



Sidewinder missile

The world's most widely used air-to-air missile began as a side project.

In the early 1950s, physicist William B. McLean, working with ONR at the Naval Ordnance Test Station, developed a low-cost, heat-seeking missile that required no external guidance.

That project became Sidewinder, and it transformed aerial warfare.

NAVAL TECHNOLOGY:
DELIVERING DOMINANCE





Sidewinder locked on and reimagined air combat.

As the first infrared-guided missile, Sidewinder could hone in on the heat of enemy aircraft engines.

Sidewinder's simplicity, reliability and effectiveness made it a critical asset in the **U.S. Navy's** Cold War engagements, **from the Taiwan Strait to Iraq.**

NAVAL TECHNOLOGY:
DELIVERING DOMINANCE





More than 70 years later, Sidewinder remains in active service.

Modern variants, developed through
ONR's Air Warfare and Weapons Department,
feature digital guidance, advanced
countermeasures and
multi-platform adaptability,
strengthening U.S. Naval air power.

NAVAL TECHNOLOGY:
DELIVERING DOMINANCE

