

MODERN AIRCRAFT

2nd Edition Military Series Playing Cards



COUNTRY RANKING GUIDE

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Introduction

This guide has been produced as an insight into the analysis and research that determined the rankings for the Modern Aircraft playing cards.

The focus was to rank a country based on combat air power and to select military aircraft that could contribute the most to any air campaign. Four aircraft were selected to represent each of the top-4 countries and one aircraft for the remaining 36 countries.

The top-4 are ranked JQKA, Ace being the most capable aircraft the air force has operational for that given country. All aircraft selected were based on the highest potential to inflict losses on an adversary. Selection did not always mean the most technologically advanced aircraft was chosen, instead several selection criteria were used.

Criteria 1: Number of operational combat-aircraft.

Criteria 2: Aircraft technology, 3rd, 4th, 5th generation, stealth etc.

Criteria 3: Weapon technology, radar guided vs simple heat seekers.

There were sometimes other considerations such as level of training, modernization or serviceability that were used to make a final decision, however in most cases Criteria 1 and 2 ranked a country and respective aircraft.



Disclaimer: This guide is for Informational-Purposes-Only and as a companion to the Modern Aircraft Playing Cards Kickstarter project launched in 2018. The findings in this guide are based off analytical analysis of open-source information readily available to the public, the final rankings are the views of the creator only and do not represent the views of any organisation or country in any way. Rankings are a basic assessment and are made with an assumption that any country at-war will divert resources to ensure aircraft in-service are fully operational and in addition does not consider weapon stockpiles or allied country assistance.

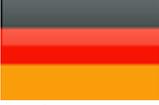
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Rank	Country	Comments	Considerations	Primary Aircraft
1	 USA	Combining the air combat power from the US Air Force, Navy and Marines amounts to the USA being the undisputed global power in force-projection.	Technology, aircraft numbers in-service and combat experience.	F-16 F-22 F-35 B-1 F-15
2	 China	Steadily progressing with modernization programs and efforts to upgrade/replace their sheer number of aircraft sees China in a solid 2 nd position. In addition, they are working towards large scale carrier based Naval air-power capabilities.	Aircraft numbers in-service and reserve, extensive large-scale modernization programs.	J-10 J-11 JH-7 H-6
3	 Russia	Only recently falling to 3 rd place due to China's immense military growth and aircraft numbers. Russia however, still has a technological advantage and continues to produce cutting-edge aircraft and weapon systems in direct competition with the USA and China.	Technology, experience and aircraft production commitments	Su-35 Su-30 Su-34 Tu-160
4	 India	India easily holds the 4 th position with an impressive air force of over 600 combat fighter aircraft. Although many airframes are becoming obsolete, India has invested considerably in upgrades and procuring new generation aircraft such as the SU-30 from Russia which they now have over 220.	Modernization and aircraft numbers	Su-30 MKI MiG-21 Jaguar MiG-29
5	 South Korea	Maintaining many F-16s as the core capability of the South Korean air force, its commitment to extensive training due to the North Korean threat keeps South Korea's air power highly trained and combat ready at short-notice.	Training and aircraft numbers	F-16
6	 Japan	Comparable on many fronts to the South Korean air force, the Japanese Air Self Defence Force (JASDF) has considerable air power capability due to the large number of indigenously produced F-2s (derived from the US F-16) and large inventory of F-15s.	Technology and aircraft numbers	F-2
7	 Israel	Highly trained and efficient, the Israeli air force also maintains a simplified force structure that leads to increased combat capabilities.	Training and highly efficient infrastructure	F-16

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8	 Turkey	With over 230 F-16 aircraft, Turkey has a solid foundation in air power for their region and maintains a commitment to procure F-35s to replace older F-16 airframes.	Modernization	F-16
9	 Saudi Arabia	The Royal Saudi Air Force is a powerful player within the Gulf and maintains a robust air component consisting of F15s, Tornados and Eurofighter Typhoons.	Aircraft numbers	Eurofighter Typhoon
10	 France	The 10 th and 11 th position is closely contested between France and the United Kingdom, although comparable in air power, the fact that France has a fully operational aircraft carrier makes their air-power element more robust.	Modernization, aircraft carrier	Rafale B/C
11	 UK	After many funding issues, delays and scrapping of programs, the Royal Air Force is making somewhat of a comeback, however it will be a few more years until the new Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carrier (undergoing sea trials) and large numbers of F-35 fighters become fully operational.	Modernization	Eurofighter Typhoon
12	 Taiwan	Boasting a large contingent of F-16s and Taiwan made F-CK-1s, combat air power from these aircraft alone is over 250 airframes and provides the air force with a key strength in the islands defence capabilities.	Indigenously produced fighter	F-CK-1
13	 Egypt	The Egyptian air force has a mix of Russian, European and US airframes, however the bulk of their air-power consists of the 210 F-16s procured from the US which have also undergone many upgrades and modernization projects.	Modernization, aircraft numbers	F-16
14	 Germany	A modern and capable air force, the German Luftwaffe consists of Typhoon and Tornado aircraft to project air-power.	Technology	Eurofighter Typhoon
15	 Pakistan	The rivalry with India has led Pakistan to maintain and modernize a capable air force. Primary aircraft are the F-16 and indigenously built JF-17 Thunder	Modernization	JF-17

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16	 Italy	While Italy maintains a considerable number of aircraft and in addition to the navy air power from their carrier, considerable strain has been put on modernization efforts due to financial funding instability and cuts in recent years.	Modernization, funding issues	Eurofighter Typhoon
17	 Greece	Sustaining chronic cuts and lack of funding due to the financial crisis in Greece, the air force is still managing to maintain over 200 aircraft, 170 of which are F-16s.	Funding issues	F-16
18	 Ukraine	Effectively grounded since 2014, the Ukraine air force has been unable to maintain air combat operations within its own country due to annexation of Crimea and the break-away areas which have major anti-air arms support from Russia. Efforts have been put into bringing stored aircraft back into operational status and the number of aircraft in-country are still considerable.	Funding, maintenance, regional instability	MiG-29
19	 Spain	The Spanish air force maintains a credible warfighting capability with over 140 fighters in service, split between F/A-18 and Eurofighter Typhoons.	Modernization, aircraft numbers	F/A-18EF
20	 North Korea	The North Korean air force on paper looks to have a vast array of aircraft, this is in physical numbers only and it is assessed by many countries to be anywhere from 50-60% less in number that are operational and able to perform in combat roles. North Korea has also had a significant challenge in upgrading airframes and many are still from the 70s.	Poor serviceability	MiG-21
21	 Australia	Well trained and a highly compact air force with a considerable commitment to modernize its aging F/A-18's to the F-35.	Training, modernization	F/A-18
22	 Iran	Years of economic sanctions have had a major blow to the Iranian air force, while still maintaining many fighters, most have maintenance issues and are older generation which limits their capability. Future investment in new airframes is likely in the coming years with the removal of many sanctions once imposed by the U.S.	Maintenance, lack of modernization	Saeqeh

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23	 UAE	Well-equipped and based on a solid force of F-16s.”	Aircraft numbers	F-16 Desert Falcons
24	 Canada	Air combat power is based solely on a fleet of F/A-18 Hornets which are expected to remain in service until 2025.	Aircraft numbers	F/A-18
25	 Sweden	Well trained and specializing in the JAS 39 Gripen fighters, with just under 100 fighter aircraft in service.	Indigenous aircraft development by Saab	JAS 39 Gripen
26	 Kazakhstan	Consisting of a number of Ex-Soviet airframes, the Kazakhstan air force is still formidable enough due to its numbers, although questionable on serviceability.	Aircraft numbers, serviceability	MiG-29
27	 Singapore	Dominated by western platforms, the air force primarily consists of F-16s backed up by F-15s	Aircraft numbers	F-16
28	 Algeria	Leveraging off a large number of SU-30s as its primary combat air power, the Algerian air force maintains a credible force, although some platforms are still of the soviet era and in much need of replacement.	Aircraft numbers	Su-30
29	 Poland	The Polish air force consists of US and Russian legacy platforms, with a large contingent of F-16s as the base air power element followed up by Su-29s	Aircraft numbers, reduction in force size	F-16
30	 Finland	A compact and professional air force, Finland leverages its entire combat air power on the F/A-18 Hornet.	Modernization	F/A-18
31	 Netherlands	The core air power element is leveraged off the F-16 Fighting Falcon with modernization upgrade programs working with the new F-35.	Aircraft numbers	F-16
32	 Norway	Undergoing a modernization program to replace its aging F-16s inventory with F-35s, this upgrade significantly increases the air power capability of the Norwegian air force.	Modernization	F-35

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33	 Brazil	Consisting of a decent indigenous aircraft industry, the primary air combat aircraft is the Brazilian AMX A-1 with 48 currently in service.”	Indigenous aircraft	AMX A-1
34	 Thailand	Well-equipped air force for its region leveraging off a number of F-16s.	Aircraft numbers	F-16
35	 Denmark	The Danish air force combat aircraft are the F-16s with 54 currently in service and plans to begin phased replacements to the F-35 beginning 2021.	Aircraft numbers	F-16
36	 Belgium	Combat air power is projected from over 50 F-16s.	Aircraft numbers	F-16
37	 Vietnam	While steadily modernizing, the Vietnamese air force still operates a number of legacy soviet era aircraft which limits air power capabilities.	Modernization	Su-30 MK2
38	 Uzbekistan	Operating a number of soviet era aircraft limits the air forces capabilities, although the largest contingent is MiG-29s which still provide reliable combat air power.	Aircraft numbers	MiG-29
39	 Switzerland	A small but modern air force leveraging off 30 in service F/A-18 as the primary fighter capability.	Aircraft numbers	F/A-18
40	 Chile	Committing to a long but sustained modernization program has seen the Chilean air force just make it to the 40 th rank. Air combat power is provided by 45 F-16s.	Modernization	F-16



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