

USS NIMITZ (CVN 68) Public Affairs
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USS Nimitz History

After her commissioning May 3, 1975, Nimitz' first deployment began July 7, 1976 when she departed Norfolk for the Mediterranean. Nimitz again sailed toward the Mediterranean Sea Dec. 1, 1977. Sept. 10, 1979, she was dispatched to the Indian Ocean as tensions heightened after Iran took 52 U.S. hostages. Four months later, Operation Evening Light was launched from Nimitz in an attempt to rescue the hostages. The rescue was aborted in the Iranian desert when the number of operational helicopters fell below the minimum needed to complete the rescue.

Oct. 29, 1988, Nimitz began operating in the North Arabian Sea in support of Operation Earnest Will. Nimitz then departed Bremerton on Feb. 25, 1991 for the Arabian Gulf, relieving USS Ranger (CV 61), during Operation Desert Storm. Nimitz again deployed Feb. 1, 1993 to the Arabian Gulf, relieving USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) as part of Operation Southern Watch.

Sept. 1, 1997, Nimitz set out on an around-the-world cruise. During this deployment, Nimitz was ordered into the Arabian Gulf to support Operation Southern Watch and various United Nations initiatives.

Nimitz arrived at her new homeport in San Diego Nov. 13, 2001. In 2003, Nimitz deployed in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. In May 2005, Nimitz embarked on a six-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and the Global War on Terrorism. After leaving the Gulf, the strike group participated in Malabar 2005, an exercise between the U.S. and Indian navies. In 2007 and 2008, Nimitz CSG deployed in support of the U.S. commitment to peace and stability in the region. Nimitz departed to the Persian Gulf for a scheduled eight-month Western Pacific deployment on July 31, 2009 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Nimitz arrived at her new homeport in Everett, Washington in March 2012. March 30, 2013, Nimitz deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Nov. 3, 2014, Nimitz took part in naval aviation history when the Navy's fifth generation Joint Strike Fighter, F-35 Lightning, touched down on a carrier at sea for the first time.

Nimitz arrived at her new homeport in Bremerton, Washington Jan. 13, 2015. Beginning Jan. 15, 2016, Nimitz underwent a 20-month extended incremental availability (EPIA). Nimitz began workups Oct. 10, 2016 for a 2017 deployment completing sea trials, and Tailored Ships Training Availability and Final Evaluation Problem (TSTA-FEP). Nimitz returned to sea Jan. 28, 2017 to undergo its first Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) since 2010.

In April 2017 Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 11 completed its final pre-deployment assessment, Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX), marking the completion of a condensed Inter-Deployment Training Cycle (IDTC). Nimitz deployed on a regularly scheduled deployment June 1 to the U.S. 7th Fleet (C7F) and U.S. 5th Fleet (C5F) areas of operations. Nimitz returned home from deployment on December 10, 2017. Nimitz entered dry dock six on March 1st, 2018, for a docking planned incremental availability at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility.



Legacy

Our legacy comes from the rich history of Fleet Adm. Chester W. Nimitz and the vast history of USS Nimitz – the lead ship of the Nimitz class of aircraft carriers. Both the man and the ship share deep roots in tradition, dedication and service to the United States Navy.

Namesake

Chester William Nimitz Sr. (Feb. 24, 1885 – Feb. 20, 1966) was a fleet admiral of the United States Navy. He played a major role in the naval history of World War II as commander in chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet and Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas, commanding Allied air, land, and sea forces during World War II.

Nimitz was the leading U.S. Navy authority on submarines. Qualified in submarines during his early years, he later oversaw the conversion of these vessels' propulsion from gasoline to diesel, and then later was key in acquiring approval to build the world's first nuclear-powered submarine, USS Nautilus (SSN 571), whose propulsion system later completely superseded diesel-powered submarines in the U.S.

In 1917, he was the Navy's leading developer of underway replenishment techniques, that tool that allowed the U.S. fleet to operate away from port almost indefinitely during the Pacific War. Chief of the Navy's Bureau of Navigation in 1939, Nimitz served as chief of naval operations from 1945 until 1947. He was the United States' last officer to serve at the rank of fleet admiral.

First of Her Class

USS Nimitz is a supercarrier of the U.S. Navy, and the lead ship of her class. One of the largest warships in the world, she was laid down, launched and commissioned as CVAN 68 but was later re-designated CVN 68 (nuclear-powered multi-mission aircraft carrier) on June 30, 1975 as part of the fleet realignment. Nimitz was homeported at Naval Station Norfolk until 1987, when she was relocated to Naval Station Bremerton in Washington State (now part of Naval Base Kitsap).

Following her Refueling and Complex Overhaul in 2001, her homeport was changed to Naval Air Station North Island in San Diego. The homeport of Nimitz was again moved to Naval Station Everett in Washington State in 2012. In January 2015, Nimitz changed homeport from Everett back to Naval Base Kitsap.

Nimitz is now the oldest American aircraft carrier in active service.



USS Nimitz Fast Facts

Keel Laid	June 22, 1968
Launched	May 13, 1972
Commissioned	May 3, 1975
Propulsion System	Two nuclear power plants
Main Engines	Four
Speed	30+ knots
Propellers	Four
Blades on each propeller	Five
Aircraft Elevators	Four
Catapults	Four
Arresting Gear Cables	Four
Overall Length	1,092 feet
Overall Width	252 feet
Beam at Waterline	134 feet
Area of Flight Deck	Approx 4.5 Acres Full
Load Displacement	Approx 97,000 Tons
Accommodations	Approx 5,000 Sailors/Marines
Meals Each Day	18,000-20,000
Mail Processed	Over 1 million lbs per year

- Four distilling units enable engineers to make more than 400,000 gallons of fresh water a day for use by the propulsion plant, catapults and crew.
- Nimitz can stock at least 70 days of refrigerated and dry goods.
- Several tons of laundry is washed every day by Nimitz's laundry, dry cleaning and tailoring services personnel.
- Nimitz's two barber shops trim more than 1,500 heads per week.
- Nuclear power allows the ship to store 50 percent more ammunition and almost twice as much aviation fuel as the largest conventional steam carrier.
- Nimitz can hold 3.5 million gallons of fuel.
- Nimitz reaches more than 23 stories high from the keel to the top of the mast.
- The hangar bay extends for most of the ship's length. It is used for major repairs and shelters aircraft.



Nimitz Deployment 2017

Nimitz deployed on a regularly scheduled deployment June 1 to the U.S. 7th Fleet (C7F) and U.S. 5th Fleet (C5F) areas of operations. The deploying units from DESRON 9 accompanying Nimitz are the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Hopper (DDG 70), USS Howard (DDG 83), USS Shoup (DDG 86), USS Pinckney (DDG 91), USS Kidd (DDG 100), and the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Princeton (CG 59). Nimitz strike group is part of U.S. 3rd Fleet, which leads naval forces in the Pacific and provides the realistic, relevant training necessary for an effective global Navy. U.S. 3rd Fleet constantly coordinates with U.S. 7th Fleet to plan and execute missions based on their complementary strengths to promote ongoing peace, security, and stability throughout the entire Pacific theater of operations.

Embarked aviation squadrons of CVW-11 are: Lemoore, California-based “Argonauts” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 147, “Black Knights” of VFA 154, “Blue Diamonds” of VFA 146, San Diego-based “Death Rattlers” of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 323, the Whidbey Island, Washington-based “Gray Wolves” of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 142, Norfolk-based “Bluetails” of Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 121, and San Diego-based “Eightballers” of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 8, “Wolfpack” of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 75 and “Providers” of Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VRC) 30.

Malabar

Nimitz participated in Exercise Malabar from July 7 to July 17. Malabar is an annual maritime exercise the U.S. Navy participates in with the Indian Navy and Japan Maritime Self Defense Force. Exercise Malabar is designed to improve interoperability between the U.S., Indian and Japanese maritime forces, provide an opportunity to conduct engagements with India and Japan, and demonstrate U.S. naval presence in the Indo-Asia Pacific region. This year was the largest and most complex iteration of the exercise, with three aircraft carriers participating for the first time, two submarines and 95 aircraft highlighting the deepened partnership between the three nations.

Operation Inherent Resolve

Nimitz flew missions in support of Operation Inherent Resolve from July to October, launching 1,322 sorties and dropping 904 pieces of ordnance from the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations. During more than three months in the region, the ship and its crew also supported the mission by building 1,112 pieces of ordnance and performing flight deck operations during the day and at night.

Carrier Strike Force Operations

Nimitz participated in a three-carrier strike force exercise in the Western Pacific, Nov. 11-14. While at sea, Nimitz conducted air defense drills, sea surveillance, replenishments at sea, defensive air combat training, close-in coordinated maneuvers, and other training. The coordinated operations in international waters demonstrated the U.S. Navy’s unique capability to operate multiple carrier strike groups as a coordinated strike force effort. This was the first time three carrier strike groups operated together in the Western Pacific since exercises Valiant Shield 2006 and 2007 off the coast of Guam. The exercise focused on the ability to rapidly bring together forces from three strike groups in response to any regional situation.