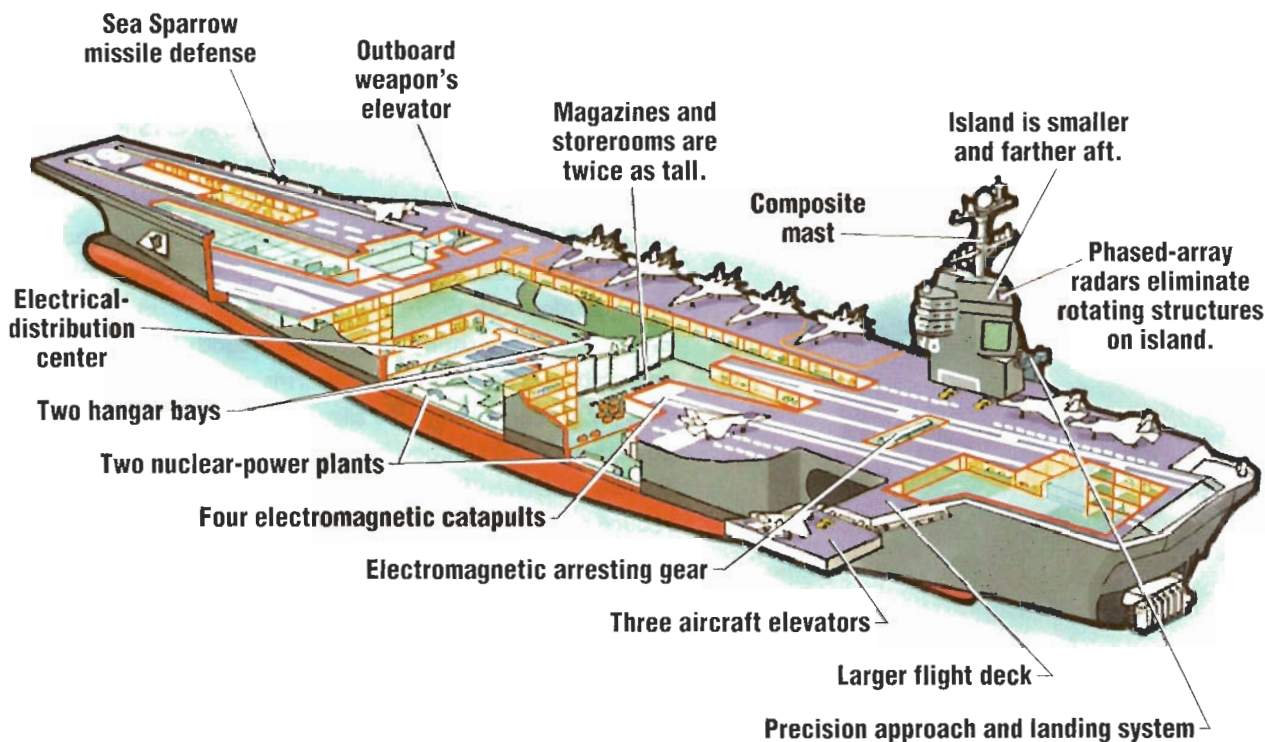


U.S.'s new supercarrier



The Navy's next aircraft carrier, CVN-78, or the *Gerald R. Ford*, is currently being built by **Northrup Grumman Corp.** at its shipyard in Newport News, Va. The ship will be almost 1,100 ft long, displace 100,000 tons, and have a top speed of over 30 knots. It will carry two nuclear reactors, which will give the ship two to three times the electrical output of Nimitz-class carriers. The carrier will need that electricity to power electromagnetic catapults and arresting gear. There's also supposed to be electrical capacity left over to

support beam weapons that may come online in the ship's estimated 50-year operational life.

Other changes include an island positioned farther aft to make room for aircraft queuing for launches from the forward catapults. The island will also be smaller because command and control spaces have been moved below decks for security. And a composite mast reduces weight by up to 20 tons. The \$13 billion ship should be completed in 2015.

Circle 401

Edited by Stephen J. Mraz