



# Backgrounder

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

### Description and Purpose:

The combat-proven F/A-18E/F Super Hornet delivers cutting-edge, next-generation multi-role strike fighter capability that is available today, 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 today's newest advances in multimission capability and growth for decades to come in missions, roles and technology. The Super Hornet's suite of integrated and networked systems provides enhanced interoperability and support for ground forces as well as the overall force commander.

### Customers:

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

Both 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:

<b>Max takeoff weight</b>	66,000 lb (29,937 kg)	<b>Field landing weight</b>	50,600 lb (22,951 kg)
<b>Max catapult payload</b>	34,000 lb (15,422 kg)	<b>Speed</b>	Mach 1.8+
<b>Max bringback payload</b>	E: 9,900 lb (4,491 kg) F: 9,000 lb (4,082 kg)	<b>Combat ceiling</b>	50,000+ ft (15,240+ m)
		<b>Design load factor</b>	7.6g

With a total of 11 weapons stations, the Super Hornet gives warfighters extraordinary payload flexibility by carrying a mixed load 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.

A comprehensive spiral development design concept – including the addition of the APG-79 active electronically scanned array (AESA) radar – offers continuously improving overall mission capability and supportability. Integrating the APG-79 AESA radar, Advanced Targeting Forward Looking Infrared (ATFLIR) system, Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing System (JHMCS), Multifunctional Information Distribution System (MIDS), advanced high capacity computer system, and state-of-the-art cockpit provides the warfighter with intuitive situational awareness.

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.

Two 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 (FADEC) allows for unrestricted engine response in any phase of flight.

**Background:**

The first operational F/A-18E/F Super Hornet squadron – VFA-115 – stood up in June 2001 and deployed aboard the USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) in July 2002. In April 2005, Boeing delivered the first Block II Super Hornet, complete with AESA radar.

Since inception, the Super Hornet program has remained on time, on weight, 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 565 aircraft.

In 1999, the F/A-18 program team was awarded the prestigious Collier Trophy. The award recognizes the greatest achievement in aeronautics and astronautics in the United States, and has been called the greatest and most prized of all aeronautical honors in the country.

The F/A-18 program team won the *Aviation Week* Program Excellence Award in November 2005.

In May 2007, the Commonwealth of Australia signed a Letter of Offer and Acceptance to buy 24 F/A-18F Super Hornets, becoming the first international Super Hornet customer. In March 2010, the first five Super Hornets were delivered to Australia, at RAAF Base Amberley. RAAF Super Hornet deliveries were completed ahead of schedule in October 2011.

Boeing delivered 210 Super Hornets to the Navy during MYP I, which spanned fiscal years 2000 through 2004. The company then received a second multi-year contract that included 213 F/A-18E/F and EA-18G aircraft, and spanned fiscal years 2005 through 2009. Through fiscal year 2009, 44 more aircraft were added to MYP II, including 24

F/A-18Fs acquired by the Royal Australian Air Force under a Foreign Military Sales agreement with the U.S. Navy.

On Sept. 28, 2010, the U.S. Navy awarded Boeing a new F/A-18E/F and EA-18G multi-year contract for 124 aircraft that will be delivered from 2012-2015. The contract included 66 Super Hornets and 58 Growlers. The Navy has since expanded the contract with the addition of 24 F/A-18E/Fs.

**Miscellaneous:**

- Operational in 10 U.S. Navy Carrier Air Wings (19 squadrons)
- 491 Super Hornets have been delivered as of June 1, 2012
  - 258 F-model Super Hornets
  - 209 E-model Super Hornets
  - 24 Royal Australian Air Force F/A-18Fs

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June 2012