

Yakovlev Yak-3

The Yak-3 was one of the most successful fighters designed during World War II. Entering service in mid 1944, it achieved fame and a very high score rate against German aircraft for the rest of the war.

Design on the Yak-3 began at the end of 1941, intended to produce the most efficient single seat fighter possible using a newly designed engine. It was similar to other Yak fighters of the time but with the least possible drag, smallest dimensions and weight but also tough and efficient. Delays with the new engine meant the prototype did not fly until late 1943 and they did not enter operations until July 1944. In all 4848 Yak-3s were manufactured, they proved to be formidable dogfighters and were highly regarded by their pilots and their opponents alike.

This model represent a Yak-3 of the Free French Normandie-Niemen unit.

Data: *Engine* one 969kW (1300hp) Klimov VK-105PF-2 piston engine. *Wing span* 9.2m (30ft 2¼in). *Length* 8.49m (27ft 10¼in). *Maximum take-off weight* 2660kg (5864lb). *Maximum speed* 655km/h (407mph). *Range* 900km (559 miles). *Armament* one engine mounted 20mm cannon and two 12.7mm (0.5in) machine guns. *Crew* one. *Red Star* 1/72 kit completed by Leigh Edmonds in April 1987.



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