

Lockheed U-2R

The Lockheed U-2 is virtually a powered glider, designed in the 1950s to fly at very high altitudes, initially for reconnaissance missions over the Soviet Union. Since then it has proved to be a very useful and versatile aeroplane.

The Lockheed U-2 was designed in the famous 'Skunk Works'. Its role was to fly reconnaissance missions over the Soviet Union at such an altitude that it was invulnerable to interception. The first flight occurred on 1 August 1955, the first overflight of the Soviet Union occurred on 4 July 1956 and the U-2 has since been used in many military and civil reconnaissance and research roles. The U-2R was a larger and modernised version that began production in the 1980s. A total of 104 U-2s were produced and they are likely to remain in service into the 2020s.

This model represents a U-2R of the 9th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing based at RAF Mildenhall in 1977.

Data: single-seat very high altitude reconnaissance aeroplane. *Engine* one Pratt & Whitney J75-P-13B jet engine of 82.29kN thrust. *Wing span* 24.38m. *Length* 15.42m. *Maximum take-off weight* 10,225kg. *Maximum speed* 850k/hr. *Service ceiling* 42.43km. *Range* 10,060 km. *Crew* 1.

Dragon 1:144 kit completed by Leigh Edmonds in October 2012.



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