

The Lockheed A-12, SR-71, and YF-12A Blackbirds by James Pate Williams, Jr.

The A-12 was a spy-plane jointly operated by the United States Air Force and the Central Intelligence Agency. The CIA was the primary user. Fifteen A-12 Oxcart (CIA designation) or Cygnus (crew name). None were lost in combat, but six were six were lost by accident and the other nine are currently museum aircraft.

[Lockheed A-12 - Wikipedia](#)

The USAF decided it needed a variant of the Lockheed A-12 for high-speed and high-altitude reconnaissance missions. Thus, Lockheed built 32 SR-71 Blackbird jets. Twelve of the SR-71s were lost by accident and one pilot died. Enemies tried hard to shoot down the spy-planes, but no interceptor nor missile was fast enough to destroy a SR-71 on a spying mission.

[Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird - Wikipedia](#)

Partially as an experiment and a ruse to fool our strategic adversaries, i.e., North Korea, North Vietnam, Red China, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), Lockheed was again called to design and build an interceptor based on the A-12 and SR-71. It could carry three nuclear or nonnuclear missiles built by the Hughes Corporation. The new air-to-air missiles used Hughes groundbreaking Doppler radar inventions. This program was canceled after three aircraft were built and one crashed accidentally.

[Lockheed YF-12 - Wikipedia](#)

[SR-71 Online - YF-12A Flight Manual - Section I: Description and Operation](#)

