

# McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II - Intrepid Museum

## McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II on the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum

The F-4 Phantom II displayed on the Intrepid Museum is a powerful testament to the jet's remarkable service history and enduring impact on military aviation.

## \*\*1. Historical Background and Significance:\*\*

The F-4 Phantom II, originally designed for the US Navy, became a ubiquitous symbol of American air power during the Vietnam War. Its impressive speed, payload capacity, and versatility led to its adoption by the US Air Force, Marine Corps, and numerous allied nations. The Phantom II was a true multi-role fighter, capable of air superiority, ground attack, and reconnaissance missions. It was instrumental in shaping air combat tactics and proving the effectiveness of large, twin-engine fighter designs.

## \*\*2. Technical Specifications (General for F-4, not specific to Intrepid's aircraft):\*\*

\* \*\*Crew:\*\* 2 (pilot and weapons systems officer/radar intercept officer)

\* \*\*Length:\*\* 63 ft (19.2 m)

\* \*\*Wingspan:\*\* 38 ft 5 in (11.7 m)

\* \*\*Height:\*\* 16 ft 6 in (5.0 m)

\* \*\*Maximum speed:\*\* Mach 2.23 (1,472 mph, 2,370 km/h)

\* \*\*Combat radius:\*\* Up to 430 mi (690 km) depending on configuration

\* \*\*Ferry range:\*\* 1,750 mi (2,820 km) with external tanks

\* \*\*Engine:\*\* Two General Electric J79 turbojet engines

\* \*\*Armament:\*\*

- \* M61 Vulcan 20mm cannon

- \* Up to 18,650 lbs (8,480 kg) of bombs, rockets, missiles on nine external hardpoints (AIM-7 Sparrow, AIM-9 Sidewinder, AGM-12 Bullpup, etc.)

### \*\*3. Interesting Facts and Stories (Specific to Intrepid's F-4B BuNo 153078):\*\*

- \* The F-4 on the Intrepid is an F-4B, the initial Navy variant. Its Bureau Number (BuNo) is 153078.

- \* It saw service with both VF-11 "Red Rippers" and VF-31 "Tomcatters" squadrons.

- \* While the specific combat history of *this particular aircraft* isn't readily available on the museum website, both squadrons were heavily involved in Vietnam War combat operations, including Operation Rolling Thunder and Operation Linebacker.

- \* The aircraft was eventually used as a training aircraft before being retired and finding its final home on the Intrepid.

### \*\*4. Its Role in History:\*\*

- \* \*\*Vietnam War Workhorse:\*\* The Phantom II played a pivotal role in the Vietnam War, engaging in countless air-to-air and air-to-ground missions. Its speed and firepower made it a formidable adversary.

- \* \*\*Cold War Guardian:\*\* The F-4 served as a frontline fighter during the Cold War, providing air defense and nuclear deterrence capabilities to the US and its allies.

- \* \*\*Technological Advancement:\*\* The F-4 pushed the boundaries of aviation technology with its

powerful engines, advanced radar systems, and sophisticated weapons systems. It paved the way for future generations of fighter aircraft.

\* **Global Influence:** The F-4 was exported to numerous countries, becoming a mainstay of many air forces around the world, demonstrating its adaptability and effectiveness in diverse operational environments.

#### **5. Current Condition and Display Information:**

- \* The F-4B on the Intrepid is displayed on the flight deck, allowing visitors to get up close and appreciate its size and power.

- \* It is painted in the markings of VF-11 "Red Rippers."

- \* Visitors can walk around the aircraft and view it from multiple angles. Unfortunately, access to the cockpit is generally not available to the public.

- \* The Intrepid Museum provides information about the F-4 through signage and exhibits, placing the aircraft in context within the larger narrative of naval aviation history.

It's important to note that while I have provided general information about the F-4, the specific combat history and details of the *exact* aircraft on the Intrepid might be available through further research at the museum itself or by contacting the Intrepid Museum's curatorial staff. They often have more detailed records about the individual aircraft in their collection.