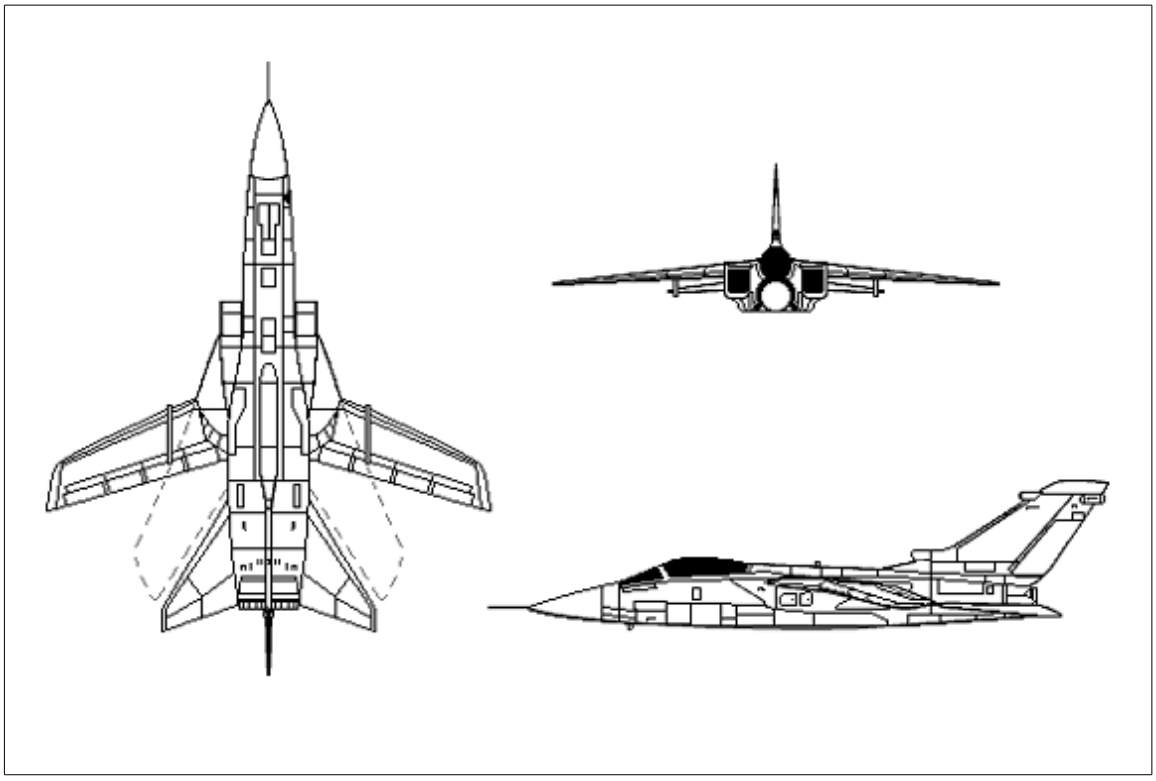
Pinon / Weed / Sacramento / Mayhill Military Aircraft

10/19/13 Walt Coffman

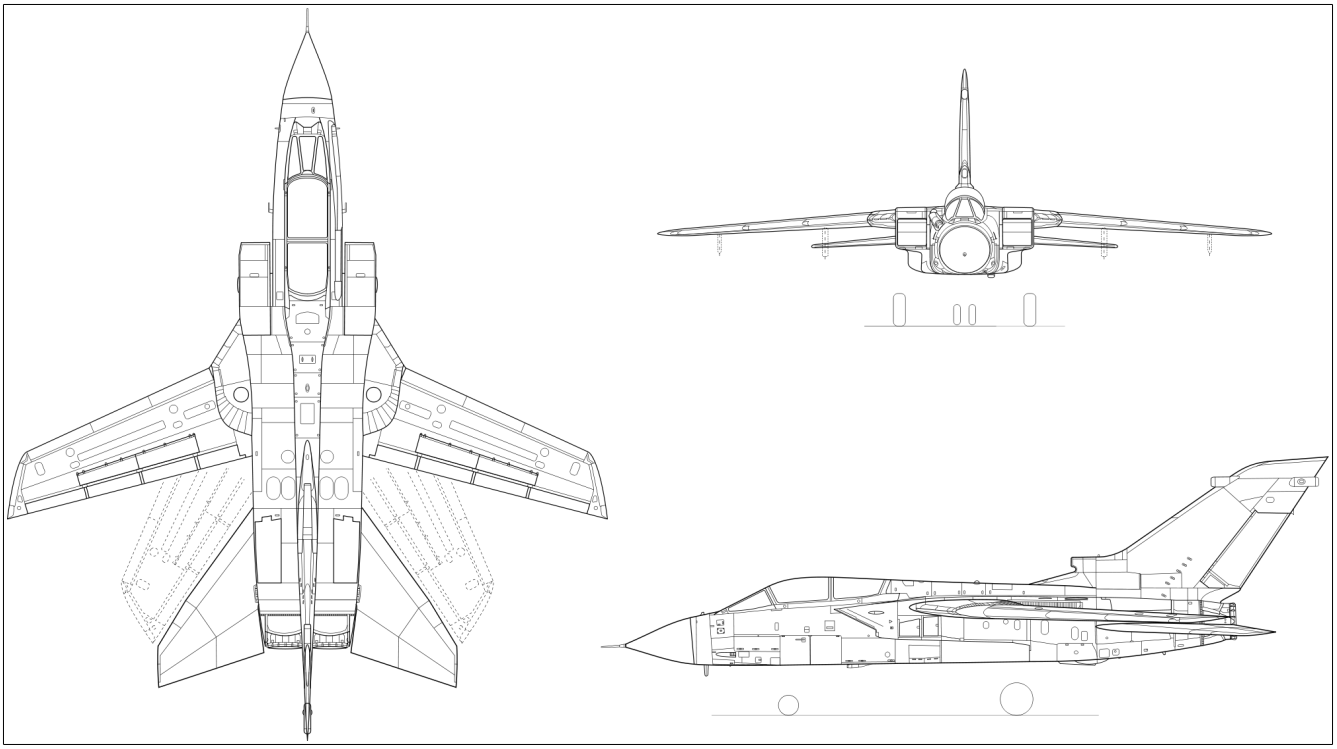
Our military airspace has many different aircraft. Some fly very low and fast, some fly very high (and fast). Because DoD has sold “airspace” (and the people's rights under it) to other countries all manner of aircraft fly our skies. I believe that the German Luftwaffe is the most common foreign air force (who would have thought they would be based here in New Mexico after the atrocities committed during the war).

The following is a quick guide to recognizing common aircraft flying from Holloman (note Holloman often flies aircraft other than listed here, sometimes these are “secret” such as the F-117). If you see something strange search the internet. Perhaps you'll find a match.

Walt Coffman
Weed, NM
10/19/13



Some Data from Wikipedia.
German Air Force (Luftwaffe) Tornado (see next sheet)



Some Data from Wikipedia. (GAF Panavia Tornado)

Length:	54 ft 10 in
Wingspan:	45.6 ft at 25° wing sweep, 28.2 ft at 67° wing sweep
Height:	19.5 ft
Wing area:	286 ft²
Empty weight:	31,620 lb
Max. takeoff weight:	61,700 lb

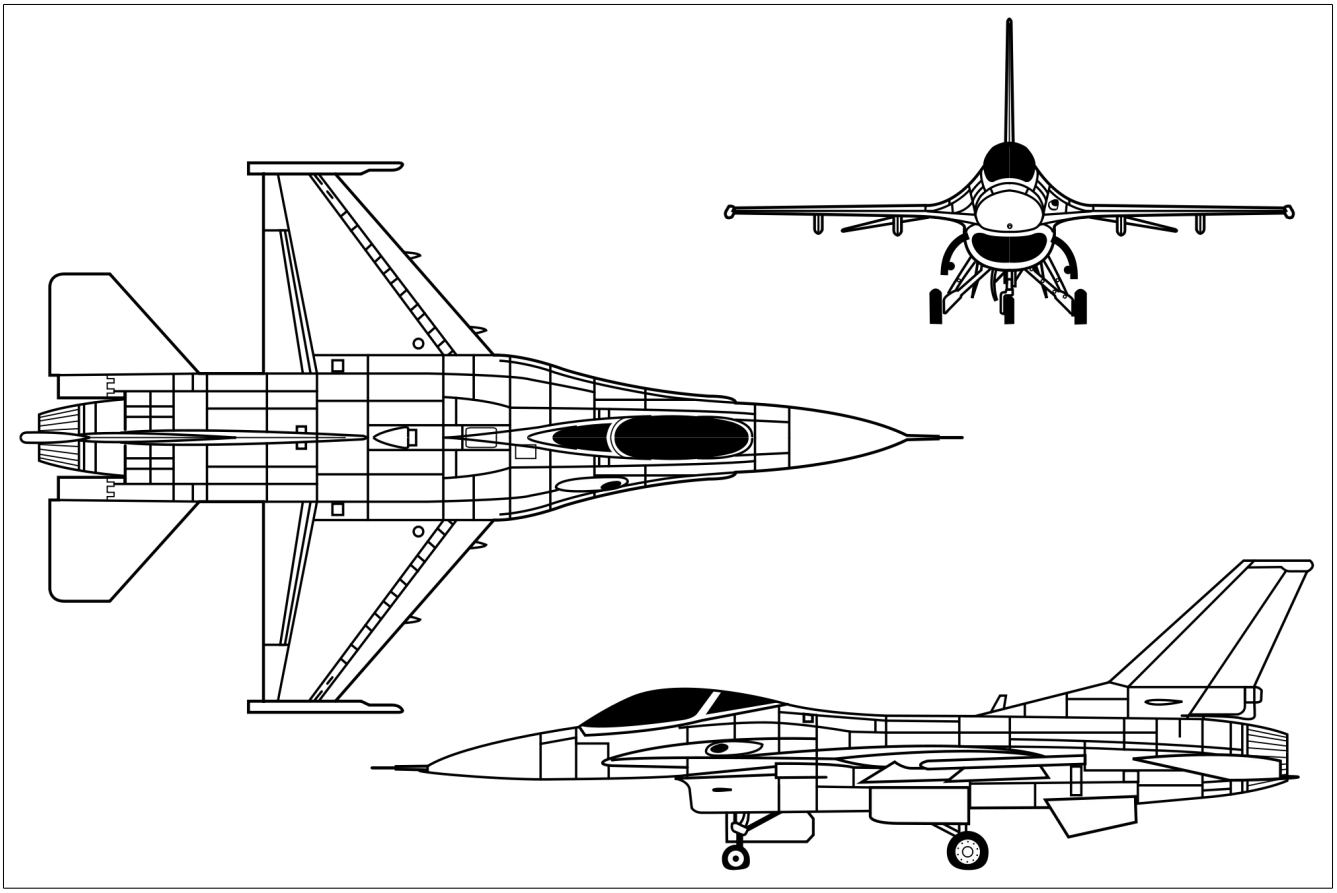
German Air Force (Luftwaffe) Tornado. A twin-engine, variable-sweep wing combat aircraft, which was jointly developed and manufactured by the United Kingdom, West Germany and Italy. It first flew on August 14, 1974 and was introduced into service in 1979–1980.

The Tornado was used during the 1991 Gulf War, in which the Tornado conducted many low-altitude penetrating strike missions. The Tornados of various operators were also used in conflicts in the former Yugoslavia during the Bosnian War and Kosovo War, the Iraq War, Libya during the Libyan civil war, as well as smaller roles in Afghanistan and Yemen. Including all variants, a total of 992 aircraft were built.

The variable-sweep wing causes these aircraft to look different depending on manuavering. The wings can stick almost straigt out or they may be fully swept.

The Luftwaffe has a spotty safety record. The German citizens became tired of the crashes, noise and pollution. They voted to severly limit the areas that the Luftwaffe was allowed to fly in Germany. The Luftwaffe, faced with loss of airspace moved it's “Top Gun” training to Otero County. Rural folks fought hard to keep them out. Yes they have had accidents here, including the loss of aircraft. No rural residents were killed (so far). The Luftwaffe will be changing to the Eurofighter soon.

These twin engined jets are, IMHO very noisy, especially when flown at 500 feet above the ground and 550 miles an hour, which is their normal routine over ranches in Otero County. I have seen them fly over rural homes at 150 feet elevation which is not legal (it is called buzzing). The Luftwaffe is immune from US law (NATO Treaty).



Some Data from Wikipedia.

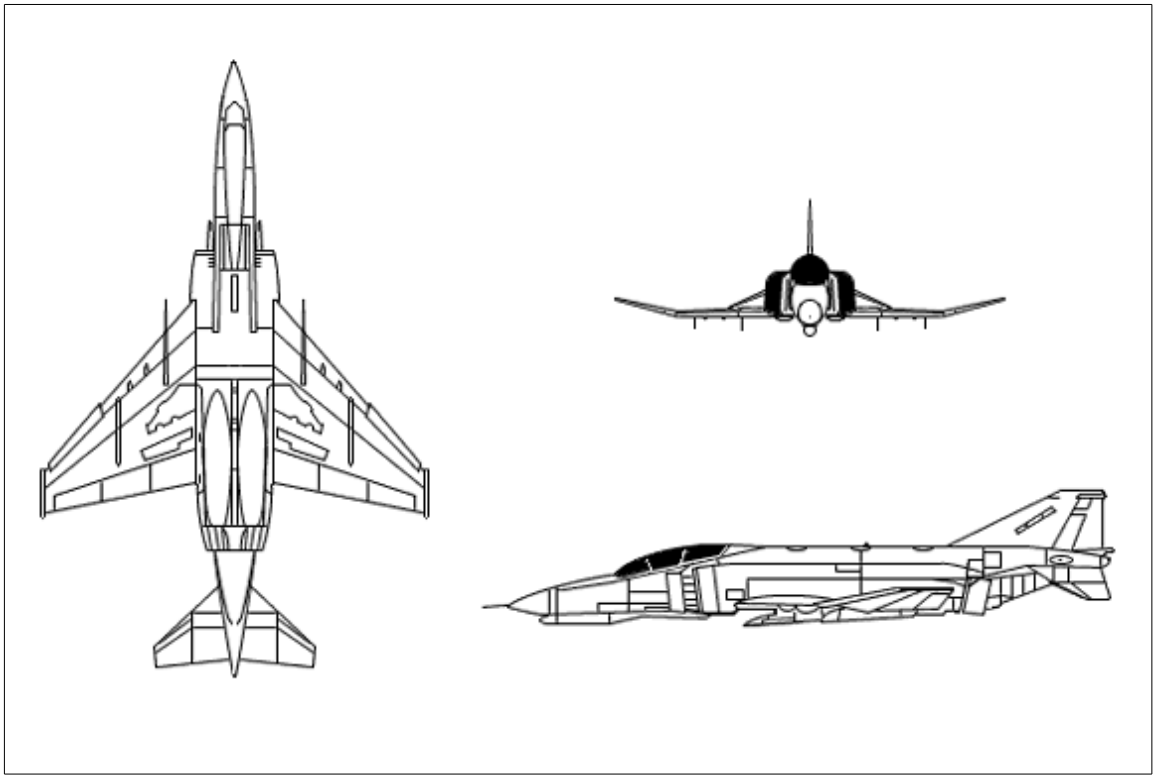
F-16 Fighting Falcon is a single-engine multirole fighter aircraft originally developed by General Dynamics for the United States Air Force (USAF). Designed as an air superiority day fighter, it evolved into a successful all-weather multirole aircraft. Over 4,500 aircraft have been built since production was approved in 1976. Although no longer being purchased by the U.S. Air Force, improved versions are still being built for export customers.

The Fighting Falcon is a fighter with numerous innovations including a frameless bubble canopy for better visibility, side-mounted control stick to ease control while maneuvering, a seat reclined 30 degrees to reduce the effect of g-forces on the pilot, and the first use of a relaxed static stability/fly-by-wire flight control system helps to make it a nimble aircraft. The F-16 has an internal M61 Vulcan cannon and 11 locations for mounting weapons and other mission equipment.

In addition to active duty U.S. Air Force, Air Force Reserve Command, and Air National Guard units, the aircraft is also used in the air forces of 25 other nations.

These aircraft are not presently based at Holloman but are scheduled to arrive. They can be seen from time to time usually at higher altitudes.

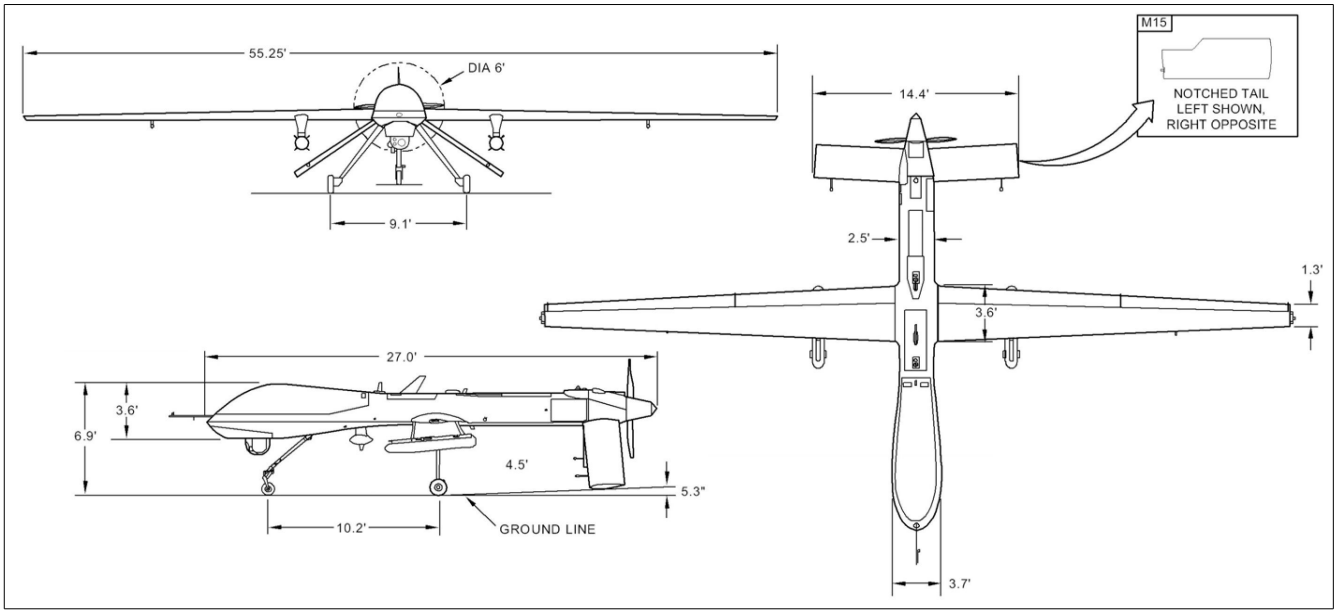
The F-16 is a pilots aircraft. It was developed, despite the USAF, by Colonel John Boyd with mathematician Thomas Christie. They developed the Energy-Maneuverability theory to model a fighter aircraft's performance in combat. Boyd's work called for a small, lightweight aircraft that could maneuver with the minimum possible energy loss, and which also incorporated an increased thrust-to-weight ratio. The USAF was against this (they wanted a swiss army knife type a/c).



The McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II is a tandem two-seat, twin-engine, all-weather, long-range supersonic jet interceptor fighter/fighter-bomber originally developed for the United States Navy by McDonnell Aircraft. It first entered service in 1960 with the U.S. Navy. It was also adopted by the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Air Force, and by the mid-1960s had become a major part of their respective air wings.

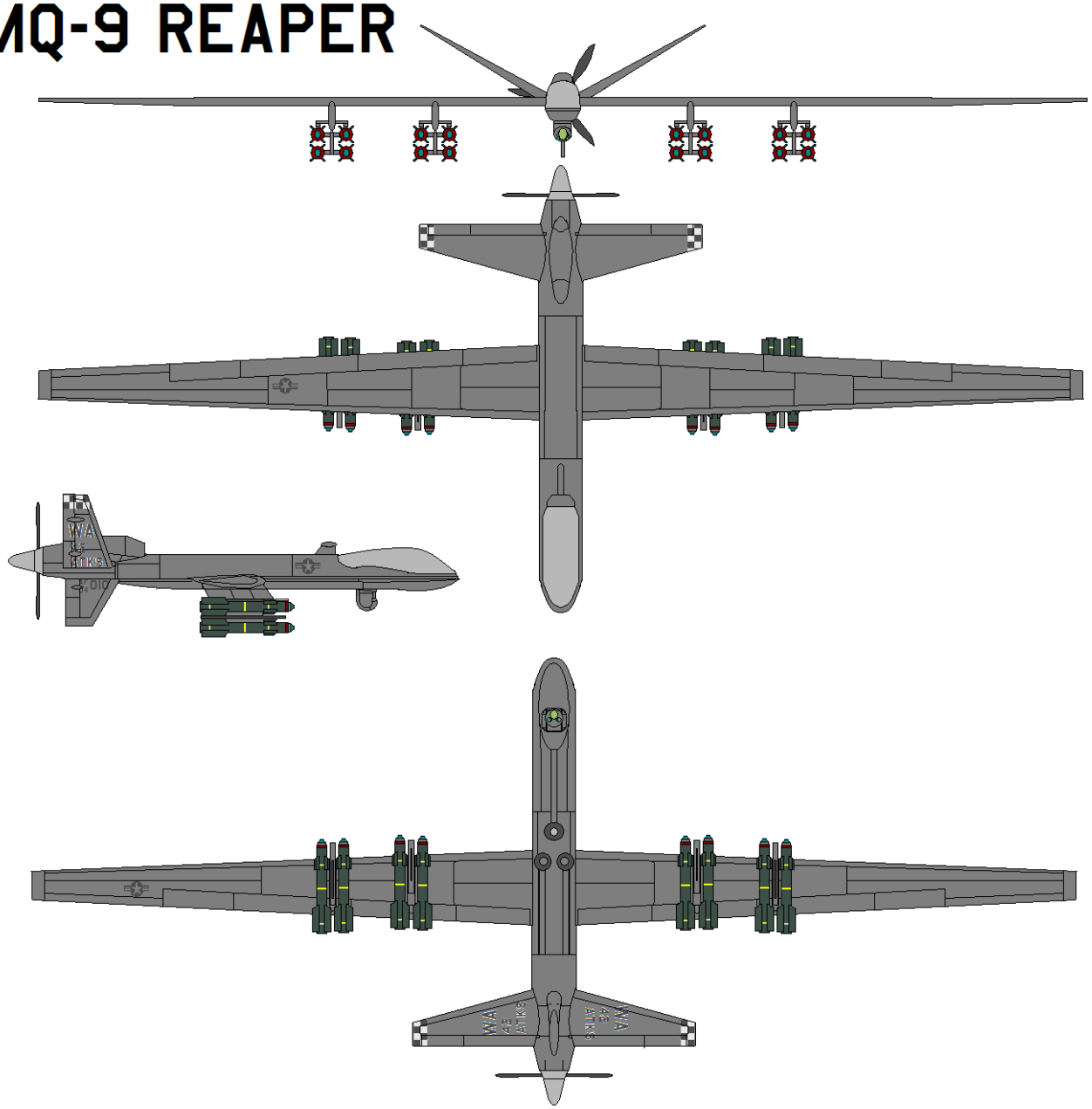
The Phantom is a large fighter with a top speed of over Mach 2.2. It can carry over 18,000 pounds of weapons on nine external hardpoints, including air-to-air missiles, air-to-ground missiles, and various bombs. Beginning in 1959 it set 15 world records for in-flight performance, including an absolute speed record, and an absolute altitude record. The F-4 continued to form a major part of U.S. military air power throughout the 1970s and 1980s, being gradually replaced by more modern aircraft such as the F-15 Eagle and F-16 in the U.S. Air Force; the Grumman F-14 Tomcat in the U.S. Navy and the F/A-18 Hornet in the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps. The F-4 was also operated by the armed forces of 11 other nations. Israeli Phantoms saw extensive combat in several Arab–Israeli conflicts, while Iran used its large fleet of Phantoms in the Iran–Iraq War. Phantoms remain in front line service with seven countries, and in use as an unmanned target in the U.S. Air Force at Holloman AFB.

Yes the F-4 target drones from Holloman have crashed on private property – no one killed yet.



Some Data from Wikipedia. MQ-1 Predator (see next sheet)
Length: 27 ft
Wingspan: 48.7 ft ; MQ-1B Block 10/15: 55.25 ft
Height: 6.9 ft
Wing area: 123.3 sq ft
Empty weight: 1,130 lb
Loaded weight: 2,250 lb

MQ-9 REAPER



Some Data from Wikipedia.
Length: 36 ft 1 in
Wingspan: 65 ft 7 in
Height: 11 ft 10 in
Max takeoff weight: 10,494 lb

I've put the all “drones” or UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) together, so read all this if you want an overall picture of the future. There are many more UAVs and I suspect some “secret” ones flying our skies.

A key point for Department of Defense (and now “Homeland” Security) UAVs is their purpose. They are formost, spy machines. They have sensors that allow detailed survalance. They can fly very high and very low, they are quiet. You probably will never see a UAV unless it is landing/takeoff. They can “visit” your home late at night, or track your movements. Walls, roofs are not a impedament. If you believe you are

alone in the mountains (or in your bathroom or bedroom) you would be wrong. A UAV can send real time data, including pictures, back to Holloman and Washington DC (or whever). This includes pictures of you, your home, your childern, pets, etc. There are no limits and no laws. Much of the UAV capabilities is “secret”. The technology is radiply developing. The Border Patrol operates these (and have crashed one with no deaths, yet). I bet they have some great pictures that they can show around over coffee.

UAVs are now armed and could be retasked to shoot anyone, at any time. Favorite weapon is a very accurate Hellfire missle. Other possibilities are being developed. I believe a super quiet kinetic weapon is up next. This would allow quiet assassinations. So far they have not targeted citizens within the USA. However, American citizens overseas have been “targeted” and killed (assassinated).

Wikipedia states: **The General Atomics MQ-1 Predator** is an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) built by General Atomics and used primarily by the USAF and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Initially conceived in the early 1990s for reconnaissance and forward observation roles, the Predator carries cameras and other sensors but has been modified and upgraded to carry and fire two AGM-114 Hellfire missiles or other munitions. The aircraft, in use since 1995, has seen combat over Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bosnia, Serbia, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, and Somalia.

The USAF describes the Predator as a "Tier II" MALE UAS (medium-altitude, long-endurance unmanned aircraft system). The UAS consists of four aircraft or "air vehicles" with sensors, a ground control station (GCS), and a primary satellite link communication suite. Powered by a Rotax engine and driven by a propeller, the air vehicle can fly up to 400 nautical miles to a target, loiter overhead for 14 hours, then return to its base.

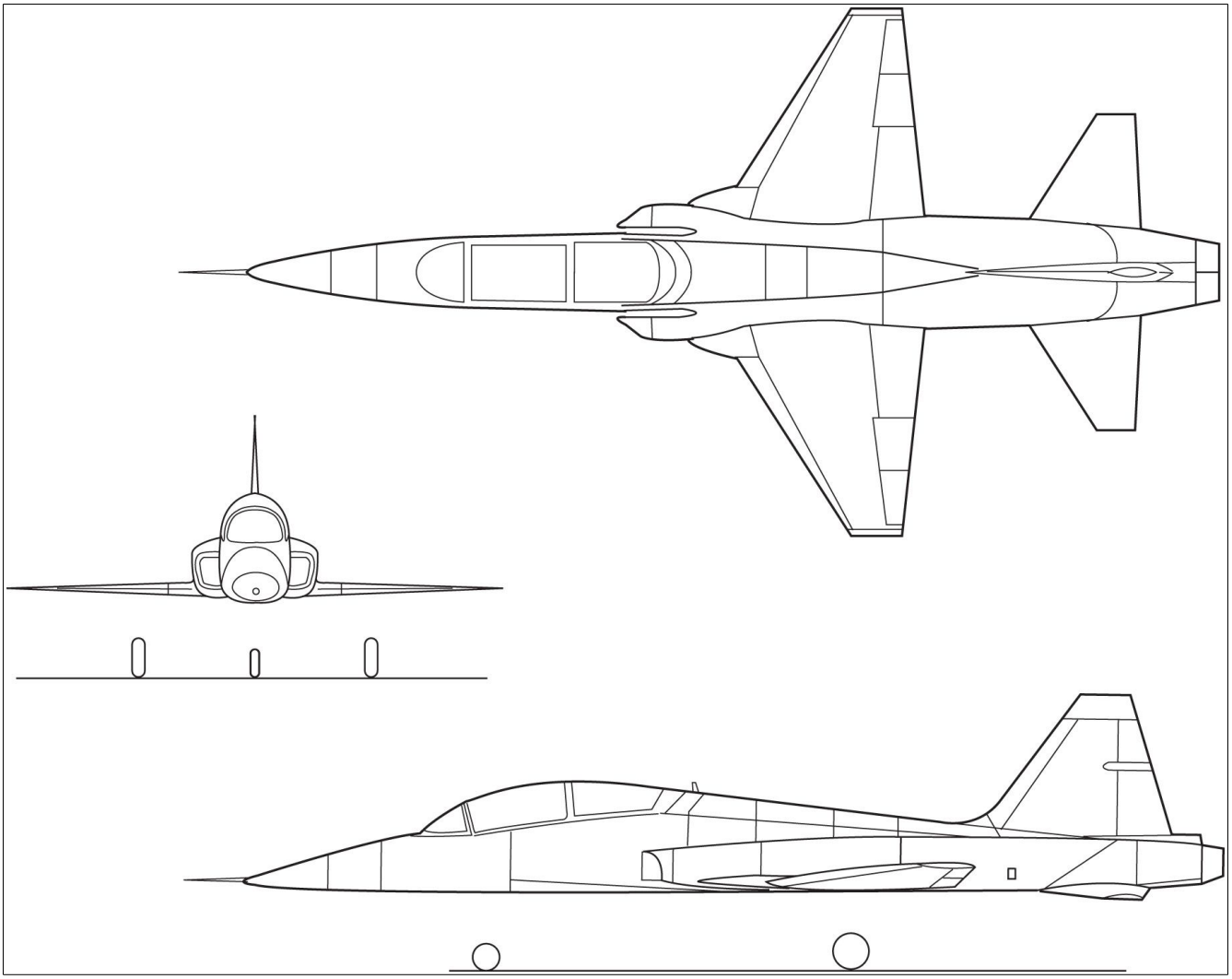
Following 2001, the RQ-1 Predator became the primary unmanned aircraft used for offensive operations by the USAF and the CIA in Afghanistan and the Pakistani tribal areas; it has also been deployed elsewhere. Because offensive uses of the Predator are classified, U.S. military officials have reported an appreciation for the intelligence and reconnaissance-gathering abilities of UAVs but declined to publicly discuss their offensive use. Civilian applications have included border enforcement.

The General Atomics MQ-9 Reaper is an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) capable of remote controlled or autonomous flight operations, developed by General Atomics Aeronautical Systems (GA-ASI) primarily for the United States Air Force. The MQ-9 is the first hunter-killer UAV designed for long-endurance, high-altitude surveillance.

The MQ-9 is a larger, heavier, and more capable aircraft than the earlier MQ-1 Predator; it can be controlled by the same ground systems used to control MQ-1s. The Reaper has a 950-shaft-horsepower turboprop engine, far more powerful than the Predator's 115 hp piston engine. The power increase allows the Reaper to carry 15 times more ordnance payload and cruise at almost three times the speed of the MQ-1. The aircraft is monitored and controlled by aircrew in the Ground Control Station (GCS), including weapons employment.

The U.S. Air Force is training more pilots for advanced unmanned aerial vehicles than for any other single weapons system. The Reaper is also used by the United States Navy, the CIA, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, NASA, and others.

Then Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force General T. Michael Moseley said, "We've moved from using UAVs primarily in intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance roles before Operation Iraqi Freedom, to a true hunter-killer role with the Reaper."



Some Data from Wikipedia.
T-38
Length: 46 ft 4.5 in
Wingspan: 25 ft 3 in
Height: 12 ft 10.5 in
Wing area: 170 ft²
Loaded weight: 11,820 lb

When Holloman wanted to get us rural folks “used to” sonic booms they employed the T-38 to booms us (illegally in my view, they are not susposed to use sonic booms for a tool, but hey it's the DoD).

The Northrop T-38 Talon is a two-seat, twin-engine supersonic jet trainer. It was the world's first supersonic trainer and is also the most produced. The T-38 remains in service as of 2013 in air forces throughout the world.

The United States Air Force (USAF) is the largest operator of the T-38. In addition to training USAF pilots, the T-38 is used by NASA. The US Naval Test Pilot School is the principal US Navy operator (other T-38s were previously used as USN aggressor aircraft until replaced by the similar Northrop F-5 Tiger II). Pilots of other NATO nations fly the T-38 in joint training programs with USAF pilots.

As of 2012, the T-38 has been in service for over 50 years with its original operator (the USAF).