

AIRCRAFT NAMING TRADITIONS

- Alliteration was particularly common; e.q: "Vickers-Valiant"
- Heavy bombers received the names of cities and towns e.g: "Lancaster"
- Flying boats were given the names of coastal or port communities e.g: "Sunderland"
- Land-based maritime patrol aircraft have been named after explorers e.g: "Shackleton" and Gods e.g: "Poseidon" and "Nimrod"
- Aircraft for army co-operation and liaison and gliders were given names associated with mythological or legendary leaders e.g: "Horsa Glider"
- American aircraft, whether purchased directly or sourced under Lend-Lease, were given American-themed names e.g: "Dakota"
- Naval versions of aircraft not originally ordered for the Fleet Air Arm were given the prefix 'Sea' e.g: "Hawker Sea Fury" and "Sea Harrier"
- Naval aircraft ordered as such had names with a nautical theme e.g:
 "Supermarine Walrus"

- Training aircraft were given names related to academic institutions "Airspeed Oxford". Alternative names for teachers were also used "De Havilland Dominie", "Percival Provost, Miles Magister", "Percival Proctor"
- Aircraft built for one role such as the "Avro Anson" or "Armstrong Whitworth Albemarle" but converted to other roles rarely changed their names
- A trend might also be followed by a manufacturer: "Hawker Hurricane",
 "Typhoon", "Tornado" and "Tempest"
- Where civilian aircraft types have been taken into service, their existing names or alphanumeric designations have often been retained e.g: "Vickers VC10" or "Lockheed Tristar"
- The systems began to change in the immediate post-WWII period with the V-bombers ("Vulcan", "Valiant" and "Victor") and types such as the "Supermarine Scimitar"
- Typhoon was adopted by Eurofighter for the EF2000 as it translated well across the languages of the partner nations who developed it: Taifun (German), Tifone





EUROFIGHTER TYPHOON



(Italian) and Tifón (Spanish)

UK FORMAT OF MILITARY NAMING DESIGNATION

System has been largely unchanged since 1948 with the addition of more prefixes as new roles have arisen

For example, the first Lockheed Hercules variant in RAF service was the Hercules C.1 ("Cargo, Mark 1").

A single example was adapted for weather monitoring purposes and became the Hercules W.2

The stretched variant became the Hercules C.3

For aircraft with a long service life, as their function changes over time, the designation letters and sometimes the mark digit will change to reflect this

The practice of restarting the mark numbers for the naval variant where the name was changed continued – e.g. the naval version of the Harrier, the Sea Harrier, marks started again at FRS Mk 1

Variants where the name was unchanged for the naval version such as the Lynx have a single set of numbers for both land and naval variants



LOCKHEED C-130 HERCULES

