



AIRSHOW SPOTTER'S GUIDE



U.S. Navy
Blue Angels

See live airshow action at
LiveAirShowTV.com



Lockheed Martin F-16

How to recognize: Single vertical tail, cropped delta wing, half-moon air intake beneath cockpit.

Claim to fame at airshows: U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds perform precision formation aerobatics to demonstrate the agility of the frontline fighters.



Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-15

How to recognize: Though sometimes mistaken for its nemesis, the F-86, the MiG has a larger vertical tail. Its tailplanes ride high; a Sabrejet's tailplanes ride low, close to the fuselage. (So close are the two fighters in appearance that F-86 pilots in Korea sometimes shot down friendly aircraft believing them to be MiGs.)

Claim to fame at airshows: MiG-15s and -17s sometimes perform mock dogfights with F-86 Sabres.



Boeing F/A-18 Hornet

How to recognize: Twin vertical tails, canted outward; short, slightly swept (as opposed to straight) wings.

Claim to fame at airshows: In ultra-precise formation flight, U.S. Navy Blue Angels fly so close that their wingtips come within three feet of one another.



Lockheed Martin F-22 Raptor

How to recognize: Twin vertical tails cantied outward, broad back, gold-tinted cockpit canopy, modified delta wing.

Claim to fame at airshows: Stands on its tail, tips over backward into a loop within a box of airspace not much larger than itself, winks at the crowd by opening and closing its bomb bay doors.



North American F-86F Sabre

How to recognize: Scoop nose with a pronounced beak on the upper edge of the intake, swept wings and tailplanes, round fuselage, and a large curved and frameless glass cockpit.

Claim to fame at airshows: F-86s often fly in formation with warbirds of other eras in U.S. Air Force Heritage Flights.



Boeing AV-8B Harrier

How to recognize: Enormous half-circle intakes flanking the fuselage; drooping wings; loud, Earplugs mandatory.

Claim to fame at airshows: Uses its vertical takeoff and hovering ability to face the crowd at low altitude and bow.

Extra 330SC

How to

Recognize:

Low-wing monoplane. Aerobatic monoplanes all look alike: thin wings with symmetrical airfoils, sleek fuselages, tapered vertical tails. The easiest way to tell them apart is by the performer's paint scheme. **Claim to fame at airshows:** Michael Goulian chose cherry red for nose, wings, and tailplanes, with a jazzy, polka-dot transition from red to white on the fuselage.



North American P-51 Mustang

How to recognize:

Long nose, low wing, and big air scoop faired under the fuselage, just aft of the wings. **Claim to fame at airshows:** Frequently featured in U.S. Air Force Heritage Flights, the Mustang also stars in a three-ship aerobatic act known as The Horsemen.



Interstate Cadet

How to recognize:

High-wing, two-seat, light monoplane. **Claim to fame at airshows:** Kent Pietsch's joyful, power-off aerobatic routine in a sunny yellow Jelly Belly-sponsored Cadet. The routine ends with the pilot landing on top of a moving RV camper.



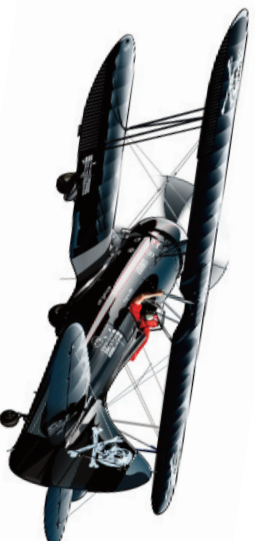
Beech 18 or 1943 JRB-2

How to recognize:

Twin piston engines, tapering flat-top fuselage and dolphin nose, twin vertical tails connected by a broad elevator, tubular steel fuselage, tail-dragging landing gear.

Claim to fame at airshows:

In a black and crimson Beech 18, Matt Younkin moves from gentle barrel rolls into screaming dives and fluid yet precise loops. At some shows, a night display with strobe lights turns the former corporate transport into a flaming phantom.



WACO UPF-7 (PT-14 trainer)

How to recognize:

Open-cockpit biplane with wings staggered fore and aft and connected by struts and flying wires; round engine, usually cowled.

Claim to fame at airshows:

Kyle Franklin painted his UPF-7 Mystery Ship black and white, with rounded frames and a skull-and-crossbones on the upper wing and tail; he replaced the 220-hp engine with a 450-hp monster. He reinforced struts and flying wires for muscular loops, twists, nose-overs, rolling vertical climbs, inverted flat spins, and tail slides.



Pitts Special

How to recognize:

Biplane; bungee landing gear; compact fuselage.

Claim to fame at airshows:

Since 1949, when Betty Skelton performed in her Pitts Special *Little Stinker*, the Pitts has been a pilot's favorite, flying more aerobatic displays than any other light piston aircraft. Jacque Warda has picked up the baton in her red, white, and blue Pitts S-1T Red Eagle.

North American T-6 (AT-6) Texan

How to recognize:

Snub nose, low wing, greenhouse canopy, often in its original silver coat.

Claim to fame at airshows:

The four-ship Aeroshell Aerobatic Team flies a program that shows why the T-6 was chosen as the primary trainer for pilots headed for combat: easy and quick rolls, high-bank turns, and impressive rate of climb.

