

# LOCKHEED P-38 LIGHTNING

## P-38 SERVICE

*Manufacturer:* The Lockheed Aircraft Corp., Burbank, California, USA  
*Models:* 020, 022, 122, 222, 322, 422, 522, 622  
*Designations:* P-38; F-4, F-5, F-38, FO, P-49, P-58, P-322  
*Names:* Lightning; Chain Lightning (P-58),  
Night Lightning (P-38M)

*First official flight:* XP-38 27 Jan 1939  
*Factory production period:* 1938 – 1945  
*Primary service period:* 1941 – 1946  
*Last official flight:* ZF-38J / L 1949

## P-38 VARIANTS

1939	Model 022-64-01	XP-38	1	
1940	Model 122-62-02	YP-38	13	<b>Total: 00014</b>
1941	Model 222-62-02	P-38	30	
1941	Model 222-62-08	P-38D	36	<b>Total: 00066</b>
1941	Model 222-62-09	P-38E	210	
1941	Model 222-62-13	F-4	99	
1942	Model 322-61-04	Lightning Mk. I	143	
1942	Model 222-60-09 / -12 / -15 / 322-60-19	P-38F	527	
1942	Model 222-60-13	F-4A	20	
1942	Model 222-68-12 / 322-68-19	P-38G	1082	
1942	Model 222-62-16 / 222-68-16	F-5A	181	
1943	Model 422-81-20	P-38H	601	<b>Total: 02863</b>
1943	Model 422-81-14 / -22 / -23	P-38J	2970	
1943	Model 422-81-21	F-5B	200	
1943	Model 422-85-14	P-38K	1	
1944	Model 422-87-23	P-38L	3923	<b>Total: 07094</b>
1942	Model 522-66-07	XP-49	1	
1944	Model 020-86-04	XP-58	1	<b>Total: 00002</b>
				<b><u>Total: 10039</u></b>

## **P-38 PRODUCTION**

### **XP-38**

*Prototype twin-engine, long-range fighter, 4 nose guns / 1 nose cannon.*

*produced 1938*

Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)

37-457 022-2201

1 **Total: 00001**

### **YP-38**

*Service test version, engine, armament upgrade.*

*produced 1940 – 1941*

Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)

39-689 / 39-701 122-2202 / 2214

13 **Total: 00013**

### **P-38**

*As YP-38, armour protection, XP-38 armament.*

*produced 1941*

Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)

40-744 / 40-773 222-2215 / 2244

30 **Total: 00030**

*P-38B – Reserved for projected development, cancelled.*

*P-38C – Reserved for projected development, cancelled.*

### **P-38D**

*As P-38, modified tailplane, minor changes.*

*produced 1941*

Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)

40-774 / 40-809 222-2245 / 2280

36 **Total: 00036**

### **P-38E**

*As P-38D, mechanical changes, cannon upgrade.*

*produced 1941 – 1942*

Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)

41-1983 / 41-2292 222-5201 / 5510

210 **Total: 00210**

*- 210 as P-38E.*

*- 99 as F-4.*

*- 1 as F-5A.*

*- 3 to RAAF as A55-1 / A55-3.*

### **F-4-1**

*As P-38E, photo reconn., unarmed.*

*produced 1941*

Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)

*99 mixed with P-38E-LO s/n.*

99 **Total: 00099**

### **Lightning Mk. I**

*RAF version of the P-38E, minor changes.*

*produced 1942*

Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)

*Delivered as Lightning Mk. I to:*

(RAF) AE978 / AE980 322-3001 / 3003

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*Retained by USAAF with non-standard designation P-322:*

(RAF) AE981 / AE999 322-3004 / 3022

(RAF) AF100 / AF220	322-3023 / 3143	140	<b>Total: 00143</b>
<i>60 additional airframes cancelled.</i>			
<b>P-38F</b>			
<i>As P-38E, engine upgrade, external changes.</i>			
<i>produced 1942</i>			
Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)			
41-2293 / 41-2392	222-5511 / 5610		
<i>- 80 as P-38F.</i>			
<i>- 20 as F-4A.</i>			
41-7484 / 41-7680	222-5611 / 5807		
42-12567 / 42-12666	222-7001 / 7100		
43-2035 / 43-2184	322-3144 / 3293	527	<b>Total: 00527</b>
<i>- 150 ex-Lightning Mk. II orders.</i>			
<b>F-4A-1</b>			
<i>As P-38F, photo reconn., unarmed.</i>			
<i>produced 1942</i>			
Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)			
<i>20 mixed with P-38F-LO s/n.</i>			
		20	<b>Total: 00020</b>
<b>P-38G</b>			
<i>As P-38F, engine / radio upgrade.</i>			
<i>produced 1942 – 1943</i>			
Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)			
42-12667 / 42-12866	222-7101 / 7300		
<i>- 160 as P-38G.</i>			
<i>- 40 as F-5A.</i>			
42-12870 / 42-13557	222-7304 / 7991		
<i>- 548 as P-38G.</i>			
<i>- 140 as F-5A.</i>			
43-2185 / 43-2558	322-3294 / 3667	1082	<b>Total: 01082</b>
<i>- 374 ex-Lightning Mk. II orders.</i>			
<b>F-5A-1 / -2 / -3 / -10</b>			
<i>As P-38G, photo reconn., unarmed.</i>			
<i>produced 1942 – 1943</i>			
Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)			
<i>1 mixed with P-38E s/n, was Model 222-62-16.</i>			
<i>180 mixed with P-38G s/n.</i>			
		181	<b>Total: 00181</b>
<b>P-38H</b>			
<i>As P-38G, engine / mechanical upgrade.</i>			
<i>produced 1943</i>			
Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)			
42-13559	422-1005		
42-66502 / 42-67101	422-1013 / 1612	601	<b>Total: 00601</b>
 <i>P-38I – Not used.</i>			
 <b>P-38J</b>			
<i>As P-38G, chin radiators on nacelles, some converted with glass nose for bombing duties.</i>			
<i>produced 1943 – 1944</i>			
Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)			
42-12867 / 42-12869	422-1001 / 1003		

42-13560 / 42-13566	422-1006 / 1012	
42-67102 / 42-68301	422-1613 / 2812	
- 1000 as <b>P-38J</b> .		
- 200 as <b>F-5B</b> .		
42-103979 / 42-104428	422-2813 / 3262	
43-28248 / 43-29047	422-3263 / 4062	
44-23059 / 44-23768	422-4063 / 4772	2970 <b>Total: 02970</b>

**F-5B-1**

*As P-38J, photo reconn., unarmed.  
produced 1943  
Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)  
200 mixed with **P-38J-LO** s/n.*

200 **Total: 00200**

**P-38K**

*As P-38J, engine / prop upgrade.  
produced 1943  
Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)  
42-13558 422-1004*

1 **Total: 00001**

**P-38L**

*As P-38J, engine upgrade, landing light  
on port wing. Some converted with glass  
nose for bombing duties.  
produced 1944 – 1945  
Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)  
44-23769 / 44-27258 422-4773 / 8262  
44-53008 / 44-53327 422-8263 / 8582 3810  
1380 additional airframes cancelled.  
Consolidated-Vultee Nashville, Tennessee (VN)  
43-50226 / 43-50338 unknown 113 **Total: 03923**  
1887 additional airframes cancelled.*

**XP-49**

*As YP-38, engine / armament upgrade.  
Second cockpit for pressurization tests.  
produced 1942  
Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)  
40-3055 unknown 1 **Total: 00001***

**XP-58 Chain Lightning**

*As P-38, 2-seater with provision for  
gun turrets, engine upgrade.  
produced 1944  
Lockheed Burbank, California (LO)  
41-2670 020-1526 1 **Total: 00001**  
1 additional prototype cancelled.*

**Total: 10039**

**P-38 CONVERSIONS & TRANSFERS**

**USAAF**

RP-38	30	P-38, 1942, redesignation as "restricted" from combat.
RP-38D	36	P-38D, 1942, redesignation as "restricted" from combat.
RP-38E	210	P-38E, 1943, redesignation as "restricted" from combat.
<b>XP-38K</b>	<b>1</b>	P-38E (41-1983), 1941-1943, prototype with engine / prop upgrade.

TP-38L 2 P-38L, 1945, 2 seater operational trainers.

**P-38M Night Lightning**

**75** P-38L, 1945, 2-seater armed night-fighter with chin mounted radar.  
P-38L (44-25237) was the prototype, some conversions not completed.

RF-4 99 F-4, 1943, redesignation as "restricted" from combat.

RF-4A 20 F-4A, 1943, redesignation as "restricted" from combat.

**F-5C-1 128** P-38H / J, post-factory conversions to photo reconn. aircraft.

**XF-5D 1** F-5A (42-12975), 1942-1945, modified with glazed nose for observer, armed.

**F-5E-2 / -3 / -4**  
**705** P-38J / L, post-factory conversions to photo reconn. aircraft.

**F-5F-3 1+** P-38L, post-factory conversions to photo reconn. aircraft.

**F-5G-6 1+** P-38L, post-factory conversions to photo reconn. aircraft.

**ZF-38J 1+** P-38J, 1948, redesignation as "obsolete."

**ZF-38L 1+** P-38L, 1948, redesignation as "obsolete."

**Droop Snoot 1+** P-38J, 1943, bomber conversions with glass nose for bombardier.

**Pathfinder 1+** P-38J / L, 1944, even larger nose section for bombing radar.

**Swordfish 1** P-38E (41-2048), 1941-1946, modified for flight testing.

**(Model 622-62-10) XP-38A**  
**1** P-38 (40-762), 1942-1945, conversion with a pressurized cockpit.

**US Navy**

**XFO-1 4** F-5B, temporarily loaned aircraft to the US Navy in North Africa.  
Assigned BuNo. 01209 / 01212.

**British RAF**

**(Model 322-60-04) Lightning Mk. II**

**1** 1942, single airframe completed, retained by USAAF for test duties.  
Assigned RAF s/n: AF221, later redesignated as P-38F and assigned s/n: 43-2035.  
149 orders became P-38F, s/n: 43-2036 / 43-2184.  
374 orders became P-38G, s/n: 43-2185 / 43-2558.

**FOREIGN MILITARY / CIVILIAN SERVICE**

- *P-38 Lightnings in service during and post WW2 with the foreign Air Forces of Australia, France, China, Honduras, Italy and Portugal.*
- *Some P-38J / L sold on the civil market as circuit racers and aerial surveyors.*