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UTC's Sikorsky division builds the world's most popular combat helo. Photo: Wikimedia Commons

The 10 Most Popular Combat Helicopters in the World



United Technologies UH-60 Black Hawk



The most popular combat chopper on the planet, Sikorsky's Black Hawk boasts an 18% global market share.

That's more than Lockheed Martin's F-16 commands in the fighter jet market.

More Black Hawks are flying today (3,325) than there are F-16s and F-18s *combined*.



Mil Mi-8 Hip



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

First introduced in 1961, Russia's most popular whirlybird had a 13 year head start on the Black Hawk, but still sits in second place with an 11% market share.

And its share is sinking.

Only 2,160 Hips are flying today, 168 fewer than last year.



Textron Bell UH-1 Huey



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

A certified Vietnam Vet, Bell's Huey is 58 years young, and still going strong.

Out of 16,000 units produced, 1,508 remain in service -- giving Huey an 8% market share.



Boeing AH-64 Apache



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Moving up one spot in this year's survey is the ever-popular Boeing Apache.

Around the globe, 1,008 Apaches are now in service, giving this all-star attack chopper a 5% market share.



Boeing CH-47 Chinook



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

The undisputed king of vertical lift, when troops and cargo absolutely, positively, must get there faster than overnight -- customers opt for Boeing's Chinook. 939 units in service. 5% market share.



Mil Mi-24 Hind



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Dropping two spots in this year's survey is Russia's Soviet-era Mi-24 attack helicopter.

The Mi-24 still holds a 5% market share globally, but...

With only 868 units still in service – 12% fewer than last year – this chopper is falling be-"Hind" its rivals.



Textron Bell OH-58 Kiowa



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

The U.S. Army plans to retire its Kiowa fleet – but if it does, the helo should find plenty of willing second-hand buyers.

With 758 units in service, Kiowa commands 4% of the market.



MD Helicopters MD 500



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

First developed as a light observation bird for the U.S. Army, the MD 500 found a ready market abroad as well.

With 681 units in service, it's gaining popularity – and market share, which now stands at 4%.



Textron Bell 412



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

How popular is Bell's 412? Popular enough that in the Philippines, it's the equivalent of America's "Marine One," ferrying presidents from Point A to Point B.

Globally, 675 units remain in service, tied with the MD 500 at 4% market share.



Aérospatiale SA 342 Gazelle



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Aérospatiale's (not to be confused with the teeny-bopper store) Gazelle makes its 2014 debut on this list with 556 units in service, and 3% market share.

After 41 years in service in theaters from Rwanda to Lebanon to Iraq, the French bird has finally come into its own.



In the helicopter market, as in the fighter jet market, market *share* is crucial.

It is hard to overstate the importance of market share.

The more helicopters a company builds, and sells, the broader the “base” over which it can spread research & development costs – and the lower the price it can charge per helo.

And the lower the cost per ‘copter ... the easier it is to sell more of them, growing market share even further.



United Technologies has sold more than 4,500 Black Hawks!

And nearly 75% of them are still flying today – and incidentally, still generating maintenance and parts revenue for UTC. That's more than Lockheed Martin can say about its 4,500 F-16s.

At an estimated cost of just \$20 million apiece, the Black Hawk costs nearly twice as much as competing 'copters from Russia. But it's less than UTC would have to charge at lower production volumes.

The relatively high price also has another nice benefit for shareholders: It helps United Technologies maintain a beefy 9% profit margin.



9% net profit.

That's more than Boeing gets.

And more than Textron, too.

And now, United Technologies is ramping up its
newest project.



Marine One.

The President's Helicopter.

Building on the successful Sikorsky S-92 “Superhawk” airframe – itself an evolution of from the UH-60 Black Hawk – UTC will design the next-generation of helicopters “good enough to fly a President.”

A job it's performed with honor since 1957.

The U.S. Government will pay United Technologies at least \$1.24 billion for the project, and order as many as 21 helicopters for the Executive fleet.



For the past 57 years, only one company has been considered good enough to build helicopters for the President.

United Technologies.

Shouldn't it be good enough for you, too?



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