

Curtiss P-40B

The Curtiss P-40B was the first version of the P-40 manufactured for the United States Army Air Corps. They were a slightly improved version of the original P-40 and began entering service in 1941.

The prototype P-40 was a modification of a the earlier Curtiss P-36 and first flew in October 1938. In April 1939 the United States Army Air Corps ordered 524 P-40s and the final 324 aircraft of that order were completed as the slightly improved P-40B which had additional armour, self-sealing tanks and improved armament including bomb shackles.

During the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour 72 P-40s were destroyed or damaged on the ground. Five P-40s launched during the attack. Two were shot down before gaining altitude whilst the remaining three flew seven sorties claiming seven or eight Japanese dive bombers.

This model represents a P-40B of the 47th Pursuit Squadron, 15th Pursuit Group from Wheeler Field, Hawaii, on 7 December 1941.

Data: *Engine* one Allison V-1710-33 V-12 liquid cooled piston engine of 780 kW. *Wingspan* 11.36m. *Length* 9.66m. *Maximum take-off weight* 3,461kg. *Maximum speed* 538km/h. *Range* 1,150 km. *Armament* two .50cal and four .30cal machine guns. *Crew* one.

Airfix 1/72 kit completed by Steve Pulbrook in 2018.



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