

WELCOME ABOARD BATTLESHIP TEXAS

Battleship TEXAS is the last of the world's "dreadnoughts," the big-gun battleships designed and built at the beginning of the 20th century. When she was commissioned in 1914, TEXAS was the most powerful weapon in the world and the most complex product of an industrial nation that was becoming a force in global events. She is now the only surviving U.S. naval ship that served in both World Wars.

TEXAS served in World War I as part of the Battleship Force of the Atlantic Fleet. She participated with the American squadron in maneuvers in the North Sea against threats from the German High Seas Fleet. A gun crew of TEXAS sailors loaned to the SS MAGNOLIA, a merchant ship, fired the first shots of the U.S. Navy in the War. However, Battleship TEXAS saw no combat action in World War I. After the Armistice on November 11, 1918, TEXAS sailed with the Grand Fleet, escorting the German Fleet to Scotland for surrender.

In 1925, TEXAS underwent major modifications. Modern oil-fired boilers replaced her older coal-fired boilers; a single stack replaced the two originals used to vent boiler smoke; stronger tripod masts replaced the original cage masts; and six of her 5-inch guns were moved from the second deck to the main deck aircastles. Torpedo blisters were also added as protection against torpedo attack. She emerged from the Norfolk Navy Yard in 1927 as the flagship of the American Fleet. For the next 12 years, she steamed the Atlantic and Pacific, representing American naval power.



General Data

Hull number:	BB-35
Builder:	Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Co., Va.
Keel laid:	April 17, 1911
Launched:	May 18, 1912
Commissioned:	March 12, 1914
Length overall:	573'
Max. beam:	106' 0.75" (width)
Height:	131' 7.5" (approx. waterline to radar on top of foremast)
Normal freeboard:	25' 4" at bow, 22' at stern (approx. waterline to main deck)
Normal draft:	28' 6" (waterline to keel)
Rated displacement:	34,000 tons, full load
Speed:	20.4 knots (about 24 mph)
Complement (3/1945):	Crew – 1,464; Officers – 101; Marines – 80; Total – 1,645
Decommissioned:	April 21, 1948 when transferred to the State of Texas

Ship's Weapons – 1945

Main battery:	10 14-inch/45-caliber guns in 5 turrets
Range:	13 miles
Projectiles:	1,500 pounds each (armor piercing) 1,275 pounds each (high explosive)
Full broadside:	15,000 pounds (armor piercing)
Rate of fire:	1 round every 45 seconds
Turret crew:	70–110 men
Secondary battery:	6 5-inch/51-caliber guns
Anti-aircraft:	10 3-inch/50-caliber guns 10 40mm four-gun (quad) mounts 44 20mm guns

Battleship TEXAS is owned by the people of Texas and is administered by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

BATTLESHIP TEXAS (BB-35) STATE HISTORIC SITE
3523 Independence Parkway South, La Porte, Texas 77571

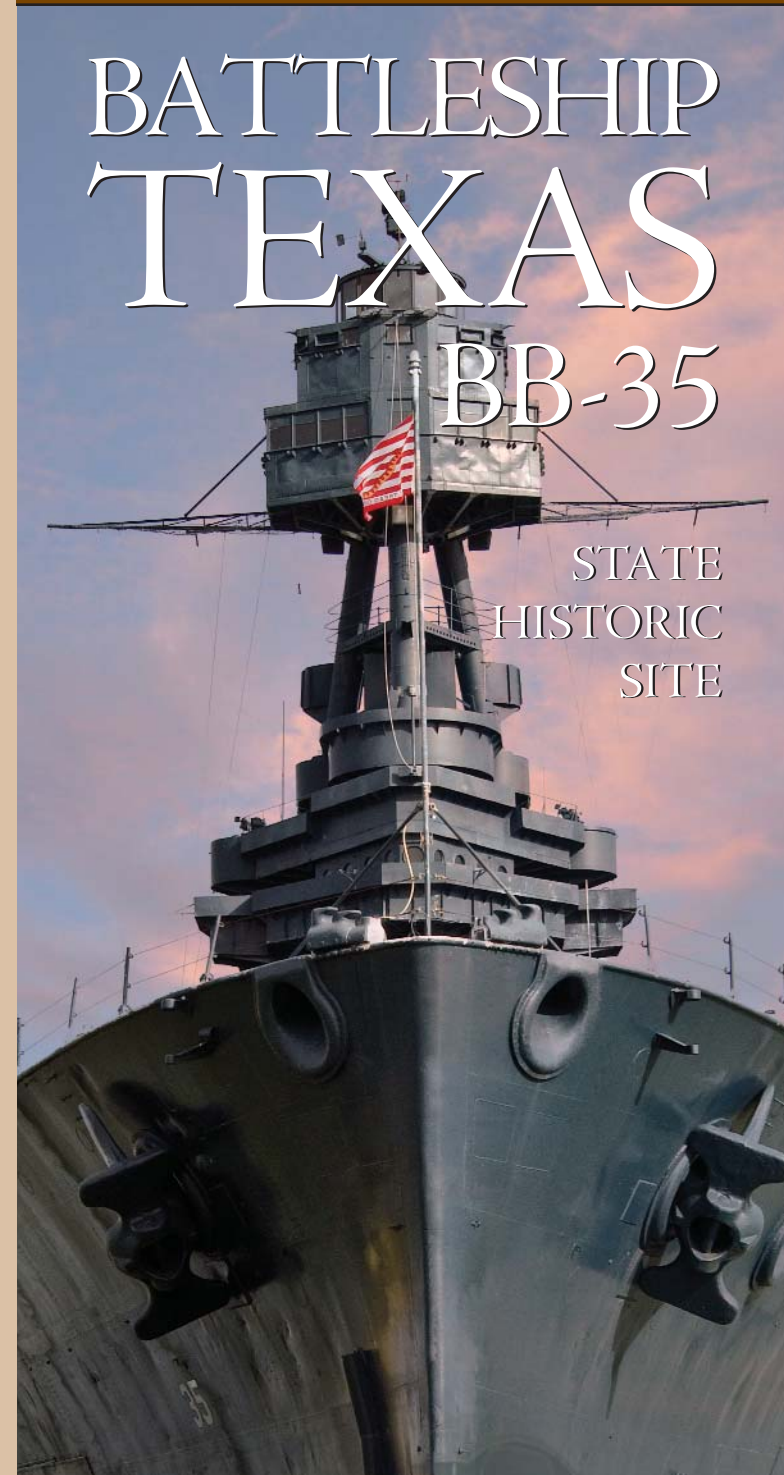


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Historical Overview of:

BATTLESHIP TEXAS BB-35

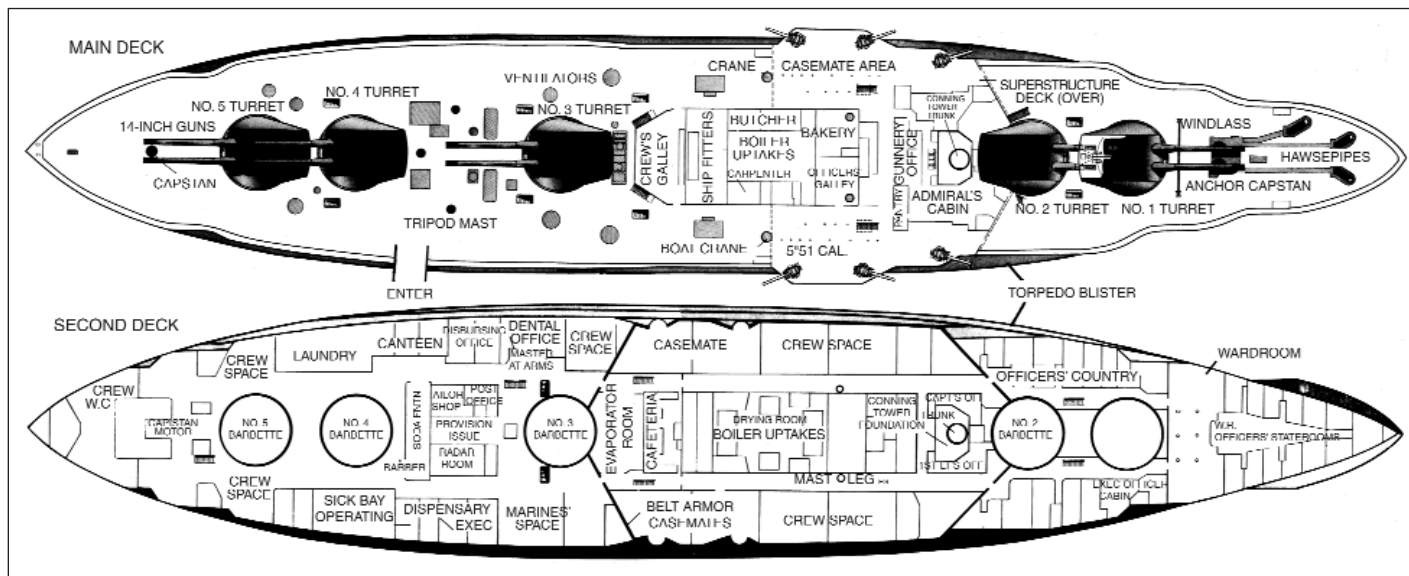
STATE
HISTORIC
SITE



During World War II, TEXAS was an aging ship, but she remained up-to-date with the addition of radar, fire-control and communication equipment, and new anti-aircraft batteries between 1941 and 1945. She saw action in the invasions of North Africa (November 1942), Normandy (June 1944) and Southern France (August 1944).

During the attack on the port of Cherbourg, France, in June 1944, TEXAS was struck twice by large-caliber coastal defense guns, causing the only known casualties in action during TEXAS' long service. Moving into the Pacific in late 1944, she provided support for the landing at Iwo Jima from February 18 to March 7, 1945, firing 923 rounds from her main battery. On April 1, she took part in the invasion of Okinawa, the largest amphibious assault of the Pacific theater. For six weeks she bombarded the coast and fired 2,019 rounds of 14-inch ammunition, but when TEXAS withdrew from Okinawa on May 14, she was untouched by the attacks from enemy guns and swarms of suicide planes. At the end of the war, she carried many prisoners of war from the Philippines to Pearl Harbor, and made three "Magic Carpet" voyages from Pearl Harbor to California, bringing nearly 5,000 troops home from the Pacific.

After her service, Battleship TEXAS was retired to Hawkins Point, Baltimore, from June 1946 to January 1948. She was scheduled to be used as a bombing target, but Texas citizens launched a successful statewide fund drive to save her. The U.S. Navy towed her to Texas to become the nation's first permanent memorial battleship, and she was officially transferred to the state in ceremonies at San Jacinto Battleground on April 21, 1948. For 35 years, TEXAS was administered by the Battleship TEXAS Commission. During that time she was designated a National Historic Engineering Landmark (1975) and a National Historic Landmark (1977). She became part of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department on September 1, 1983.



TOURING TEXAS

Battleship TEXAS is a large and complicated artifact. Getting around her can be confusing, even to a sailor, so please be careful. High coamings (door sills), steel ladders and obstructions throughout the decks make a battleship hazardous to the unwary. Please supervise children closely and refrain from running.

Hours of operation:

10 a.m. - 5 p.m., seven days a week; closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. School group tours are available by reservation at reduced rates. Call (281) 479-2431 for information.

