

Leopard NATO: First Line of Defence 1979-2024 – Tankcraft

The Leopard 2 is a main battle tank (MBT) developed by Krauss-Maffei in the 1970s. It entered service in 1979 and has since become one of the most successful MBTs in history, with over 3,500 units in service in Europe and around the world.

The Leopard 2 is known for its excellent firepower, mobility, and protection. It is armed with a 120mm smoothbore gun, which is capable of firing a variety of rounds, including armor-piercing discarding sabot (APDS), high-explosive anti-tank (HEAT), and canister rounds. The Leopard 2 is also equipped with a coaxial 7.62mm machine gun and a roof-mounted 12.7mm machine gun.



Leopard 2: NATO's First Line of Defence, 1979–2024

(TankCraft) by David Grummitt

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

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The Leopard 2 is powered by a 1,500 horsepower diesel engine, which gives it a top speed of 70 km/h. The tank is also equipped with a hydropneumatic suspension system, which gives it excellent off-road mobility.

The Leopard 2 is protected by a composite armor hull and turret. The armor is designed to protect the tank from a variety of threats, including kinetic energy penetrators, shaped charges, and missiles.

Development

The Leopard 2 was developed in response to the Soviet Union's T-64 main battle tank. The T-64 was a revolutionary design, and it was feared that it would outclass the Leopard 1, which was the Bundeswehr's main battle tank at the time.

The Leopard 2 was designed to be a more powerful and better-protected tank than the T-64. It was also designed to be more mobile and easier to maintain. The Leopard 2 entered service in 1979, and it quickly became one of the most successful MBTs in history.

Variants

There have been a number of variants of the Leopard 2 developed over the years. The most notable variants include:

- Leopard 2A1: The Leopard 2A1 was the first production variant of the Leopard 2. It was armed with a 120mm smoothbore gun and a coaxial 7.62mm machine gun.
- Leopard 2A2: The Leopard 2A2 was a more advanced variant of the Leopard 2A1. It was equipped with a new fire control system and a more powerful engine.
- Leopard 2A3: The Leopard 2A3 was a further improved variant of the Leopard 2A2. It was equipped with a new armor package and a more powerful engine.

- Leopard 2A4: The Leopard 2A4 was a major upgrade of the Leopard 2A3. It was equipped with a new turret, a new fire control system, and a more powerful engine.
- Leopard 2A5: The Leopard 2A5 was a further improved variant of the Leopard 2A4. It was equipped with a new armor package and a more powerful engine.
- Leopard 2A6: The Leopard 2A6 was a major upgrade of the Leopard 2A5. It was equipped with a new turret, a new fire control system, and a more powerful engine.
- Leopard 2A7: The Leopard 2A7 is the latest variant of the Leopard 2. It was equipped with a new armor package, a new fire control system, and a more powerful engine.

Operational History

The Leopard 2 has been used in combat in a number of conflicts, including the Kosovo War, the Iraq War, and the Syrian Civil War.

In the Kosovo War, the Leopard 2 was used by the Bundeswehr to support NATO peacekeeping operations. The tanks were used to patrol the border between Kosovo and Serbia, and they were also used to provide fire support to NATO troops.

In the Iraq War, the Leopard 2 was used by the Bundeswehr to support the US-led invasion of Iraq. The tanks were used to spearhead the invasion, and they were also used to provide fire support to US troops.

In the Syrian Civil War, the Leopard 2 has been used by the Turkish Armed Forces to support Turkish-backed rebels. The tanks have been used to

attack ISIL positions, and they have also been used to provide fire support to Turkish troops.

The Leopard 2 is one of the most successful main battle tanks in history. It is a powerful, well-protected, and mobile tank that has served in a number of conflicts around the world. The Leopard 2 is expected to remain in service for many years to come.

Technical Specifications

Characteristic Leopard 2A7

Weight	62.5 tonnes
Length	9.91 meters
Width	3.70 meters
Height	2.99 meters
Engine	1,500 horsepower diesel engine
Top speed	70 km/h
Range	500 kilometers
Armament	120mm smoothbore gun, 7.62mm coaxial machine gun, 12.7mm roof-mounted machine gun
Armor	Composite armor hull and turret
Crew	4

Image Gallery







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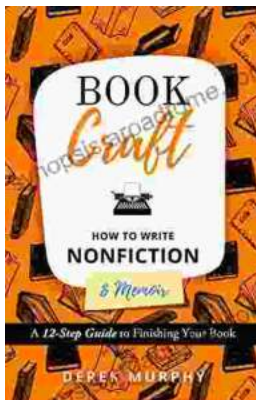
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