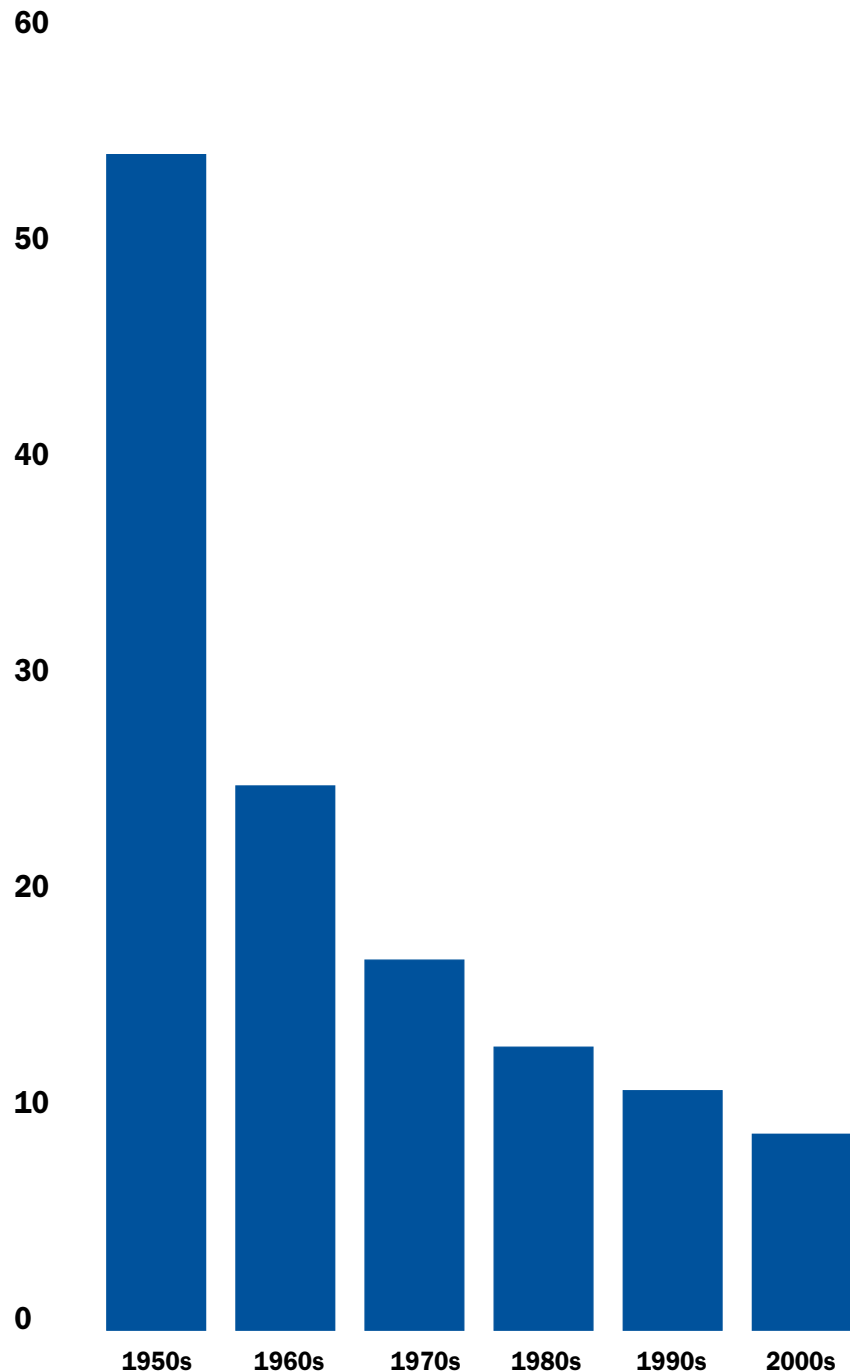


Aircraft Program Fade-out

USAF and Navy First Flights by Decade



For 60 years, major aircraft programs have been the prime source of aerospace innovation. Around 1950, the aerospace industry entered a period in which many firms competed on a wide variety of projects. Some were experimental. Some were forgettable. Some produced classics. The point was that there was a striking diversity in the number and types of aircraft designs. The chart depicts the steady decline in first flights of military fixed-wing aircraft for USAF and the Navy. Today, there are few plans for new program starts, which in the next decade will limit first flights—and innovation.

Source: Rebecca Grant, "The Vanishing Arsenal of Airpower," October 2009, Mitchell Institute for Airpower Studies, Arlington, Va.