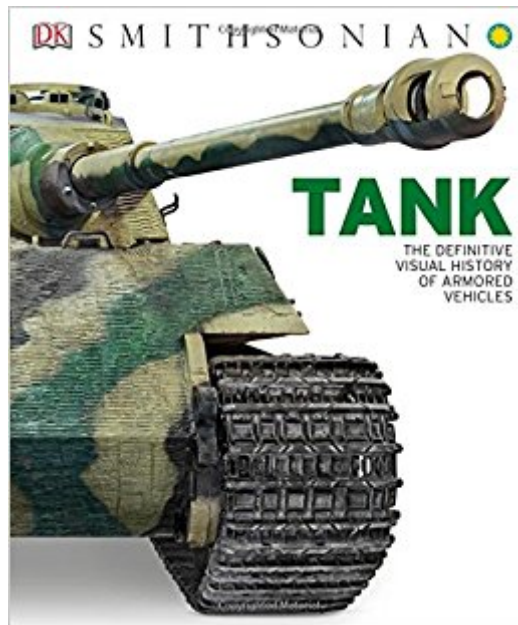


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# Tank: The Definitive Visual History Of Armored Vehicles



## Synopsis

A visual history of armored vehicles, from the early tanks of World War I to present-day models, created in association with the Smithsonian Institution. Showcasing the most famous military fighting machines, *Tank* combines comprehensive photographic spreads with in-depth histories of key manufacturers and specially commissioned visual tours of the most iconic examples of their groundbreaking firepower. Study the impact of the tank on the evolution of battlefield and military strategy, from the crude machines that were designed to roll through mud to break up trench warfare to the more sophisticated weapons that have become a symbol of military strength. Following the advancement and design of one of the greatest weapons in modern history, *Tank* studies more than 400 tanks and military vehicles from all over the world. Look through the history of tanks to see the form and function of a weapon that transformed modern warfare. Learn the different vehicles' weight, size, country of origin, and designer through in-depth profiles and spreads. With two exclusive prints of a 1940 M3A1 (Stuart) and a 1940 StuG III, *Tank* is a perfect gift for the military history enthusiast. A celebration of the world's iconic military vehicles told with gripping visual detail, *Tank* is the ultimate guide to the machines that changed the world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

**Early Design** Early British tanks featured an elongated lozenge shape designed to cross trenches, with the crew, tracks, engine, and armament all contained within the hull. [View larger](#)

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[Earliest Experiments](#) For centuries

soldiers have wished for machines that could cross a battlefield while remaining impervious to enemy fire. The tank that was developed in the early 20th century was a combination of armor protection, internal combustion engine, and tracks. Attempts to bring all of these to the battlefield were not new. However, what changed in 1915 and 1916, was the way they were combined.

**The Cold War** Tracked tank destroyers as used in World War II became less common as the Cold War progressed. By the 1970s, the development of lightweight antitank missiles meant that a heavy, gun-armed vehicle was no longer needed to destroy a tank. Many countries adapted their standard Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs) for the job. **Tank Destroyers** Large guns continued to be widely used on wheeled vehicles. These vehicles still offered greater speed and lighter weight than a tracked vehicle, giving them superior mobility over long distances or poor infrastructure. Their guns were increasingly obsolete against the latest main battle tanks, but they still offered sufficient firepower to destroy older vehicles or fortifications.

**The First Tanks** "We heard strange throbbing noises, and lumbering slowly towards us came three huge mechanical monsters such as we had never seen before." [View larger](#)

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**Armored Reconnaissance Vehicles**

Reconnaissance vehicles were not intended to fight, but to find enemy forces and report back. This role drove their design, which emphasized mobility over protection to the point that many were light enough to float across rivers. They were armed with machine guns or light cannon designed for self-defense only—**their main weapon was still the radio.** **Engineering and Specialized**

**Vehicles** After the war the idea of building specialized vehicles based on a tank chassis became common. APCs often received this treatment too, with a dizzying array of vehicles developed.

These versatile vehicles have been used as mortar carriers, antitank missile launchers, signals vehicles, artillery observation posts, command posts, antiaircraft missile launchers, and many other roles.

**Main Guns** The development of the tank's main gun has been largely linear. Size, both in terms of caliber and barrel length, has steadily increased in order to fire more powerful ammunition, but the fundamental principle of a high-velocity, direct-fire weapon remains. Many of the innovations in tank gunnery have been in fire control systems, ensuring that this weapon can hit its target as often as possible.

**Great Designers** After years of stalemate on the Western Front, the allies finally pierced the German lines in 1917, using an invention that dismayed the enemy—the tank. Designed and

constructed in secret, it was the brainchild of two British engineers, William Tritton and Walter Wilson. [View larger](#)

Good art work and original pictures of tanks with a break down and cut away view inside the tank and out.

Excellent book DK done it again

This beautiful coffee table book is lavishly illustrated with just about every military tank that's ever been made.

it did meet expectations, the only thing missing was some photography on tanks in action during the war. thanks Lydia.

I keep saying I'm "not that interested" in tanks, but the more I study the subject, the more I find myself digging deeper into it. Being a fan of DK's books in general, I purchased this one out of curiosity and was pleasantly surprised. My copy came with prints of the M3A1 and StuG III, although I'm not sure if every copy comes with the same. For an \$18 coffee table book, it's definitely a bit more in depth than you might expect. Anyone who's purchased any of DK's other vehicle books (Train, Classic Car, Tractor, etc.) will find themselves in familiar territory. The photographs are mostly excellent, and the 15 "feature tank" spreads have some wonderfully detailed close-ups of interior and exterior features. As I've come to expect from the DK, the two and four-page spreads are attractively laid out. Although most tank references focus mainly on World War II, this book does an excellent job covering the main eras of tank development in an equitable fashion. World War I through 1939, World War II, and the Cold War to the present each receive about the same number of pages. Along with tanks, a surprisingly healthy chunk of this book is devoted to other kinds of armored vehicles, such as assault guns, armored cars, scout cars, and counterinsurgency vehicles. The majority of the vehicles come from the Bovington Tank Museum, so there's definitely a bit of a British bias here. Thankfully, there are plenty of vehicles from other nations, and some really obscure tanks, to balance things out. There's also an excellent reference section in the back, with explanations of different types of armor-piercing shells, suspension systems, engines, etc. work, and a handy glossary. My main disappointment is how stingy most of the individual vehicle descriptions are. Except for the 15 "feature tanks," each receives a couple sentences, along with the

year they entered service, country, weight, engine, and main armament. I understand that books like this are intended as "gateway drugs" to more serious study. Considering that tanks are trade-offs between mobility, firepower, and protection, it's odd to see nothing about maximum speed, range (on road and cross-country), or armor thickness. The text will occasionally mention that a tank had "poor mobility" or was "well armored," but there's a disappointing lack of statistical data. Some moments of shallowness aside, this book is an excellent value for money, and should fascinate anyone with an interest in tanks. I'm not sure if it's really "definitive," but it's definitely more fun to browse through than the stodgy military references I usually prefer to study.

Received My copy today, and its really just what I expected. If you are looking for a good single volume on the history of armoured warfare, then look elsewhere, there is little or no narrative to be found here. If you are a technocrat, then look elsewhere, there is very little technical info given, and what is given is limited to country of origin, caliber of main armament, and vehicle weight, etc. It's certainly true that one could learn more about armoured vehicles and armoured warfare simply by surfing Wikipedia articles, but that's not to say this book is not worth getting, it is. It quite simply is a large coffee table format book, that is lavishly illustrated, with high quality color photographs and illustrations. It would be a welcome addition to any armour enthusiast's coffee table. If you are looking for information, then read Zaloga, etc. But if you want great material for your living room, then for \$16 bucks, you could do far worse. P.s, The cover of My book said that 2 prints were inside, but alas, none were included.

This book has a beautiful layout with just the right mixture of narrative to image. The images are absolutely stunning and give a real sense of both the interior and exterior design of the tanks being portrayed. The two prints that come with this book are nearly worth the entire purchase price. Extremely nice side views of the Stuart Light tank and the German Stug III in 8X10 format each easily framed on the cheap and great for the man cave. This book is well thought out and it's chronological approach gives the reader a sense of how much this weapon system has evolved over its first 100 years. Great addition to your library and highly recommended. Well worth the wait.

DK books specialize in visual histories that feature spectacularly beautiful graphics and reader-friendly text that condenses information into easy-to-assimilate chunks. Some readers may find this tendency to summarize data rather than to revel in it less-than truly informative. It's true that Tank is not an exhaustive history of armored mobile attack vehicles, but in combination with its

extensive visual imagery, the information it contains is broad enough to provide a good overview of the subject. The history of armored attack vehicles has its roots in the remarkably creative mind and groundbreaking designs of Leonardo da Vinci, who seems to have dreamed the template of armored military vehicles. His machine was designed while he was under the patronage of Ludovico Sforza in 1487. Sometimes described as the prototype of modern armored vehicles, da Vinci's "tank" represented a conical cover made of wood and reinforced with metal plates, the design inspired by a turtle's shell. With the advent of mechanized vehicles, the reliance upon horse cavalry as a mobile shock and attack force became an obvious liability in the early 20th century. The era of mechanized warfare had begun. Tanks have evolved quickly, becoming faster and more deadly with increasingly effective armor, until their ability to thrust power forward on the battlefield has made them an indispensable tool in modern ground warfare. With the advent of computerized command-and-control technology, the future of tank warfare is even more fierce to contemplate. The history of the tank is well-told in this large, slightly unwieldy but beautifully illustrated DK book.

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