McDonald Douglas F-4E “Phantom II”

F-4E with 12 MK 82 bombs with extended fuses, four AIM 7 Sparrows, four AIM 9 Sidwinders, M61 internal 20mm Vulcan Cannon, and two 370 gallon wing tanks

Aircraft Specs *

Wingspan	38 ft, 5 in
Length	63 ft, 0 in
Height	16 ft, 5 in
Empty weight	30,328 lbs
Max flying wt	61,651 lbs
Max T.O. wt	55,000 lbs
Powerplants	Two J79-GE-15 Turbojets 17,900 pounds thrust Afterburners
Crew	Two
Performance	Max Speed: 1,470 mph (Mach 2.25) at 40,000 ft Service Ceiling: 62,250 ft. Range: 1,500 miles

* Actual numbers vary depending upon configuration, weather, and aircraft specific modifications.

M61 Vulcan 20mm Cannon

AIM 9 Sidewinder Heat Seeking Missile

About the F-4 Phantom

The F-4 Phantom, built by McDonnell Douglas, ranks among the most important military aircrafts in the history of the United States, serving her country from Vietnam to Iraq. Sleek and powerful, the supersonic jet fighter inspired awe in all who saw her in action.

The F-4 Phantom first took flight in 1958 and quickly set 25 world records in categories such as speed (reaching Mach 2.6) and altitude. Due to the aircraft’s impressive performance, the Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps all flew the F-4.

Nearly 5,200 Phantoms were built from 1958 to 1981, making it the3 most-produced American supersonic military aircraft.

Soon after entering service, the F-4 was quickly swept away from the glory of record-breaking flights and was thrust into combat in Southeast Asia.

During the Vietnam War, the Phantom was successful at bombing enemy positions, dog-fighting with North Vietnamese MIG’s and providing close air-to-ground support for the troops. The F-4 was easily adaptable for special missions and special weapons. One highly specialized model was the “Wild Weasel” which was equipped to take-out enemy missiles sites. Another was the RF4-C which carries special photographic and surveillance equipment for reconnaissance. The F-4 was capable of carrying just about every air-to-air and air-to-ground weapon in the US arsenal. This included nuclear weapons.

After Vietnam, the F-4 fighters continued to serve with US military forces around the world. Their next conflict was Operation Desert Storm, where Air Force F-4G “Wild Weasel” Phantoms carried out strategic strikes against Iraqi military installations. Finally, in 1996 (nearly 40 years after its inception), the F-4 was retired from the role of combat. The Air Force last flew the aircraft December 21, 2016.

STORY OF F-4E S/N 71-0247

- Grove’s F-4E made her first flight on October 10, 1972 and then entered service with the 4th Tactical Fighter Wing at Seymour Johnson AFB, in North Carolina.
- In 1979 she was moved to the 52nd TFW at Spangdahlem Air Base in Germany. At that time her tail number was changed to 71-1247 for a short time as shown in the picture above.
- In 1988 she returned to the states and was assigned to the 37th TFW at George Air Force Base in California. The mission of the 37th was to provide pilot transition training for the F-4G “Wild Weasel.”
- In 1988, operations at George AFB were phased down and all of its aircraft were transferred to the 35th TFW in 1989.
- In March 1990, 71-0247 was removed from service and parked in an aircraft maintenance and storage facility at Davis-Monthan AFB in Arizona.
- In July 1995, Holloman AFB in New Mexico needed a ground trainer and 71-0247 was assigned to the Crash Damage or Disabled Aircraft Recovery (CDDAR) unit. The remaining F-4 Phantoms became target drones.
- Over the years 71-0247 was used for radar testing of coatings and equipment before finally being painted and used for display without being assigned to a fixed base.
- In 2017, Grove won the award of the aircraft as a donation through the GSAXcess SASP system.
- This aircraft was transported by Worldwide Aircraft Recovery, LTD and arrived in Grove on February 26, 2018 where it was reassembled and placed in its current location.

Weapons Carried by the Phantom

The F-4E would typically carry four AIM-7 Radar guided missiles, four AIM-9 Heat Seeking Missiles, Internal gun with 1200 rounds of High Explosive Incendiary (HEI) bullets or 1200 rounds of Armor Piercing (AP) bullets, two 370 gallon external fuel tanks under the wings or one 600 gallon external fuel tank under the center line. This left approximately 8,000 pounds available for additional weapons or fuel. Even more weapons could be carried if the external fuel tanks were removed or left empty. The F-4E fuel and weapons loading was determined by the mission it was flying and the availability of tankers for in-flight refueling. Other models of the F-4 had similar weapons capability except they did not have an internal gun. An external gun could be mounted on most models.

External air-to-Ground weapons included 20mm gun, low drag bombs (250 to 1000 lbs each), high drag bombs, laser guided bombs, nuclear bombs, tv guided missiles, rockets, cluster bombs, flares, napalm, bull pup missiles and others. In addition to the 20mm gun, Air-to Air missiles included AIM 4 Hawkeye (Heat or Radar), AIM 9 Sidewinder (Heat), AIM 7 Sparrow (Radar), HARM High speed Anti-Radiation Missile (HARM), and others.

F-4E with 600 gallon center line fuel tank, two 370 gallon wing tanks, four AIM 7 Sparrows, and four AIM 4 Hawkeyes (red fins)

Navy F4 with external 20mm gun, Mk82 Bombs, AIM 7 Sparrows (tucked into the bottom of the fuselage, and AIM 9 Sidewinders on the weapons pylons above the bombs.

Air Force F-4E refueling. Refueling probe connects just behind the back-seater.