

North American **B-25 Mitchell**

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Specifications

General characteristics

- **Crew: 6**
 - pilot
 - co-pilot
 - navigator/bombardier
 - turret gunner/engineer
 - radio operator/waist gunner
 - tail gunner
- **Length:**
52 ft 11 in (16.1 m)
- **Wingspan:**
67 ft 6 in (20.6 m)
- **Height:**
17 ft 7 in (4.8 m)
- **Wing area:**
610 sq ft (57 m²)
- **Empty weight:**
21,120 lb (9,580 kg)
- **Loaded weight:**
33,510 lb (15,200 kg)
- **Max takeoff weight:**
41,800 lb (19,000 kg)
- **Powerplant:**
2× Wright R-2600
"Cyclone 14" radials,
1,850 hp (1,380 kW) each

The North American B-25 Mitchell was an American twin-engine medium bomber manufactured by North American Aviation. Allied air forces flew it in every theater of World War II, and it was used by many other air forces after the war, seeing service across four decades.

Named in honor of General Billy Mitchell, a pioneer of U.S. military aviation, the B-25 is the only American military aircraft named for an individual. By the end of its production, nearly 10,000 B-25s, in numerous models, had been built. These included a few limited variations, such as the U.S. Navy's and Marine Corps' PBJ-1 patrol bomber and the U.S. Army Air Forces' F-10 photo reconnaissance aircraft.

The Doolittle Raid: The B-25 first gained fame in the Doolittle Raid, in which 16 B-25Bs, led by legendary Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle, attacked mainland Japan on April 18, 1942, four months after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

The mission gave Americans a much-needed lift in spirits and alarmed the Japanese, who had believed their home islands were inviolable. While the amount of damage was relatively minor, the mission forced the Japanese to divert troops for home defense for the remainder of the war.

Taking off from the carrier USS Hornet, the Doolittle Raiders successfully bombed Tokyo and four other Japanese cities without loss. However, after the raid, 15 of the 16 crash-landed en route to recovery fields in eastern China. They faced multiple challenges: low fuel, because they had to take off 170 miles early when the USS Hornet was spotted by Japanese fishing vessels; the recovery bases lacked homing aids; and they were flying at night in stormy, zero-visibility conditions. Only one landed intact, in the Soviet Union, where its five-man crew was interned and the aircraft confiscated. Of the 80 aircrew, 69 survived and eventually made it back to American lines.

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Performance

- **Maximum speed:**
275 mph (239 kn, 442 km/h)
- **Cruise speed:**
230 mph (200 kn, 370 km/h)
- **Combat radius:**
1,350 mi (1,170 nmi, 2,170 km)
- **Ferry range:**
2,700 mi (2,300 nmi, 4,300 km)
- **Service ceiling:**
25,000 ft (7,600 m)
- **Rate of climb:**
790 ft/min (4 m/s)
- **Wing loading:**
55 lb/ft² (270 kg/m²)
- **Power/mass:**
0.110 hp/lb (182 W/kg)

Armament

- **Guns:**
12-18 × .50 in (12.7 mm)
machine guns
- **Hardpoints:**
2,000 lb (900 kg) **ventral**
shackles to hold one
external Mark 13 torpedo
- **Rockets:**
3,000 lb (1,360 kg) **bombs +**
eight 5 in (130 mm) **high**
velocity aircraft rockets
(HVAR)
- **Bombs:**
6,000 lb (2,700 kg)

Specifications from Jane's Fighting
Aircraft of World War II

