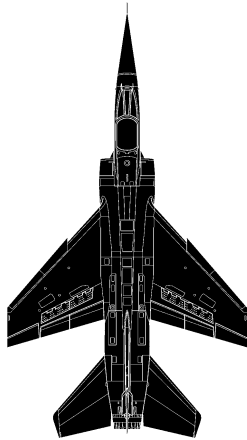


Mirage F1



The Mirage F1 is a French-built air superiority fighter and attack aircraft that has been widely used as a light, low-cost, multipurpose weapon. The Dassault fighter became operational in France in 1973, followed by a dozen other nations. It has flown in a variety of roles: air superiority, interceptor, close air support, reconnaissance, and training.

The F1 followed a long line of successful Dassault delta-wing aircraft. It combined the basic Mirage 5 fuselage with a new wing and empennage, resulting in greater maneuverability, shorter takeoff and landing distances, and longer endurance. It featured sophisticated shoulder-mounted wings with split double-slotted trailing edge flaps, among other advanced items. Tail surfaces were swept with the stabilators set low on the fuselage and

assisted by twin fixed ventral fins. When fitted with in-flight refueling gear, the F1 could deploy over long distances.

The Mirage F1 has seen extensive combat. The first was in 1983, when France used it in Chad against Libyan-backed forces. Its most extensive use has been in the Persian Gulf. During the Iran-Iraq War, Iraqi F1s flew many intercept, attack, and anti-ship missions. An Iraqi F1 in May 1987 fired an Exocet missile that nearly sank the US Navy frigate USS *Stark*.

The tables turned in the 1991 Gulf War; USAF F-15s shot down eight F1s. Iraq eventually flushed 24 F1s to Iran to avoid destruction.

—By Walter J. Boyne

This aircraft: Mirage F1CT, 13QA—#278—as it looked in 1995 when assigned to Regiment de Chasse 01/030 Normandie-Niemen, at Colmar, France.



France found many buyers for the Mirage.

In Brief

Designed, built by Dassault ★ first flight Dec. 23, 1966 ★ crew of one or two ★ number built 714 ★ one Snecma Atar 9K turbojet engine ★ **Specific to F1C:** armament, two 30 mm cannon and up to 8,800 lbs of ordnance (bombs, rockets, missiles) ★ max speed 1,460 mph ★ cruise speed 560 mph ★ max range 870 mi ★ weight (loaded) 35,715 lb ★ span 27 ft 7 in ★ length 49 ft 2 in ★ height 14 ft 9 in.

Famous Fliers

Combat: Johan Rankin of South Africa (vs. Angola); R. Banderas, C. Uzcategui, both of Ecuador (vs. Peru); Nikos Sialmas of Greece (vs. Turkey). **Test Pilots:** Rene Bigand, Jean-Marie Saget, Guy Mitaux-Maurouard.

Interesting Facts

Launched as a self-financed Dassault venture ★ built as a stopgap while France considered F-16 ★ suffered high early accident rate (13 of first 162 lost) ★ flown by 13 air forces, eight currently (Ecuador, France, Gabon, Iran, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Spain) and five formerly (Greece, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, South Africa) ★ flown in combat by almost all users ★ designated originally "Mirage F3" ★ downed 35 Iranian aircraft in Iran-Iraq War ★ flown by two senior Libyan Air Force pilots who defected to Malta Feb. 21, 2011.