



FACT SHEET

U.S. Air Force Fact Sheet DOUGLAS B-26K

With the success of the [YB-26K](#) test program, the USAF ordered 40 B-26s converted to B-26K standards. The production B-26K differed from the prototype in a few areas. First, the Pratt & Whitney engines were changed to the R-2800-52W from the R-2800-103W of the YB-26K. The prop spinners installed on the YB-26K were deleted for the production K model. The six .50-cal. machine guns mounted in the wings were removed also. The B-26K still retained a considerable firepower with eight .50-cal. machine guns in the nose, 4,000 pounds of bombs carried in the bomb bay and up to 8,000 pounds of mixed ordnance carried externally on eight wing pylons.

A \$12.6 million dollar contract was signed with On Mark Engineering Co. and the 40 aircraft were converted in 1963 and 1964. The aircraft were assigned 1964 serial numbers, although all were originally built in the early 1940s.

The B-26K conversion program was completed in 1964 when the last of 40 B-26s rolled out of the On Mark Engineering hangars in California. The B-26K was designed for counter insurgency missions in Southeast Asia. The USAF needed an aircraft to seek and destroy supplies moving towards and into South Vietnam from the north. The B-26B had been used up until 1964 when structure problems forced the withdrawal of the aircraft from combat.

Because of the urgent need for counter insurgency and interdiction aircraft, the USAF began using [A-1E Skyraiders](#) for these missions and the B-26Ks were not used in combat until 1966. Between 1964 and 1966, the B-26Ks were assigned to special operations squadrons (SOS), air commando squadrons (ACS) and composite fighter squadrons. The K models were basically combat trainers during this period.

In 1966 the USAF decided to base a squadron of B-26Ks in Thailand for use in the panhandle area of Laos in support of operation Steel Tiger. Since the Thai government restricted USAF bombers from using its bases, the designation of the aircraft was changed to A-26A, even though no changes were made to the aircraft or its mission.

The National Museum of the United States Air Force has a [B-26K](#) (A-26A) on display.

| Type | Number built/ converted | Remarks |
|-------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| B-26K | 40 | Counter insurgency aircraft |

TECHNICAL NOTES:

Armament: Eight .50 cal. nose machine guns, eight wing pylons capable of carrying 8,000 lbs. of mixed ordnance and 4,000 lbs. of bombs internally **Engines:** Two [Pratt & Whitney R-2800-52Ws](#) of 2,500 hp (maximum with water injection)

Max. speed: 323 mph/281 knots

Cruising speed: 310 mph/270 knots

Range: 2,700 statute miles/2,346 nautical miles

Service ceiling: 30,000 ft.

Span: 71 ft. 6 in.

Length: 51 ft. 7 in.

Height: 19 ft.

Weight: 38,314 lbs. maximum

Crew: Two

Serial numbers: 64-17640 to 64-17679

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