

★ **MILITARY VEHICLES** ★
FIGHTER JETS



MARTY GITLIN

Mitchell Lane

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Words in **bold** can be found in the Glossary.

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BREAKING THE SPEED OF SOUND

It was October 13, 1947. That was a big day for Chuck Yeager and the United States Air Force.

Yeager was a test pilot. He flew over the desert in Southern California. But he did not fly an ordinary plane. He sat in the Bell X-1 **rocket**. It was strapped to a B-29 **bomber**.

The two craft soon parted. Yeager ignited four rocket **engines**. His jet climbed to 45,000 feet in the air. It went faster and faster. The pilot then heard a sonic boom. He was going faster than the speed of sound!



Bell X-1 is strapped to a B-29 Superfortress.

Yeager was the first pilot to break the sound barrier. His jet had zipped past **Mach** 1. Then it picked up more speed. It finally reached 813 miles an hour.

Yeager had made history. It has been called the most important flight since the airplane was invented.



The Bell X-1 in flight.



FAST FACT

ABOUT THE BELL

Yeager named the Bell X-1 rocket after his wife. He called it *Glamorous Glennis*. It now sits in the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum. That is in Washington, D.C.

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