



## ABOUT THE “MIGHTY MO”

### USS *Missouri* (BB-63)

Class: Iowa-class battleship  
Length: 887 feet  
Height: 209 feet from keel to mast  
Beam: 108 feet  
Weight: 58,000 tons (full load); 45,000 tons (unloaded)  
Speed: In excess of 30 knots (35 mph)

*Note: Use “USS” only when referring to active-service ship. Use “Missouri,” “Battleship Missouri” when referring to decommissioned ship.*

### Dawn of the USS *Missouri*

- Four Iowa-class battleships were built during World War II, designed for speed and firepower.
- The USS *Missouri*'s keel was laid on Jan. 6, 1941, at the New York Naval Shipyard, Brooklyn, NY.
- Her armament included the main battery of nine 16 inch-barrel guns and twelve 5 inch-barrel anti-aircraft guns.
- The *Missouri* was launched on Jan. 29, 1944, and commissioned on June 11, 1944.
- She was assigned to the Pacific Third Fleet and steamed into Pearl Harbor on Christmas Eve, 1944.

### USS *Missouri*'s Service

- **Tokyo:** The USS *Missouri* was part of the force that carried out bombing raids over Tokyo and provided firepower in the battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.
- **End of the War:** The *Missouri* secured its place in history as the site of Japan's formal surrender to the Allied Forces on Sept. 2, 1945, ending World War II. The ceremony for the signing of the Instrument of Surrender was conducted by Supreme Allied Commander, General Douglas A. MacArthur.
- **Korea:** The Mighty Mo's main battery firepower became a legend in Korea, with her nine 16 inch-barrel guns hurling 1,800-pound shells as heavy as Volkswagens over 23 miles in defense of U.S. land forces.
- **Decommissioning:** In 1955, the *Missouri* was decommissioned and mothballed at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.
- **Recommissioning:** The USS *Missouri* was recommissioned in 1986 after undergoing an extensive modernization and refurbishment.
- **Persian Gulf:** Mighty Mo was deployed to the Persian Gulf where it fired its 16-inch guns and launched Tomahawk missiles against Iraqi positions during Operation Desert Storm.

*Pier Foxtrot-5, Ford Island, Pearl Harbor*

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- **Last mission:** The *Missouri's* final operational mission occurred on Dec. 7, 1991, when the battleship led a contingent of ships into Pearl Harbor as part of the commemoration to mark the 50th anniversary of the attack that thrust America into World War II.
- **Second decommissioning:** In 1992, the *Missouri* was decommissioned for the second time. In 1995, it was removed from the Navy's ship registry, clearing the way for the battleship to be donated by the Navy for preservation as a memorial museum.
- **Her legacy:** In August 1996, the Navy selected the non-profit USS Missouri Memorial Association as caretaker for the battleship and Pearl Harbor as its permanent home. On May 4, 1998, the Navy made it official, transferring the Mighty Mo's care to the association.

### Fast Facts

- Designing the *Missouri* took 175 tons of blueprint paper. The ship was built in three years and required over 3 million man-days to complete the job.
- For comparison's sake, the *Missouri* is 279 feet longer and 11 feet wider than the USS *Arizona*. The Mighty Mo is also 5 feet longer and 18 feet wider than the RMS Titanic.
- Just how big is the *Missouri*? If you could stand the ship on end, it would be 332 feet taller than the Washington Monument.
- The nine 16-inch guns are the Mighty Mo's trademark feature. Each gun barrel is 65 feet long, weighs an incredible 116 tons, and can fire a 2,700-pound shell 23 miles in 90 seconds — with pinpoint accuracy.
- The *Missouri* was the last U.S. battleship ever built. She was also the most formidable. In addition to her massive firepower capabilities, she possessed thick steel armor plating that protected the hull (13.5 inches), the gun turrets (17 inches in front; 13 inches on the sides), the citadel (17 inches), and the conning tower sides (17.3 inches).

### Visiting the Battleship Missouri Memorial

Today, the Battleship Missouri Memorial sits bow-to-bow with the sunken USS *Arizona* in the hallowed waters of Pearl Harbor. It is open daily from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mighty Mo Passes are \$29 for adults and \$13 for children (4-12). The pass includes a single admission, plus a choice from one of three tour options. For \$25 more, guests may upgrade to the Heart of the Missouri Tour, a 90-minute guided tour that focuses on the extensive mechanics behind this Iowa-class battleship, which was designed for speed and firepower. Children must be age 10 or older for this tour. For visitor information or to reserve a tour, call (808) 455-1600 or visit [ussmissouri.org](http://ussmissouri.org).