

Not Interested In Navy Ships? How About An Aircraft Carrier Collection?

[updated from Matchcover Beachcomber, June 1982]

As of 1982, it was “entirely possible to own a matchcover from every aircraft carrier that the U.S. ever launched. From the first carrier created in 1923 to the latest, the U.S.S. Eisenhower put into operation in 1977, many covers were issued.

In theory, there were 69 vessels numbered, but several were never completed. Their keels were reduced to scrap. Only three of these ill-fated carriers had a name: the Iwo Jima (CV-46), the Reprisal (CV-35), and the United States (CV-58). CV 50-57 and CV-44 were unnamed. CV-70, the Carl Vinson, is not fully constructed. Some names are repeated, but the numbers are not. When a vessel was sunk in World War II, a new vessel was named in its honor.”

CV-1 Langley (sunk 1942)	CV-22 Independence (sunk 1951)	1978)
CV-2 Lexington (sunk 1942)	CV-23 Princeton (sunk 1944)	CV-43 Coral Sea (scrapped 2000)
CV-3 Saratoga (sunk 1946)	CV-24 Belleau Wood (decom. 1947)	CV-45 Valley Forge (decom. 1970)
CV-4 Ranger (scrapped 1947)	CV-25 Cowpens (decomm. 1947)	CV-47 Philippine Sea (decom. 1958)
CV-5 Yorktown (sunk 1942)	CV-26 Monterey (scrapped 1971)\	CV-48 Saipan (decom. 1970)
CV-6 Enterprise (scrapped 1958)	CV-27 Langley (decom. 1947)	CV-49 Wright (decom. 1970)
CV-7 Wasp (sunk 1942)	CV-28 Cabot (sold to France c. 1950)	CV-59 Forrestal (decom. 1993)
CV-8 Hornet (sunk 1942)	CV-29 Bataan (scrapped 1961)	CV-60 Saratoga (decom. 1994)
CV-9 Essex (decom. 1947)	CV-30 San Jacinto (scrapped 1971)	CV-61 Ranger (scrapped 2017)
CV-10 Yorktown (on display)	CV-31 Bon Homme Richard (scrapped 1992)	CV-62 Independence (decom. 1998)
CV-11 Intrepid (decom. 1974)	CV-32 Leyte (decommissioned 1959)	CV-63 Kitty Hawk (decom. 2009)
CV-12 Hornet (decom. 1947)	CV-33 Kearsarge (decom. 1970)	CV-64 Constellation (scrapped 2017)
CV-13 Franklin (decom. 1947)	CV-34 Orinskany (decom. 1976)	CV-65 Enterprise (decom. 2017)
CV-14 Ticonderoga (decom. 1973)	CV-36 Antietam (decom. 1963)	CV-66 America (scuttled 2005)
CV-15 Randolph (decom. 1969)	CV-37 Princeton (decom. 1970)	CV-67 John F. Kennedy (decom. 2007)
CV-16 Lexington (decom. 1991)	CV-38 Shangri-La (decom. 1971)	CV-68 Nimitz (reclassified 1975)
CV-17 Bunker Hill (decom. 1947)	CV-39 Lake Champlain (decom 1966)	CV-69 Dwight D. Eisenhower (reclassified 1975)
CV-18 Wasp (decom. 1947)	CV-40 Tarawa (decom. 1960)	CV-70 Carl Vinson (on active duty)
CV-19 Hancock (decom. 1976)	CV-41 Midway (decom. 1992)	
CV-20 Bennington (decom. 1970)	CV-42 Franklin D. Roosevelt (scrapped	
CV-21 Boxer (decom. 1969)		

Note: Since the original 1982 article, two new carriers have been launched—the Gerald R. Ford (CVN-78) and the John F. Kennedy (CVN-79). Also note: since all new carriers are nuclear, they’re all designated as CVN rather than the old CV. Several of the more recent CVs were reclassified as CVNs. And, there are two more carriers on the way: the Enterprise (CVN-80, scheduled to launch in 2025) and the Doris Miller (CVN-81, scheduled to launch in 2029). Unfortunately, no covers have been seen from carriers since the Nimitz, so it’s no longer possible to have a comprehensive carrier collection...but, hey! It would still be an eye-popping collection!

