

AIRCRAFT RECOGNITION

Introduction

1. It may be thought that the new scientific aids to the identification of "friend or foe" have done away with the need for the visual recognition of aircraft, but it must be remembered that as soon as any new device is brought into operation, ways and means of defeating it are sought. This is just one of many reasons why the positive visual identification of aircraft is still vitally necessary.
2. Modern high-performance aircraft are becoming increasingly standardized in appearance, and, because of their speed and the great height at which they fly, it is often only possible to catch a glimpse of them. In many ways aircraft recognition in the modern age has become a more subtle art and the introduction of the Sargeant system of teaching has greatly simplified the task of both the student and the instructor.

Principles of the Sargeant System

3. The Sargeant system of teaching aircraft recognition is basically a course of directed study in which the instructor provides the materials necessary for the completion of a series of interesting exercises. The instructor is not required to "teach" in the generally accepted sense of the word, but to provide supervision and encouragement during the study periods.
4. No formal tests are necessary, as the exercises themselves are designed to test increasing knowledge as the work progresses. No time limit should normally be set for the exercise, each cadet working through them at his own pace.

Materials

5. All the materials necessary for each exercise are to be found in the *Joint Services Recognition Journal*. It is recommended that the pages containing each exercise are removed from the *Journal* and pasted on to cards. In this way they are more easily stored and handled, and a number of different exercises in a single copy of the *Journal* may be used at the same time.
6. To record the answers, pieces of paper are needed on which the "target" numbers are listed. Rather than preparing these before each exercise, it is suggested that a supply of *pro formae* should be duplicated similar to that shown in Fig 1.

Method of Working Exercises


7. The layout of a typical basic exercise is shown. (Fig 2)
8. The notes should first be read and the key pictures studied. When it is felt that the recognition features of the aircraft are known, the identification of the target pictures should be attempted. The easiest views should always be attempted first. For example, in Fig 2 targets Nos 1 and 9 are both Lightnings, but target No 27 is not.
9. **WHILE COMPLETING THE EXERCISES, REFERENCE SHOULD CONSTANTLY BE MADE TO THE "KEY" PICTURES AND TO "TARGETS" THAT HAVE ALREADY BEEN IDENTIFIED.** It is by constantly establishing recognition features and referring to them when identifying others that a lasting impression of the aircraft is obtained.

AIRCRAFT RECOGNITION

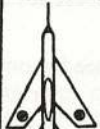
NAME					
EXERCISE					
№	NAME	SCORE	№	NAME	SCORE
1			16		
2			17		
3			18		
4			19		
5			20		
6			21		
7			22		
8			23		
9			24		
10			25		
11			26		
12			27		
13			28		
14			29		
15			30		
		TOTAL			

Fig 1. Specimen Answer Paper

KEY
PICTURES



1




LIGHTNING

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~~~~~  
~~~~~  
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Span 35ft.

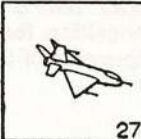
NOTES

TARGET
PICTURES



9

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	32	33	34	35
36	37	38	39	40	41	42



27

Fig 2. Typical Basic Exercise

10. *IF A TARGET IS IDENTIFIED AS THE AIRCRAFT BEING STUDIED THE NAME SHOULD BE WRITTEN AGAINST THE TARGET NUMBER ON THE ANSWER SHEET. IF THE AIRCRAFT IS IDENTIFIED AS A STRANGER, THAT ANSWER SHOULD BE LEFT BLANK.* Writing down the name at once after each identification is an important part of the procedure as it "stamps" the name of the aircraft on the memory and makes it automatic to couple the name with the particular aircraft's shape.

11. Once a range of aircraft has been learned, certain more advanced exercises may be attempted. In these exercises there are two or more sets of key pictures, each of similar aircraft, and, using the same process as before, every target aircraft must be recognized by name and its name entered on the answer sheet.

12. All civil aircraft are marked with registration letters, sometimes mixed with figures, in a similar way to the registration of motor vehicles. The first group of letters denotes the country which operates the aircraft and the remaining letters are for identification purposes. In addition, most civil aircraft are painted in the colours of their parent companies. Some of the colours are very bright and the designs often tend to break up the outline of the aircraft by hiding some recognition features and exaggerating others. Military aircraft always carry upon them the insignia of their country. For instance, all RAF aircraft carry red, white and blue roundels on the wings and fuselage and the same colours in vertical stripes upon the fin, the white marking being omitted on aircraft used on night operations, photographic reconnaissance and similar roles. A full list of the aircraft insignia is issued as a separate publication.

Conclusion

13. A sound knowledge of the more widely used military aircraft will always be necessary and the ability to recognize these aircraft should be a source of pride to everybody with an interest in aviation.

14. The Sargeant system is an effective and enjoyable way of learning this art and a large library of exercises may be quickly built up from which any cadet may increase his knowledge and test his own ability to recognize the most up-to-date aircraft operating anywhere in the world.

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