

PROTECT

WAR

BOMBER JACKET



In 1917, the U.S. Army established the Aviation Clothing Board, hoping to find a solution to keep World War I pilots warm as they flew in early airplanes, which had open-air cockpits. They settled on a short leather jacket with snug collars and cuffs, sometimes lined in fur. By the time World War II rolled around, this original design had given way to two different variations: the A-2, made of horsehide leather with flap pockets, and the B-15, often made of nylon, with a fur or fleece collar and slanted “slash” pockets. The more-insulated B-15 emerged as the popular choice among World War II pilots, whose cockpits were now enclosed but still subject to freezing temperatures. The B-15 gave way to the ubiquitous M-1 bomber jacket of the '50s and '60s, which featured a few small modifications. First, the fur collar was replaced by a less bulky knit, since the fur sometimes got in the way of parachute harnesses. The earlier jackets were issued in a dark blue color meant to blend in to the night sky, but this was changed to “sage green” in order to blend into the lush jungles of Korea and Vietnam.

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