



## US falls behind Russia, China hypersonic race

### Description

The National Interest reveals the US military's weakness in the field of hypersonic missiles.

*The National Interest* highlighted yesterday the weakness of the US in developing offensive hypersonic weapons, as well as in confronting them.

According to the outlet, the United States urgently needs to develop and deploy both offensive and defensive hypersonic weapons capabilities, because it is falling behind as China and Russia have both tested and deployed hypersonic missiles, while the United States is conducting its first successful hypersonic missile test in December 2022.

However, the US has not deployed any hypersonic weapons to date, and the existing US missile defense systems are not yet capable of shooting down adversaries' hypersonic weapons, leaving the US highly vulnerable at this time, *NI* wrote.

It is noteworthy that Washington conducted three "failed" hypersonic missile tests in 2021, according to the "*Defense News*" website.

## What are hypersonic weapons?

Hypersonic weapons are missiles or projectiles that travel at hypersonic speeds and are frequently highly maneuverable.

For decades, traditional ballistic missiles have been faster than the speed of sound, leaving the Earth's atmosphere before returning, plummeting at terrifying speeds toward their targets in their terminal phase.

The recent years have witnessed an intense arms race to get hypersonic missiles, and with [#NorthKorea](#) joining the race, here's what you need to know about the air-breathing

hypersonic weapon. [pic.twitter.com/0jbXx5qP98](https://pic.twitter.com/0jbXx5qP98)

— Al Mayadeen English (@MayadeenEnglish) [October 5, 2021](#)

Traditional ballistic missiles, on the other hand, are not maneuverable and have a predictable arc, making them easier to track and, ultimately, shoot down.

Hypersonic weapons are game changers; they come in two varieties, travel at Mach 5 or higher (3800 miles per hour+), and can maneuver, making them extremely difficult to shoot down and impossible to protect their targets from.

## America vs. Russia and China

Russia and China have been developing and testing hypersonic missile technologies for some time. Russia has deployed them in both air-launch (Kinzhal) and sea-launch (Zircon) forms, according to *The National Interest*.

China has also tested hypersonic cruise missiles and hypersonic glide vehicles. In 2021, China conducted a test of an HGV that circumnavigated the Earth before reaching its target. It developed next-generation hypersonic weapons with technical breakthroughs, namely in infrared homing tech, Chinese scientists said, which the US army may not possess until 2025.

As a result, US strategists and policymakers have been somewhat sanguine about the challenge posed to the US by technologies such as hypersonic weapons.

Given hypersonic weapons' potential ability to make Washington's missile defense systems redundant, the United States has lately realized that it too must field offensive hypersonic weapons, lest it is left vulnerable.

By Al Mayadeen English

### Category

1. Army-Wars-Conflict Zones-Military Tech.
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