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Constitution).

**Notable sailors**

Main article: [List of United States Navy people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_Navy_people)

Many past and present United States historical figures have served in the Navy. Notable officers include [John Paul Jones](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Paul_Jones), [John Barry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Barry_(naval_officer)) (Continental Navy officer and first flag officer of the United States Navy), [James Lawrence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Lawrence) (whose [last words](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Last_words) "don't give up the ship" are memorialized in [Bancroft Hall](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bancroft_Hall) at the [United States Naval Academy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Naval_Academy)), [Stephen Decatur, Jr.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephen_Decatur), [David Farragut](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Farragut), [David Dixon Porter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Dixon_Porter), [Oliver Hazard Perry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oliver_Hazard_Perry), [Commodore Matthew Perry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_Perry_(naval_officer)) (whose [Black Ships](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Ships) forced the [opening of Japan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convention_of_Kanagawa)), and [Chester Nimitz](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chester_Nimitz), Admiral of the Pacific Fleet in World War II.

A number of [presidents](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_the_United_States) served in the Navy before or early in their political careers, including [John F. Kennedy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_F._Kennedy) (who commanded the famous [*PT-109*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Motor_Torpedo_Boat_PT-109)), [Lyndon B. Johnson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyndon_B._Johnson), [Richard Nixon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Nixon), [Gerald Ford](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerald_Ford), [Jimmy Carter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jimmy_Carter), and [George H.W. Bush](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_H.W._Bush). Both [Theodore Roosevelt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodore_Roosevelt) and [Franklin D. Roosevelt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franklin_D._Roosevelt) were the [Assistant Secretary of the Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assistant_Secretary_of_the_Navy) prior to their presidencies. Many members of [Congress](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Congress) served in the Navy, notably [U.S. Senators](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Senator) [Bob Kerrey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_Kerrey), [John McCain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_McCain), and [John Kerry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Kerry). Other notable former members of the U.S. Navy include astronauts, entertainers, authors, and professional athletes such as [David Robinson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Robinson_(basketball)) and [Roger Staubach](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_Staubach).

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|  | [***United States Navy portal***](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:United_States_Navy) |

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