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# WORLD

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## The growing U.S. drone fleet

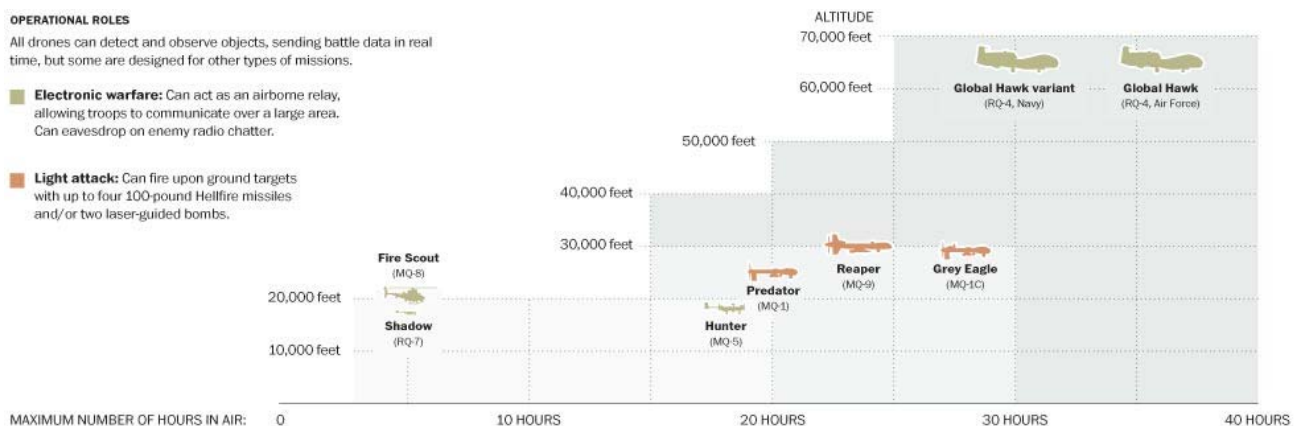
In the next decade, defense spending on known medium- and large-size drones will be nearly \$40 billion, increasing inventory by 35 percent. Ranging in size from a private aircraft to a commercial jet, nearly 800 of these bigger drones are operating around the world, observing, collecting data and in some cases attacking the enemy. The military also has thousands of mini-drones used for battlefield surveillance. Since 2001, the U.S. government is estimated to have killed more than 2,000 militants and civilians in drone attacks. [Read related article.](#)

### OPERATIONAL ROLES

All drones can detect and observe objects, sending battle data in real time, but some are designed for other types of missions.

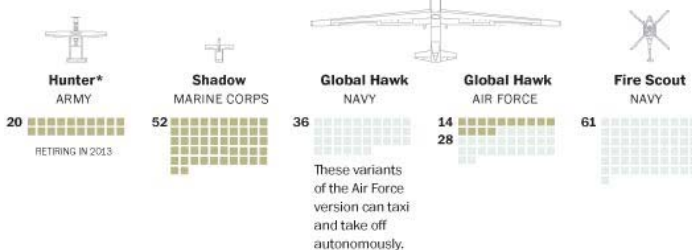
**Electronic warfare:** Can act as an airborne relay, allowing troops to communicate over a large area. Can eavesdrop on enemy radio chatter.

**Light attack:** Can fire upon ground targets with up to four 100-pound Hellfire missiles and/or two laser-guided bombs.



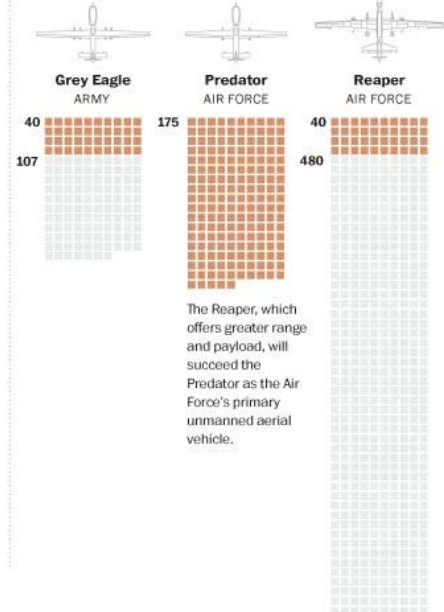
### Electronic warfare and reconnaissance

■ OPERATIONAL ■ PLANNED PURCHASES



### Light attack and reconnaissance

■ OPERATIONAL ■ PURCHASED



### Sentinel (RQ-170)

Little is known about this drone, which is used by the Air Force and CIA for sensitive surveillance missions. Photographs of the drone have been circulating since 2009. The Air Force acknowledged the existence of the drone, dubbed "the Beast of Kandahar," shortly after the photos surfaced. Iran claims to have captured one of the drones this month.



Iranian officials display a purported RQ-170 U.S. drone on state television.

Sources: Congressional Budget Office; staff reports. Graphic: Todd Lindeman and Bill Webster/The Washington Post. Published on December 23, 2011, 8:54 p.m.

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12/24/2011 10:11 AM PST

Suicide bombers and roadside bombs are the weapons of Islamists intent on causing as much misery to civilians as possible. The success of this tactic may be seen in Pakistan. Instead of blaming the madmen in their midst, Pakistanis blame their suffering on the people fighting the madmen. They forget they had religious crazies long before Americans took up the fight.

Drones are the weapon to fight the madmen. Newer and ever more sophisticated drones will carry the fight to the most remote area... **See More**

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12/24/2011 11:02 AM PST

15 million moslems killed since 1880 by the good white christian west's madmen. drone the bible belt. at any rate... drones are a coward's choice of weapons.

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