

Royal Air Force centenary

Britain's Royal Air Force (RAF) – the world's oldest independent air force – marks its 100th anniversary in 2018

RAF
100



■ **April 1, 1918:** RAF founded towards end of **World War I** by merging aviation branches of Royal Navy and British Army



Supermarine Spitfire (1938)

■ **1940:** During World War II, RAF defends UK from German air attacks in **Battle of Britain**



Douglas Dakota (1942)

■ **1948-49:** In first Cold War crisis, RAF delivers 17 percent of supplies during **Berlin Airlift**



Harrier Jump Jet (1969)

■ **1982:** RAF takes part in **Falklands War** alongside Fleet Air Arm, flying from Ascension Island in mid-Atlantic and Royal Navy aircraft carriers



Eurofighter Typhoon (2003)

■ **Current:** RAF flying combat missions against so-called Islamic State in **Iraq** and **Syria**

1910

Sopwith Camel (1917)



1920

■ **1924: Fleet Air Arm** formed from RAF units operating at sea
Avro Lancaster (1942)

1930



1940

■ **1940-45:** Campaign by RAF **Bomber Command** includes night attacks on German cities such as Hamburg and Dresden, and "Dambusters" raid

1950



1960

Avro Vulcan (1956)

1970

■ **1956-69:** RAF's **V Bomber** force carries responsibility for UK's strategic nuclear deterrent
Panavia Tornado (1979)

1980



1990

■ **Post-Cold War:** Large-scale RAF operations include two **Gulf Wars**, **Kosovo War** in 1999, **Afghanistan War** and 2011 intervention in **Libya**

2000

2010



2020

Lockheed Martin F-35 (2018)