



In the mid-1950s, the USAF required a trainer with higher performance than the T-33 to better prepare student pilots for the latest tactical aircraft that were then coming into service. The aircraft chosen was the T-38A which offered high performance with low maintenance and operating costs. The T-38A became the USAF's first supersonic trainer. The T-38A prototype first flew on 10 April, 1959, and production continued until 1972. A total of 1,189 T-38As were built. Some were later modified into AT-38Bs with external armament for weapons training purposes.

The T-38 Talon is a twin-engine, high-altitude, supersonic jet trainer used in a variety of roles because of its design, economy of operations, ease of maintenance, high performance and exceptional safety record. It is used primarily by Air Education and Training Command for undergraduate pilot and pilot instructor training. Air Combat Command, Air Mobility Command, U.S.

Navy in their Top Gun combat simulation program and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration also use the T-38 in various roles. The USAF Thunderbirds used T-38As from 1974 to 1982 because of their economic operation and high performance.

The T-38 has swept-back wings, a streamlined fuselage and tricycle landing gear with a steerable nose wheel. Two independent hydraulic systems power the ailerons, flaps, rudder and other flight control surfaces. The instructor and

student sit in tandem on rocket-powered ejection seats in a pressurized, air-conditioned cockpit. Student pilots fly

the T-38A to learn supersonic techniques, aerobatics, formation, night and instrument flying and cross-country navigation. More than 60,000 pilots have earned their wings in the T-38A.

Air Education and Training Command uses a modified version, the AT-38B, to prepare pilots for fighter aircraft such as the F-15, F-16 and A-10. And F-111. This model carries external armament and weapons delivery equipment for training.

T-38 was also a record breaker. Jacqueline Cochran set eight performance records in the fall of 1961 flying a production T-38A and in February 1962 a T-38A set four international time-to-climb records. An ongoing program called Pacer Classic, the structural life extensit program for the T-38, is integrating 10 modifications, including major structural renewal, into one process. As a result, the service life of T-38s should extend to the 2010. Additionally, the introduction of the T-1A Jayhawk significantly relieved the T-38's work load.

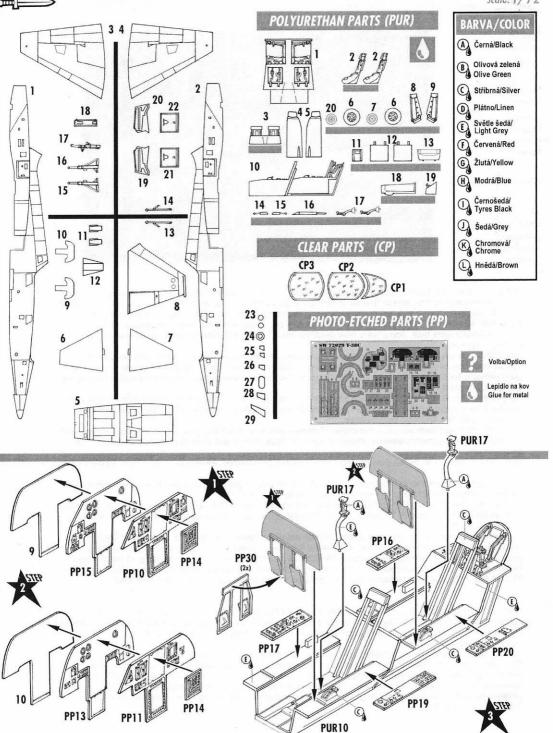
T-38C

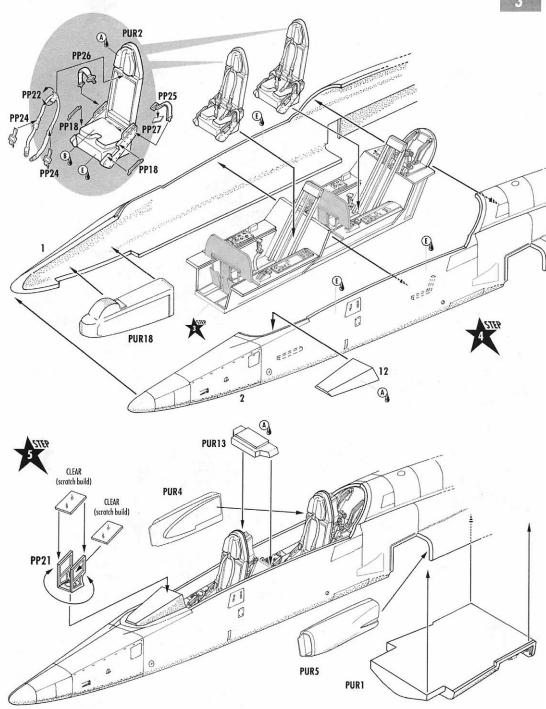
With over 500 remaining Talons in service with the US Air Force and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), it was decided to prolong their service life by improvements of existing airframe. Under the US Air Force's Pacer Classic programme, initiated in 1984, the structural integrity work on the T-38 includes replacement of the

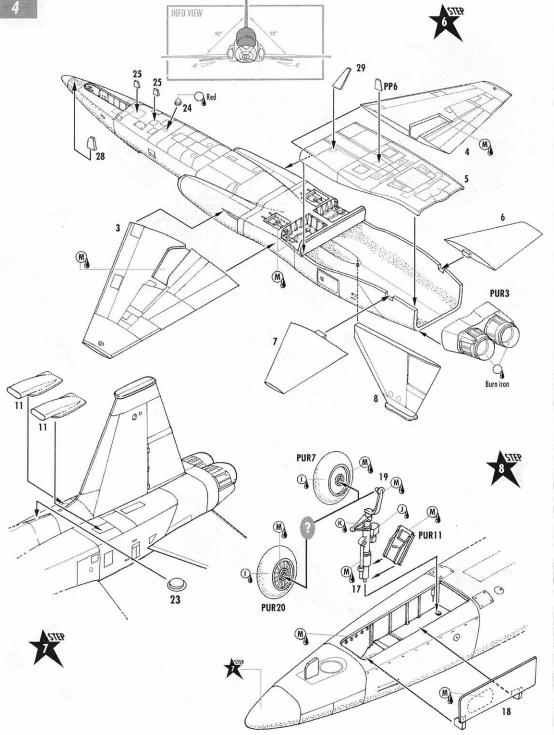
ejection seats, longerons, landing gear and brakes, flight controls and an impact resistant canopy. This was followed by wing improvement by newly designed wing incorporating fatigue resistant aluminum alloys. The USAF also has started a propulsion modernisation programme which supports the T-38 Talon advanced trainer to year 2040. The major elements of the modernisation are an engine modification programme and an avionics upgrade programme. Therefore there is a strong chance that we could see flying Talons also in next 30 years.

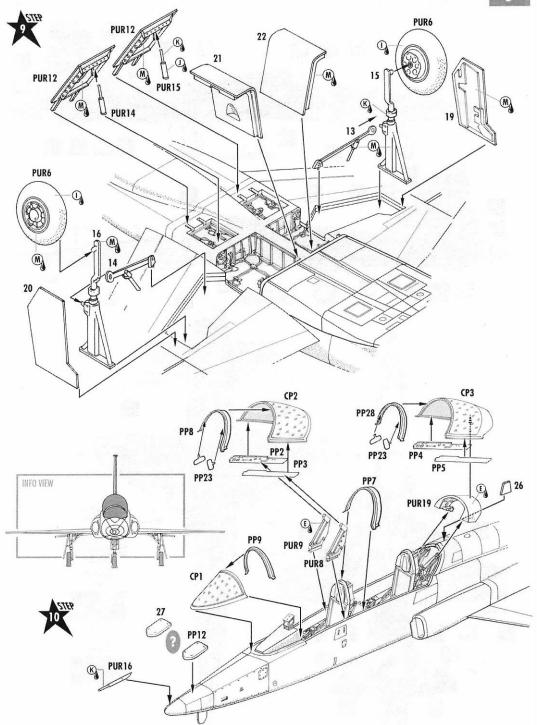
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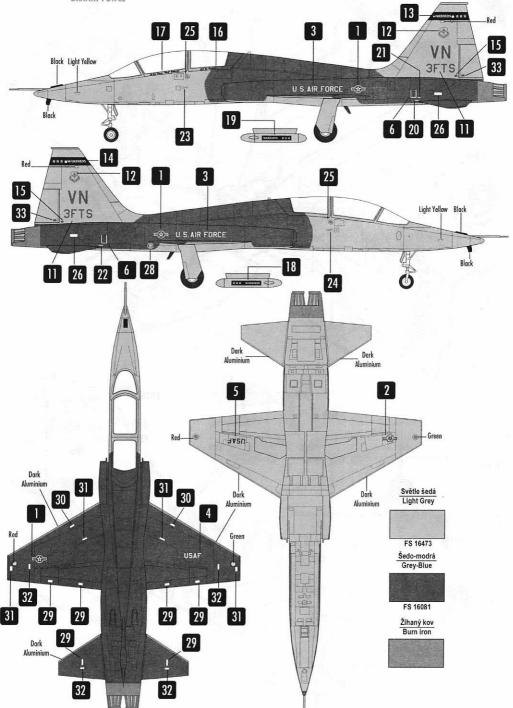


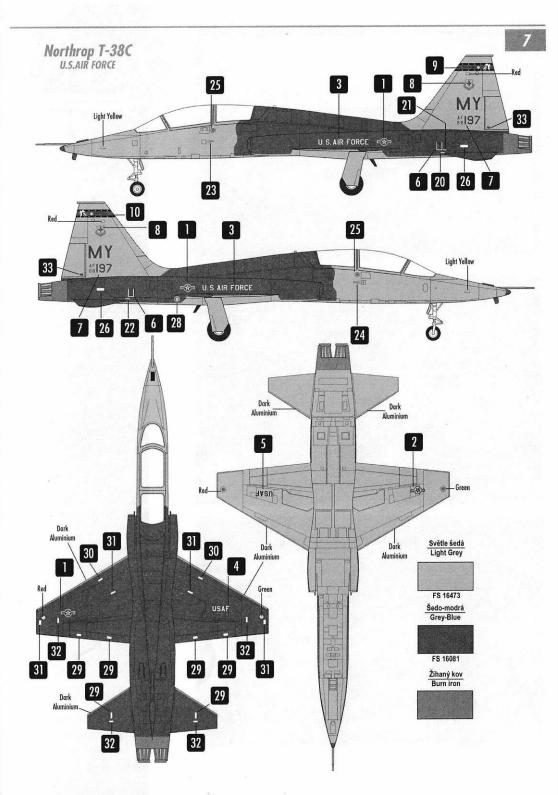






Northrop T-38C U.S.AIR FORCE









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