COMING SOON

Grumman F-14 Tomcat

Barra dos Coqueiros, Brazil



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LOT	AUCTION	BRAND	CATEGORY
#211	#182	Grumman	Aircraft

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DESCRIPTION

The Grumman F-14 Tomcat was the Cold War fleet-defence fighter built around a remarkably direct proposition: detect a bomber raid at long range, sort the threat, and engage before it reached the carrier battle group. It is remembered for its variable-sweep wings and unmistakable two-seat profile, but its real distinction was the marriage of the Hughes AWG-9 weapons system with the AIM-54 Phoenix missile. Few fighters of its era combined such long-range target handling with genuine carrier-deck compatibility.

The Tomcat emerged after the Navy rejected the F-111B as too heavy for carrier work. Grumman's VFX proposal r etained the valuable AWG-9/Phoenix concept, but wrapped it in a purpose-built, twin-engined naval fighter with v ariable geometry wings and two crew stations. The first flight took place in December 1970, deliveries began in 1 972, and operational deployments followed in 1974. Later F-14B and F-14D variants addressed the original aircraft's en gine limitations and added more capable avionics, while the basic airframe evolved from fleet interceptor into a st rike-capable fighter.

Quick facts

What made the F-14 Tomcat different from other fighters of its generation?

The central difference was not simply that the wings moved. The wing-sweep system let the Tomcat present a broad, low-speed wing for approach and carrier recovery, then sweep aft for high-speed flight. That gave Grumman a way to reconcile two demands that normally fight each other: acceptable deck handling and high-altitude interceptor speed. The mechanism was sophisticated, heavy and maintenance-intensive, but it made sense for a Navy aircraft expected to launch with substantial stores and return to a small moving runway.

The second difference was crew workload. The pilot flew and fought the aircraft; the radar intercept officer managed navigation, radar, target information and weapons employment from the aft cockpit. With the AWG-9 system, the F-14 could track 24 targets and guide Phoenix missiles against six at once. That was an unusually ambitious capability for a carrier fighter, and it explains why the Tomcat was more than a handsome airframe with a famous film career.

Powerplant, systems and technical highlights

- F-14A aircraft used Pratt & Whitney TF30 engines; F-14B and F-14D versions adopted more powerful General Electric F110-GE-400 afterburning turbofans.
- The variable-sweep wing automatically adjusted with flight condition, while manual selection remained available within system limits.
- The AWG-9 weapons-control system formed the heart of the original interceptor mission; the F-14D received the later APG-71 radar.
- Carrier equipment included a reinforced retractable tricycle undercarriage, twin-wheel nose gear, arresting hook and naval structural provisions.
- The aircraft carried an internal M61 20 mm cannon and was associated with AIM-9 Sidewinder, AIM-7 Sparrow and AIM-54 Phoenix air-to-air missiles.
- Later service introduced air-to-ground employment, turning the Tomcat into a more flexible strike platform than its original fleet-defence brief suggested.

How it compares

The comparison is with the F-15C Eagle, a representative contemporary air-superiority fighter; figures and capabilities vary by production standard, engine fit and mission configuration.

Honest ownership note: The F-14 is not a conventional civilian ownership proposition. A prospective custodian must first establish the aircraft's legal status, demilitarisation requirements and the status of every controlled component b efore considering restoration or operation. F-14-specific parts, technical data and export activity are subject to u nusually strict controls, and original engines, radar equipment, ejection-seat systems, hydraulic components a nd wing-sweep hardware demand specialist knowledge. Any pre-purchase inspection should concentrate on p rovenance and permitted configuration as much as structural condition: wing-pivot structure, undercarriage, a rresting-gear area, engine installation, hydraulic plumbing and removed or disabled military systems all deserve c areful scrutiny. A military-aircraft specialist, experienced turbine support and legal advice on controlled hardware m atter more here than optimism.

Exterior and cabin

Exterior

- Long pointed nose ahead of a broad forward fuselage and widely spaced engine nacelles.
- Shoulder-mounted wings pivot from broad glove sections beside the fuselage.
- Twin outward-canted vertical fins sit above the engine nacelles, with all-moving horizontal tailplanes aft.
- Retractable tricycle landing gear is unfaired, with a twin-wheel nose unit and prominent main gear.

Cabin and cockpit

- Two tandem cockpit stations beneath a long framed canopy.
- The pilot occupies the forward station; the radar intercept officer sits aft with mission-system displays and controls.
- Side-by-side engine intakes begin behind the cockpit, leaving the fuselage comparatively broad through the crew area.
- The cockpit layout is unmistakably military: dense instrumentation, ejection seats and little concession to baggage or weekend touring.

Who is this aircraft for: the F-14 Tomcat?

- A museum, collection or educational organisation seeking an important naval-aviation exhibit.
- A preservation group able to support a complex, controlled military aircraft project.
- A technically literate enthusiast interested in the Tomcat's engineering and historical significance rather than c asual private flying.

The F-14 Tomcat remains compelling because it was engineered around a mission few aircraft were ever asked to perform: defend a carrier force at distance, at speed, from the deck of a ship. Its swing wings and twin tails make it instantly recognisable, but the lasting fascination is the systems thinking beneath the shape. For the right preservation-minded buyer, it is a serious artefact of naval aviation rather than a simple collectible.

SPECIFICATIONS

General Information

Model	**Grumman F-14 Tomcat**

Engine & Power Systems

Engine Type	Two afterburning turbofans: Pratt & Whitney TF30 on F-14A; General Electric F110-GE-400 on F-14B/D

Avionics & Equipment

Avionics	Hughes AWG-9 weapons-control radar on early variants; APG-71 radar on F-14D

PHOTOGRAPHS

4 of 5 photographs reproduced here. The complete gallery is on the listing page.

EXTERIOR





INTERIOR



EXTERIOR


AI Enhanced

HOW TO BID ON THIS LOT

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