

U.S. Navy's coastal fighting ship sets sail

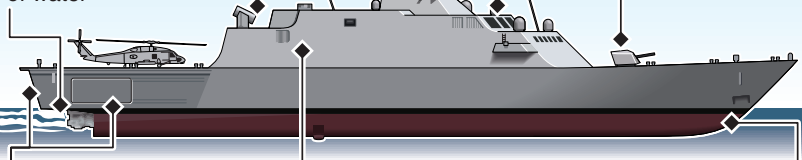
The newly commissioned *USS Freedom* is the first warship in the U.S. Navy's littoral combat ship (LCS) class, which is intended for patrol within shallow coastal waters to neutralize pirates, mines and other threats

Propulsion: Instead of propellers, ship has steerable water jets, allowing it to operate in as little as 4m of water

Missile launcher
Defends against enemy aircraft and missiles

Bridge: Only three people are needed to control ship. Levers used instead of steering wheel

57mm gun: Fires 220 rounds/min



Stern ramp/side door
Open to launch mine detection system or small boats to catch pirates

Hangar: Space for two MH-60 helicopters or one MH-60 and three MQ-8 unmanned robotic helicopters

Steel hull
Displacement: 3,000 metric tonnes

Length	115.3 metres
Beam	17.5 metres
Speed	Over 45 knots
Crew	Up to 75
Cost	\$600 million

LCS ships can be quickly reconfigured according to mission requirements – either anti-submarine, mine or surface warfare

