

# Lockheed P-38J

**The Lockheed P38 Lightning was designed to a requirement for an interceptor specifically to combat hostile aircraft at high altitude. The term “interceptor” was used to circumvent the USAAC requirement that pursuit aircraft have only one engine.**

The P38 was one of very few United States fighters that had good high-altitude performance at the start of the war. Lightnings were used in all theatres throughout the war and remained in production for the duration of the war.

Early P-38s suffered from high speed compressibility issues causing the tail to shake violently during dives. Some maneuvers were restricted however the P-38 could out turn and out climb most opponents..

P38s were utilised for photo reconnaissance, light bombers, night fighters and as pathfinders. The first P-38s to enter active service were F-4 Photo-reconnaissance versions based in Australia. Ninety per cent of all aerial film taken over Europe was by a Lightning.

**Data** *Engines* two Allison V1710 V12 piston engine of 1200 kW each. *Wing span* 15.85m. *Length* 11.53m. *Maximum take-off weight* 9,798kG. *Maximum speed* 666km/h. *Range* 2100 km. *Armament* four .50 cal machine guns, one 20mm cannon and up to 1500kg of external load on hardpoints. *Crew* 1.

*Academy* 1/72 kit completed by Steve Pulbrook in 2015.



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