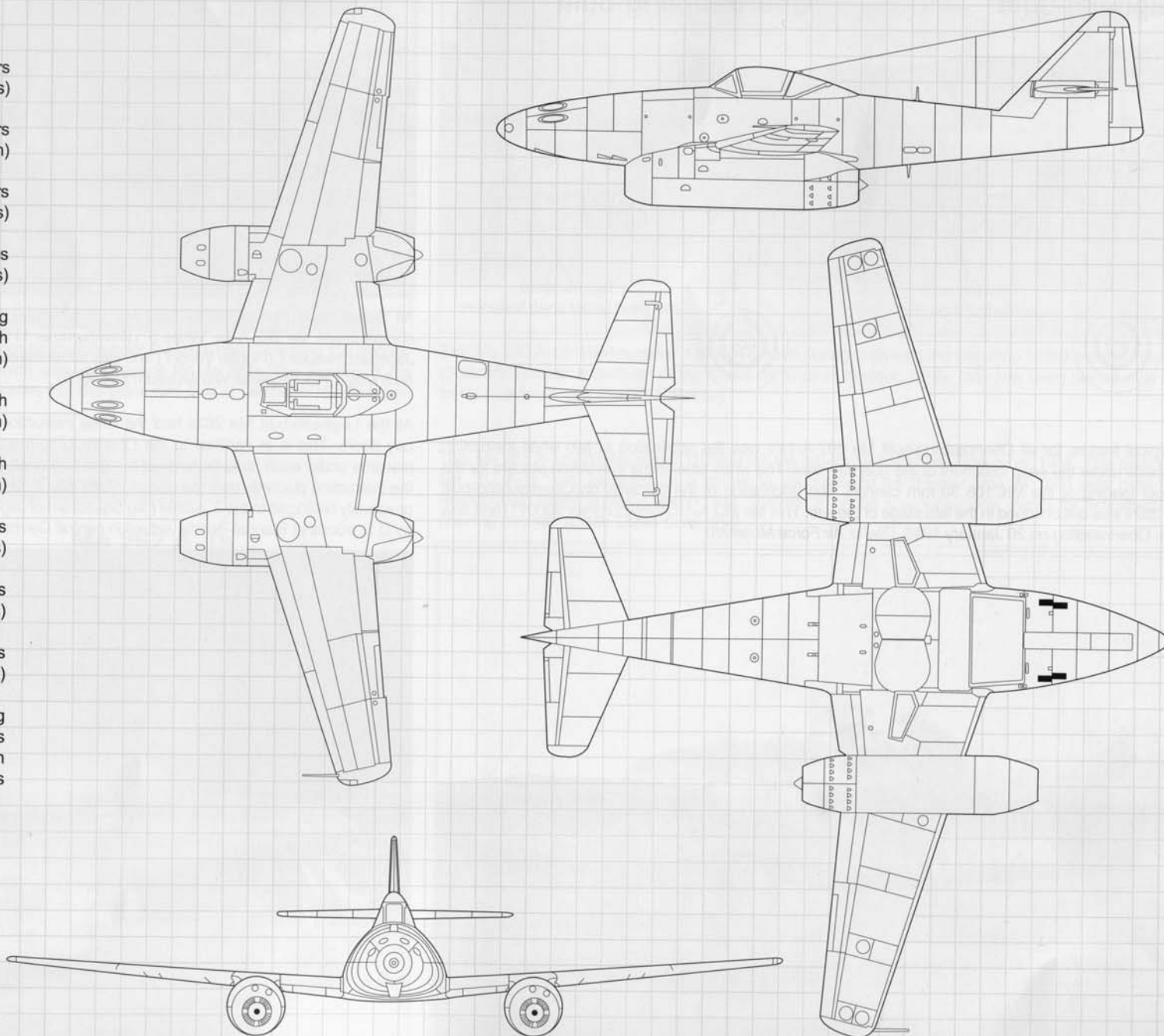


# Me 262 A-1a (standard)

## Specifications

Length .....	10.61 meters (34 feet, 9 inches)
Wingspan .....	12.51 meters (41 feet, ½ inch)
Height .....	3.83 meters (12 feet, 7 inches)
Gross weight .....	6,387 kilograms (14,080.92 pounds)
Engine .....	Two Jumo 004B jets generating 900 kilograms of thrust each (1,984.16 pounds of thrust each)
Maximum speed .....	870 km/h (540.49 mph)
Cruising speed .....	740 km/h (459.81 mph)
Fuel .....	2,000 liters (528.34 gallons)
Range .....	1,046 kilometers (649.95 miles)
Service ceiling .....	11,582 meters (38,000 feet)
Armament .....	Four Rheinmetall-Borsig MK 108 30 mm cannons with 80-100 rounds per gun and 24 R4M air-to-air rockets



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#### Armament

The Me 262 carried four 30-mm MK 108 cannon in the nose, with 100 rpg for the upper guns and 80 for the lower. Armament was reduced to two MK 108s in the recon-configured Me 262A-5a and Me 262A-1a/U3, and some operational fighters and experimental variants had their cannon armament reduced or changed.

#### Cockpit

The Me 262 pilot enjoyed a superb all-round view, sitting high on the fuselage under a blown clear-view canopy. The aircraft was originally fitted with a Revi 16B reflector gunsight, but this was later replaced by the Askania EZ42 gyroscopic sight.

#### Insignia

Many JG 7 Me 262s wore the unit's leaping greyhound insignia on their noses, usually with colourful 'Defence of the Reich' bands around the rear fuselage.

#### Handling

The Me 262 was a remarkably responsive yet docile aircraft, with pleasantly harmonised controls and comfortable stick forces. A tendency to snake at high Mach numbers reduced the aircraft's usefulness as a stable gun platform. More serious was the fact that the single-engine safety speed was a high 290 km/h (180 mph). Engine failures below this speed inevitably ended in catastrophe, especially when the aircraft was heavily laden, and the accident rate was high. There was simply insufficient control power to hold the aircraft on an even keel with asymmetric power. The aircraft was relatively underpowered, so take-offs were long and fraught.

#### Powerplant

The Me 262 was powered by a pair of Jumo 004B turbojets, rushed into production before it had reached maturity. While the axial-flow compressor in theory offered potential advantages over the higher-drag centrifugal compressor engines used in early British jet aircraft, in practice the German engines were considerably inferior. Production of the Jumo 004B was undertaken underground at Nordhausen, which imposed some difficulties, but none of these were as serious as the shortage of chrome and nickel used in the production of turbine blades. Each of the Jumo 004B's compressor's eight stages used 40 heat-resistant blades, and the chrome and nickel shortages led to the failure of many sub-standard blades at the high temperatures encountered within the engine. Furthermore, the gas dynamics of the engine were such that flow tended to break down at high altitudes, and fuel flow proved difficult to regulate. This led to turbine burn-out if fuel was admitted too quickly, and flame-outs if too slowly. The Me 262's operational usefulness was severely restricted by the limited life of its engines. With a TBO of 10 hours and an overall life of 25 hours, aircraft availability was always a limiting factor for Me 262-equipped units. Not only were the engines short-lived, but were also very unreliable, being prone to surges, stalls and fires.

#### Fighter or bomber?

It has often been said that Hitler's initial insistence on using the Me 262 as a bomber seriously delayed the programme and reduced its impact on the Allied war effort. Certainly, in June 1944 Hitler insisted that testing and trials of the aircraft in the fighter role should do nothing to delay production of the bomber version, and in August would only reluctantly concede that every 20th aircraft on the production line would be a fighter. However, the design of modifications for the bomber role were complete before he issued his edict and delays to Me 262 deliveries were imposed by engine shortages, not by having to incorporate modifications on the production line.

Keith Fretwell