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Me-309



- Fighter
- Messerschmitt



↓ The Luftwaffe command repeatedly turned to the Messerschmitt company with requests to increase the speed and range of the Bf 109 fighter, as well as to strengthen its weapons. Carrying out work on the consistent improvement of the Bf 109, the company's chief Willy Messerschmitt in 1940 decided to develop a new fighter using the latest advances in aircraft engineering, including a fully retractable tricycle landing gear, pressurized cabin and a variable area radiator.

The new aircraft, which was given the designation Me 309, could indeed become a very good fighter. It was a single-engine all-metal low-wing aircraft with a new for that time landing gear with a nose strut. Taking into account the pilots' complaints about the insufficient stability of the Bf 109 when taxiing, due to the small gauge of the chassis, the Me 309 had a chassis with a gauge increased by about one and a half times. The main landing gear retracted in flight towards the fuselage, while the nose gear retracted back into the fuselage with a 90° turn.

Located in the middle part of the fuselage, the pressurized cockpit was covered with a characteristic teardrop-shaped canopy, providing good visibility in all directions.

The aircraft was equipped with a very powerful 12-cylinder DB 603A-1 engine (1750 hp), which, in combination with a three-blade variable pitch propeller, was supposed to provide a maximum flight speed of 740 km / h. The engine cooling system had an in-flight air intake with low drag.



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Aircraft Handbook

| [Bf 109K-4](#) |

Me-309-V1 Specification

Crew	1
Dimensions	
Wing span	11.04 m (36 ft 3 in)
Wing area	11.04 m ² (179 ft ²)
Length	9.46 m (31 ft 0 in)
Height	3.90 m (12 ft 10 in)
Powerplant	
Daimler-Benz DB 603G	1,308kW (1,750 hp)
Weight:	
Empty weight	3530 kg (7,766 lb)
Loaded weight	4,250 kg (9,350 lb)
Performance	
Maximum speed	733 km/h (457 mph)
Service ceiling	12,000 m (39,360 ft)
Range	1,100 km (686 miles)
Armament	
2×15-mm MG-151 cannon, 3×13-mm MG-131 machine guns	

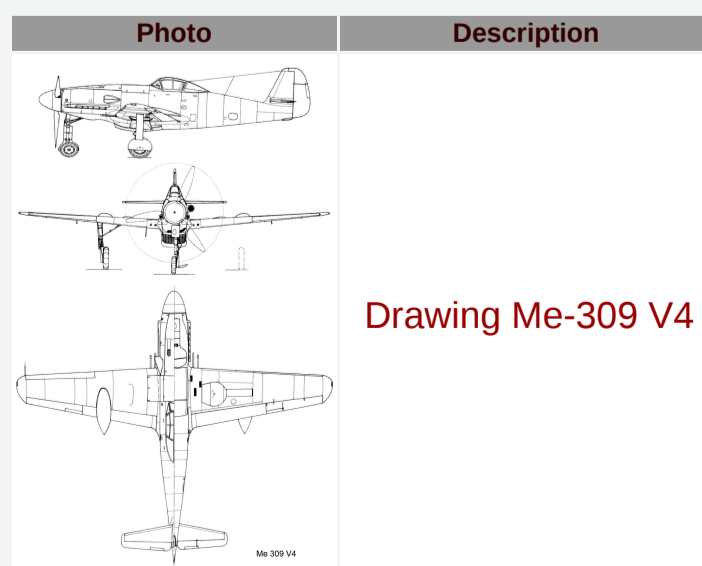
The wishes of the Luftwaffe regarding the armament of the aircraft were also taken into account to the maximum extent. It was equipped with four 13 mm MG 131 machine guns, two 30 mm MK 108 cannons and one 30 mm MK 103 cannon. The MK 108 gun weighed about one and a half times more than the MG 151/20, but the weight of its projectile was three times the weight of the MG 151/20 projectile, so three or four hits were enough to disable a four-engine bomber.

The disadvantage of the gun was the low initial velocity of the projectile - only 500 m / s, which made it unsuitable for combating ground targets. This shortcoming was eliminated in the MK 103 gun.

The muzzle velocity of this cannon has been increased to 860 m/s. Such weapons were not installed on all twin-engine fighters!

It should be noted here that the development of the Me 309 was carried out without much haste. First, it turned out that the design of the Bf 109 has considerable room for improvement and that through a relatively simple upgrade, the Bf 109 can be kept at the level of ever-increasing requirements at all times. Secondly, on the same day as the flight of the first prototype Me 309 VI, the third, and this time successful, flight of the Me 262 V3 jet fighter took place. In this regard, neither Messerschmitt nor the Luftwaffe command were seriously interested in creating a new piston-engine fighter, which required a very significant amount of work on fine-tuning and organizing mass production.

So, when in July 1943 the Messerschmitt company produced the last of the ordered four prototypes of the Me 309, no further orders followed.



Bibliography

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- "Encyclopedia of military engineering" /Aerospace Publishing/

