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Summary

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Fighter is the ideal encyclopedia for military jetfighters, from the "flying crates" of World War I, constructed of wood, fabric, and wire, to the technological wonders laden with modern artillery. The book is divided into four main sections, "The First World War", "Between the Wars", "The Second World War", and "Postwar Fighters".

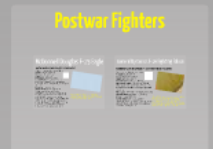
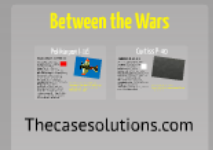
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The 4 Periods



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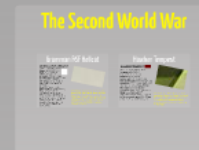
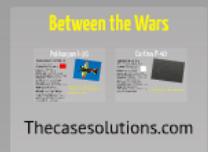
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TECHNOLOGY · FACTS · HISTORY



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The First World War

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On December 17, 1903, the Wright Brothers achieved the first successful powered, manned flight, blazing a trail for many innovations in the aviation industry that would soon follow. The time was inviting to this technological leap forward, and it was the beginning of the Industrial era.

Prior to World War I, the main objective of war was to conquer land. However, with the invention of aircraft, the fight for control was brought upwards into the sky. Superiority of the air became a key to the success of military, and it has been that way ever since then.

SPAD

SPAD S.XIII



Single-seat fighter
Wingspan: 26 ft. 6 in. (8.08 m)
Length: 20 ft. 6 in. (6.25 m)
Height: 8 ft. 6 in. (2.60 m)
Empty weight: 1,257 lbs. (570 kg)
Max. takeoff weight: 1,863 lbs. (845 kg)
Power plant: 1 Hispano-Suiza 8Be water-cooled inline V8, 220 hp (164 kW)
Max. speed: 135 mph (218 km/h) at 7,218 ft. (2,200 m)
Operational ceiling: 21,818 ft. (6,650 m)
Range: 220 miles (350 km)
Armament: 2x .303 in. (7.7 mm) Vickers machine guns



The French-built SPAD S.XIII was very fast, powerful, and reliable. It was the most built Allied fighter of World War I. Fighter aces from six nations achieved victories in this aircraft. Over 10,000 SPADs were built in total.

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Sopwith Camel

SOPWITH CAMEL

Single-seat fighter



Wingspan: 28 ft. (8.53 m)
Length: 18 ft. 9 in. (5.72 m)
Height: 9 ft. 1 in. (2.77 m)
Empty weight: 930 lbs. (422 kg)
Max. takeoff weight: 1,453 lbs. (659 kg)
Power plant: 1x Clerget 9B 9-cylinder rotary (alt. Le Rhone 9, Gnome Monosoupape, Bentley B.R.1)
Max. speed: 113 mph (182 km/h)
Operational ceiling: 18,996 ft. (5,790 m)
Range: 301 miles (485 km)
Armament: 2x fixed .303 in. (7.7 mm) Vickers machine guns with 250 rounds each, four 24 lb. (11 kg) bombs under fuselage



The Sopwith Camel is arguably the best-remembered Allied plane of World War I. It was feared by the enemy for its excellent maneuverability and its trick flying required great skill from its pilots.

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Between the Wars

Polikarpov I-16

POLIKARPOV I-16 TYPE 24

Single engined single seat
Wingspan: 29 ft. 2 in. (8.88 m)
Length: 20 ft. (6.10 m)
Height: 7 ft. 11 in. (2.41 m)
Empty weight: 3,285 lbs. (1,490 kg)
Max. takeoff weight: 4,546 lbs. (2,062 kg)
Power plant: 1x Shvetsov M-63 9-cylinder radial, 1,100 hp (850 kW)
Max. speed: 304 mph (489 km/h)
Operational ceiling: 29,199 ft. (8,900 m)
Range: 460 miles (740 km)
Armament: 4x ShKAS (Shpitalny-Komaritski) machine gun with 650 rounds of ammunition each or 2x fuselage mounted ShKAS and 2x ShVAK (Shpitalny-Vladimirov) .787 in. (20 mm) cannon with 180 rounds each



The I-16 was one of the world's first monoplanes. It featured a low-wing design, and was the first fighter produced with retractable landing gear.

Curtiss P-40

CURTISS P-40 E-1

Single-seat fighter/fighter-bomber
Wingspan: 37 ft. 4 in. (11.38 m)
Length: 31 ft. 9 in. (9.68 m)
Height: 12 ft. 4 in. (3.76 m)
Empty weight: 2,880 lbs. (6,349 kg)
Max. takeoff weight: 4,131 lbs. (9,107 kg)
Power plant: 1x Allison 1710-39 liquid-cooled V12, 1,150 hp (846 kW)
Max. speed: 343 mph (552 km/h)
Operational ceiling: 28,871 ft. (8,800 m)
Range: 525 miles (845 km)
Armament: 6x .50 in. (12.7 mm) machine guns, 3,704 lb. bomb load



The P-40 was the US Army Air Corps' (USAAC's) first mass-produced fighter/fighter-bomber.

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