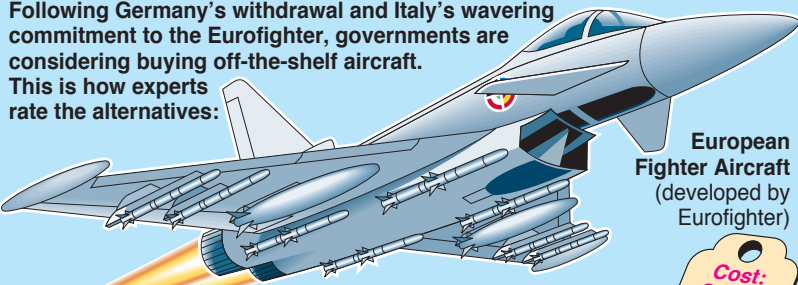


Eurofighter – the Top Gun alternatives

Following Germany's withdrawal and Italy's wavering commitment to the Eurofighter, governments are considering buying off-the-shelf aircraft. This is how experts rate the alternatives:



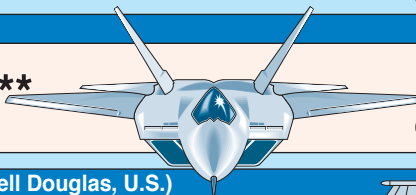
European Fighter Aircraft
(developed by Eurofighter)

Ground attack: **** Aerial combat: ****
Chance of winning a combat engagement: 82%

Cost: £37m
Available: 1999

F-22 (Lockheed, U.S.)

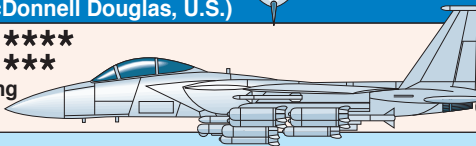
Ground attack: ★
Aerial combat: ★★★★★
Chance of winning in combat: 91%



Cost: £70m
Available: 2003

F-15F Eagle (McDonnell Douglas, U.S.)

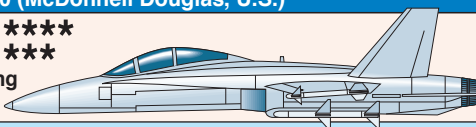
Ground attack: ****
Aerial combat: ***
Chance of winning in combat: 60%



Cost: £42m
Available: 1994

F-18 Hornet 2000 (McDonnell Douglas, U.S.)

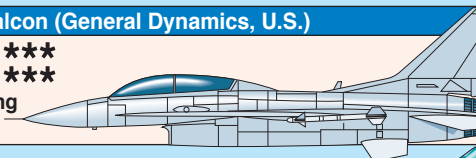
Ground attack: ****
Aerial combat: ***
Chance of winning in combat: 25%



Cost: £30m
Available: 1998

F-16 Fighting Falcon (General Dynamics, U.S.)

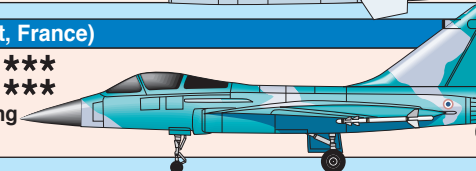
Ground attack: ***
Aerial combat: ***
Chance of winning in combat: 21%



Cost: £20m
Available: Now

Rafale (Dassault, France)

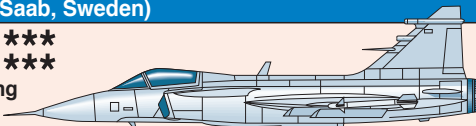
Ground attack: ***
Aerial combat: ***
Chance of winning in combat: 50%



Cost: £42m
Available: 2000

JAS-39 Gripen (Saab, Sweden)

Ground attack: ***
Aerial combat: ***
Chance of winning in combat: n/a



Cost: £20m
Available: 1994

MiG-29 (Mikoyan, Russia)

Ground attack: **
Aerial combat: ****
Chance of winning in combat: n/a

Other Russian aircraft include MiG-31, MiG-33 and Su-27



Cost: £26m
Available: Now