

## Bofors 40mm Anti-Aircraft Gun

Written by David Boyd

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### The Bofors 40mm Anti-Aircraft Gun



The Bofors anti-aircraft gun was developed by a Swedish company in the late twenties and in 1937 the War Office decided to buy 100 guns and 500,000 rounds of ammunition. This initial order was later followed by a license to build them in Britain. Production began before the outbreak of war but only 233 had been produced by September 1939, production was slow but rapidly increased to fill the increasing anti-aircraft requirements. The practical rate of fire is generally listed as 120 round per minute.

Unlike other nations such as Germany, the British never held smaller calibre anti-aircraft weapons such as the 20mm in much regard as while generally having a higher rate of fire which meant a greater chance of achieving a hit they lacked sufficient power to guarantee severe damage to the aircraft. In 1938 the Royal Aircraft establishment calculated that it would require 4 ounces of cyclonite to destroy a modern aircraft wing. A 20mm calibre weapon



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SA 40mm Bofors Mk II

## Ballistic data

HE HE Mk IIT  
 Muzzle velocity 2,828 ft/s  
 Max horizontal range 12,500 yards  
 Max height 26,000 feet

Production of Bofors Guns by year \*Commonwealth data is from May 1942 onwards.

	Sep-41	Oct-41	1942	1943	1944	1945 (May)
Bofors Equipments	2,316	2,254	7,325	5,556	-	-
Bofors SP	-	-	10,458	80	-	-
Airborne version	-	-	1,238	9	-	-
Bofors for Crusaders	-	-	1,225	-	-	-
Bofors Equipments (Canada)	-	-	1,420	1	-	-
Bofors Equipments (Other)	-	-	815	58	-	-

Sources - British & American Artillery of WWII, AVIA 22 456 - 514, Bofors Handbook