

# The Chart Page

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## The Rated Force Goes Down

*Despite an uptick in the middle 1980s, the number of active duty Air Force aircraft and the number of officers with aeronautical ratings—pilots and navigators—have been falling steadily for many years.*

■ *At the peak of World War II, almost 46 percent of the officer force wore wings. Today, it's about 24 percent.*

■ *In the 1950s, pilots accounted for more than 40 percent of the total officers. Today, they are 17 percent.*

■ *The number of active duty pilots has fallen by 91 percent since World War II—but the drop in the number of active duty aircraft has been even steeper, down more than 92 percent.*

Year			Pilots		Navigators		Rated Officers	
	Active Duty Aircraft	Total Air Force Officers	Number of Pilots	Percent of Total Officers	Number of Navs	Percent of Total Officers	Number of Rated Officers	Percent of Total Officers
1944	78,757	342,914	132,477	<b>38.63</b>	24,991	<b>7.29</b>	157,468	<b>45.92</b>
1956	24,949	141,296	56,847	<b>40.23</b>	n/a		n/a	
1978	7,121	95,242	20,029	<b>21.03</b>	9,550	<b>10.03</b>	29,579	<b>31.06</b>
1986	7,245	109,048	22,283	<b>20.43</b>	9,291	<b>8.52</b>	31,574	<b>28.95</b>
2000	6,205	69,023	11,800	<b>17.09</b>	4,437	<b>6.43</b>	16,237	<b>23.52</b>

n/a = not available

Sources: Army Air Forces Statistical Digest, World War II, 1945; A History of the United States Air Force, 1907–1957 ©1957, The Air Force Association; Air Force Magazine Almanac issues, 1987–2001.