

Tupolev Tu-22M2 (Backfire-B)

The Tupolev Tu-22M (Backfire) became one of Soviet Union's front line bombers from 1976. With supersonic speed and armed with cruise missiles it could attack land or naval forces with atomic and conventional weapons.

Development of the Tu-22M began in 1967, to replace the earlier Tu-22 (Blinder) supersonic bomber. Flight testing commenced in 1973 and it was deployed by Soviet air force and naval air forces. A total of 211 were produced between 1973 and 1983. They were capable of low-level high speed flight to overcome ground defences and their main armament of air-to-surface missiles allowed them to attack strategic ground targets and navel targets like United States carrier groups.

The Tu-22M2 was armed with surface-to-air missiles

This model represents a standard Backfire-B in USSR service around 1980.

Data: *Engine* two NK-22 turbofans of 247.9kN each. *Wing span* 23.3m minimum and 34,28m extended. *Length* 42.46m. *Maximum take-off weight* 126,440kg. *Maximum speed* 1800km/hr. *Armament* two GSH-23 23mm cannon and up to 24,000 kg or weapons including bombs or missiles. *Crew* 4.

Esci 1/72 kit completed by Leigh Edmonds in September 2005.



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