

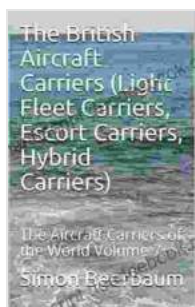
# The British Aircraft Carriers: A Legacy of Innovation and Dominance

The British Royal Navy has a long and illustrious history of operating aircraft carriers. From the early days of the Royal Naval Air Service to the present day, British carriers have played a vital role in naval warfare. This article takes a look at the different types of aircraft carriers that have served in the Royal Navy, from the light fleet carriers of World War II to the modern, hybrid carriers of today.

## Early Aircraft Carriers

The first aircraft carriers were developed in the early 20th century, and the Royal Navy was one of the pioneers in this field. The first British aircraft carrier, HMS Hermes, was converted from a merchant ship in 1914. Hermes was followed by a series of other converted carriers, including HMS Argus and HMS Eagle.

These early aircraft carriers were small and had limited capabilities. They were primarily used for reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare. However, the potential of aircraft carriers was quickly recognized, and the Royal Navy began to develop larger and more powerful carriers in the interwar years.



## The British Aircraft Carriers (Light Fleet Carriers, Escort Carriers, Hybrid Carriers): The Aircraft Carriers of the World Volume 7 by Mick Twemlow

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
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Print length : 99 pages



## **World War II**

During World War II, aircraft carriers played a entscheidend role in the Royal Navy's success. The Royal Navy operated a large fleet of carriers, including the Illustrious-class, Implacable-class, and Colossus-class carriers. These carriers were used to provide air cover for the Royal Navy's surface fleet, to attack enemy ships and installations, and to support amphibious operations. The courage and sacrifice of the men and women who served on British aircraft carriers during World War II played a major role in the Allied victory.

## **Post-World War II**

After World War II, the Royal Navy continued to operate a large fleet of aircraft carriers. However, the development of nuclear weapons led to a decline in the importance of aircraft carriers. In the 1960s, the Royal Navy began to phase out its fixed-wing carriers in favor of helicopter carriers.

## **Modern Aircraft Carriers**

In the 1980s, the Royal Navy began to develop a new generation of aircraft carriers. These carriers were designed to be larger and more powerful than their predecessors. The first of these new carriers, HMS Invincible, was commissioned in 1980. Invincible was followed by HMS Illustrious and

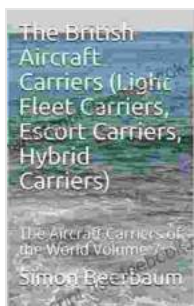
HMS Ark Royal. These carriers were used in a variety of operations, including the Falklands War, the Gulf War, and the War in Afghanistan.

In the early 21st century, the Royal Navy began to develop a new class of aircraft carriers. These carriers, known as the Queen Elizabeth-class, are the largest and most powerful carriers ever built for the Royal Navy. The first of these carriers, HMS Queen Elizabeth, was commissioned in 2017. The second carrier, HMS Prince of Wales, is scheduled to be commissioned in 2019.

## The Future of British Aircraft Carriers

The Royal Navy's aircraft carriers are a vital part of the UK's defense strategy. These carriers provide the UK with the ability to project power around the world and to respond to a wide range of threats. The Queen Elizabeth-class carriers are the most advanced aircraft carriers in the world, and they will continue to serve the Royal Navy for many years to come.

The British Royal Navy has been operating aircraft carriers for over 100 years. These carriers have played a vital role in British naval warfare, and they continue to be a vital part of the UK's defense strategy. The Royal Navy's aircraft carriers are a symbol of the UK's maritime power and its commitment to global security.



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