

Bell UH-1H Iroquois

At the end of the Korean conflict the US Army issued a specification for a new general utility helicopter that could be used for medical evacuation. Twenty companies submitted designs and the Bell design was ultimately selected for production.

The first prototypes flew in 1956 and the type was ordered into production in 1960 as the HU-1. This designation gave rise to the nickname “Huey” and the official name was rarely used. Bell embraced this nickname even moulding “Huey” into the rudder pedals. In 1962, the helicopter was redesignated as the UH-1.

Early models of the UH-1 were found to be underpowered despite the turboshaft engine being a vast improvement over piston engine helicopters. Improved models were soon produced, first increasing the power followed by stretching the aircraft to accommodate more troops.

The ‘D’ model was committed to the Vietnam conflict as a troop carrier, medivac, gunship and many other roles. More than 7000 were committed however 3300 were lost. As a result of extensive TV coverage, the UH-1 became the most recognizable helicopter in the world.

Data: Utility Helicopter. *Engine* one Lycoming T-53 turboshaft engine of 1000 kW. *Rotor span* 14.63m. *Length* 17.61m (less rotors). *Maximum take-off weight* 4100kg. *Maximum speed* 204km/h. *Range* 511 km. *Armament* unarmed or one 7.62mm machine gun mounted in door. *Crew* 4.

Italeri 1/72 kit completed by Steve Pulbrook in 2020.



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