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# Turboprop

A **turboprop** engine is a turbine engine that drives an aircraft propeller.<sup>[1]</sup>

In its simplest form a turboprop consists of an intake, compressor, combustor, turbine, and a propelling nozzle.<sup>[2]</sup> Air is drawn into the intake and compressed by the compressor. Fuel is then added to the compressed air in the combustor, where the fuel-air mixture then combusts. The hot combustion gases expand through the turbine. Some of the power generated by the turbine is used to drive the compressor. Thrust is obtained by the combusting gases, pushing toward a (vectored) surface in front of the expanding gas.

The rest is transmitted through the reduction gearing to the propeller. Further expansion of the gases occurs in the propelling nozzle, where the gases exhaust to atmospheric pressure. The propelling nozzle provides a relatively small proportion of the thrust generated by a turboprop.<sup>[3]</sup>

In contrast to a turbojet, the engine's exhaust gases do not generally contain enough energy to create significant thrust, since almost all of the engine's power is used to drive the propeller.



GE T64 propeller at left, gearbox with accessories in the middle, turbine core at right

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# Technological aspects

Exhaust thrust in a turboprop is sacrificed in favour of shaft power, which is obtained by extracting additional power (up to that necessary to drive the compressor) from turbine expansion. Owing to the additional expansion in the turbine system, the residual energy in the exhaust jet is low.<sup>[4][5][6]</sup> Consequently, the exhaust jet typically produces around or less than 10% of the total thrust.<sup>[7]</sup> A higher proportion of the thrust comes from the propeller at low speeds and less at higher speeds.<sup>[8]</sup>

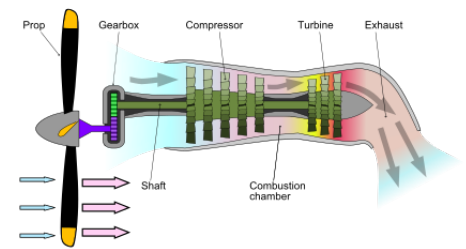
Turboprops can have bypass ratios up to 50-100<sup>[9][10][11]</sup> although the propulsion airflow is less clearly defined for propellers than for fans.<sup>[12][13]</sup>

The propeller is coupled to the turbine through a reduction gear that converts the high RPM/low torque output to low RPM/high torque. The propeller itself is normally a constant-speed (variable pitch) propeller type similar to that used with larger aircraft reciprocating engines.

Unlike the small diameter fans used in turbofan jet engines, the propeller has a large diameter that lets it accelerate a large volume of air. This permits a lower airstream velocity for a given amount of thrust. As it is more efficient at low speeds to accelerate a large amount of air by a small degree than a small amount of air by a large degree,<sup>[14][15]</sup> a low disc loading (thrust per disc area) increases the aircraft's energy efficiency, and this reduces the fuel use.<sup>[16][17]</sup>

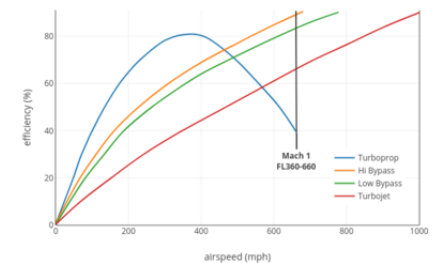
Propellers lose efficiency as aircraft speed increases, so turboprops are normally not used on high-speed aircraft<sup>[4][5][6]</sup> above 0.6–0.7 Mach.<sup>[7]</sup> However, propfan engines, which are very similar to turboprop engines, can cruise at flight speeds approaching 0.75 Mach. To increase propeller efficiency across a wider range of airspeeds, turboprops are typically equipped with constant-speed (variable-pitch) propellers. The blades of a constant-speed propeller increase pitch as aircraft speed increases, allowing for a wider range of airspeeds than a fixed-pitch propeller. Another benefit of this type of propeller is that it can also be used to generate negative thrust while decelerating on the runway. Additionally, in the event of an engine failure, the propeller can be feathered, thus minimizing the drag of the non-functioning propeller.<sup>[18]</sup>

While most modern turbojet and turbofan engines use axial-flow compressors, turboprop engines usually contain at least one stage of centrifugal compressor which have the advantage of being simple and lightweight, at the expense of a streamlined shape.



Schematic diagram showing the operation of a turboprop engine

Propulsive efficiency comparison for various gas turbine engine configurations



Propulsive efficiency comparison for various gas turbine engine configurations

While the power turbine may be integral with the gas generator section, many turboprops today feature a free power turbine on a separate coaxial shaft. This enables the propeller to rotate freely, independent of compressor speed.<sup>[19]</sup> Residual thrust on a turboshaft is avoided by further expansion in the turbine system and/or truncating and turning the exhaust 180 degrees, to produce two opposing jets. Apart from the above, there is very little difference between a turboprop and a turboshaft.<sup>[11]</sup>

## History

Alan Arnold Griffith had published a paper on turbine design in 1926. Subsequent work at the Royal Aircraft Establishment investigated axial turbine designs that could be used to supply power to a shaft and thence a propeller. From 1929, Frank Whittle began work on centrifugal turbine designs that would deliver pure jet thrust.<sup>[20]</sup>

The world's first turboprop was designed by the Hungarian mechanical engineer György Jendrassik.<sup>[21]</sup> Jendrassik published a turboprop idea in 1928, and on 12 March 1929 he patented his invention. In 1938, he built a small-scale (100 Hp; 74.6 kW) experimental gas turbine.<sup>[22]</sup> The larger Jendrassik Cs-1, with a predicted output of 1,000 bhp, was produced and tested at the Ganz Works in Budapest between 1937 and 1941. It was of axial-flow design with 15 compressor and 7 turbine stages, annular combustion chamber and many other modern features. First run in 1940, combustion problems limited its output to 400 bhp. In 1941, the engine was abandoned due to war, and the factory was turned over to conventional engine production. The world's first turboprop engine that went into mass production was designed by a German engineer, Max Adolf Mueller, in 1942.<sup>[23]</sup>

The first mention of turboprop engines in the general public press was in the February 1944 issue of the British aviation publication *Flight*, which included a detailed cutaway drawing of what a possible future turboprop engine could look like. The drawing was very close to what the future Rolls-Royce Trent would look like.<sup>[24]</sup> The first British turboprop engine was the Rolls-Royce RB.50 Trent, a converted Derwent II fitted with reduction gear and a Rotol 7 ft 11 in (2.41 m) five-bladed propeller. Two Trents were fitted to Gloster Meteor EE227 – the sole "Trent-Meteor" – which thus became the world's first turboprop-powered aircraft, albeit a test-bed not intended for production.<sup>[25][26]</sup> It first flew on 20 September 1945. From their experience with the Trent, Rolls-Royce developed the Rolls-Royce Clyde, the first turboprop engine to be fully type certificated for military and civil use,<sup>[27]</sup> and the Dart, which became one of the most reliable turboprop engines ever built. Dart production continued for more than fifty years. The Dart-powered Vickers Viscount was the first turboprop aircraft of any kind to go into production and sold in large numbers.<sup>[28]</sup> It was also the first four-



A Rolls-Royce RB.50 *Trent* on a test rig at Hucknall, in March 1945

engined turboprop. Its first flight was on 16 July 1948. The world's first single engined turboprop aircraft was the Armstrong Siddeley Mamba-powered Boulton Paul Balliol, which first flew on 24 March 1948.<sup>[29]</sup>

The Soviet Union built on German World War II development by Junkers Motorenwerke, while BMW, Heinkel-Hirth and Daimler-Benz also developed and partially tested designs. While the Soviet Union had the technology to create the airframe for a jet-powered strategic bomber comparable to Boeing's B-52 Stratofortress, they instead produced the Tupolev Tu-95 Bear, powered with four Kuznetsov NK-12 turboprops, mated to eight contra-rotating propellers (two per nacelle) with supersonic tip speeds to achieve maximum cruise speeds in excess of 575 mph, faster than many of the first jet aircraft and comparable to jet cruising speeds for most missions. The Bear would serve as their most successful long-range combat and surveillance aircraft and symbol of Soviet power projection throughout the end of the 20th century. The USA would incorporate contra-rotating turboprop engines, such as the ill-fated twin-turbine Allison T40 – essentially a twinned up pair of Allison T38 turboprop engines driving contra-rotating propellers – into a series of experimental aircraft during the 1950s, with aircraft powered with the T40, like the Convair R3Y Tradewind flying boat never entering U.S. Navy service.



The Kuznetsov NK-12 is still the most powerful turboprop

The first American turboprop engine was the General Electric XT31, first used in the experimental Consolidated Vultee XP-81.<sup>[30]</sup> The XP-81 first flew in December 1945, the first aircraft to use a combination of turboprop and turbojet power. The technology of the Allison's earlier T38 design evolved into the Allison T56, with quartets of the T56s being used to power the Lockheed Electra airliner, its military maritime patrol derivative the P-3 Orion, and the widely produced C-130 Hercules military transport aircraft. One of the most produced turboprop engines used in civil aviation is the Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6 engine.

The first turbine-powered, shaft-driven helicopter was the Kaman K-225, a development of Charles Kaman's K-125 synchropter, which used a Boeing T50 turboshaft engine to power it on 11 December 1951.<sup>[31]</sup>

## Usage

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Compared to turbofans, turboprops are most efficient at flight speeds below 725 km/h (450 mph; 390 knots) because the jet velocity of the propeller (and exhaust) is relatively low. Modern turboprop airliners operate at nearly the same speed as small regional jet airliners but burn two-thirds of the fuel per passenger.<sup>[32]</sup> However, compared to a turbojet (which can fly at high altitude for enhanced speed and fuel efficiency) a propeller aircraft has a lower ceiling.

Compared to piston engines, their greater power-to-weight ratio (which allows for shorter takeoffs) and reliability can offset their higher initial cost, maintenance and fuel consumption. As jet fuel can be easier to obtain than avgas in remote areas, turboprop-powered aircraft like the Cessna Caravan and Quest Kodiak are used as bush airplanes.

Turboprop engines are generally used on small subsonic aircraft, but the Tupolev Tu-114 can reach 470 kn (870 km/h, 541 mph). Large military aircraft, like the Tupolev Tu-95, and civil aircraft, such as the Lockheed L-188 Electra, were also turboprop powered. The Airbus A400M is powered by four Europrop TP400 engines, which are the second most powerful turboprop engines ever produced, after the 11 MW (15,000 hp) Kuznetsov NK-12.

A military transport aircraft, over 2,500 Lockheed C-130 Hercules have been built

In 2017, the most widespread turboprop airliners in service were the ATR 42/72 (950 aircraft), Bombardier Q400 (506), De Havilland Canada Dash 8-100/200/300 (374), Beechcraft 1900 (328), de Havilland Canada DHC-6 Twin Otter (270), Saab 340 (225).<sup>[34]</sup> Less widespread and older airliners include the BAe Jetstream 31, Embraer EMB 120 Brasilia, Fairchild Swearingen Metroliner, Dornier 328, Saab 2000, Xian MA60, MA600 and MA700, Fokker 27 and 50.

The Beech King Air and Super King Air are the most-delivered turboprop business aircraft, with a combined 7,300 examples as of May 2018<sup>[33]</sup>

Turboprop business aircraft include the Piper Meridian, Socata TBM, Pilatus PC-12, Piaggio P.180 Avanti, Beechcraft King Air and Super King Air. In April 2017, there were 14,311 business turboprops in the worldwide fleet.<sup>[35]</sup>

## Reliability















Between 2012 and 2016, the ATSB observed 417 events with turboprop aircraft, 83 per year, over 1.4 million flight hours: 2.2 per 10,000 hours. Three were "high risk" involving engine malfunction and unplanned landing in single-engine Cessna 208 Caravans, four "medium risk" and 96% "low risk". Two occurrences resulted in minor injuries due to engine malfunction and terrain collision in agricultural aircraft and five accidents involved aerial work: four in agriculture and one in an air ambulance.<sup>[36]</sup>

## Current engines

*Jane's All the World's Aircraft*. 2005–2006.

Manufacturer	Country	Designation	Dry weight	Takeoff rating	Application
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			(kg)	(kW)	
<u>DEMC</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> People's Republic of China	<u>WJ5E</u>	720	2130	<u>Harbin SH-5</u> , <u>Xi'an Y-7</u>
<u>Europrop International</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> European Union	<u>TP400-D6</u>	1800	8203	<u>Airbus A400M</u>
<u>General Electric</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> United States	<u>CT7-5A</u>	365	1294	
<u>General Electric</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> United States	<u>CT7-9</u>	365	1447	<u>CASA/IPTN CN-235</u> , <u>Let L-610</u> , <u>Saab 340</u> , <u>Sukhoi Su-80</u>
<u>General Electric</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> United States <span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Czech Republic	<u>H80 Series</u> <sup>[37]</sup>	200	550–625	<u>Thrush Model 510</u> , <u>Let 410NG</u> , <u>Let L-410</u> <u>Turbolet UVP-E</u> , <u>CAIGA Primus 150</u> , <u>Nextant G90XT</u>
<u>General Electric</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> United States	<u>T64-P4D</u>	538	2535	<u>Aeritalia G.222</u> , <u>de Havilland Canada DHC-5 Buffalo</u> , <u>Kawasaki P-2J</u>
<u>Honeywell</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> United States	<u>TPE331 Series</u>	150–275	478–1650	<u>Aero/Rockwell Turbo Commander 680/690/840/960/1000</u> , <u>Antonov An-38</u> , <u>Ayres Thrush</u> , <u>BAe Jetstream 31/32</u> , <u>BAe Jetstream 41</u> , <u>CASA C-212 Aviocar</u> , <u>Cessna 441 Conquest II</u> , <u>Dornier Do 228</u> , <u>Fairchild Swearingen Metroliner</u> , <u>General Atomics MQ-9 Reaper</u> , <u>Grum Ge man</u> , <u>Mitsubishi MU-2</u> , <u>North American Rockwell OV-10 Bronco</u> , <u>Piper PA-42 Cheyenne</u> , <u>RUAG Do 228NG</u> , <u>Short SC.7 Skyvan</u> , <u>Short Tucano</u> , <u>Swearingen Merlin</u> , <u>Fairchild Swearingen Metroliner</u>
<u>Honeywell</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> United States	<u>LTP 101-700</u>	147	522	<u>Air Tractor AT-302</u> , <u>Piaggio P.166</u>
<u>KKBM</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Russia	<u>NK-12MV</u>	1900	11033	<u>Antonov An-22</u> , <u>Tupolev Tu-95</u> , <u>Tupolev Tu-114</u>
<u>Progress</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Ukraine	<u>TV3-117VMA-SB2</u>	560	1864	<u>Antonov An-140</u>
<u>Klimov</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Russia	<u>TV7-117S</u>	530	2100	<u>Ilyushin Il-112</u> , <u>Ilyushin Il-114</u>
<u>Progress</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Ukraine	<u>AI20M</u>	1040	2940	<u>Antonov An-12</u> , <u>Antonov An-32</u> , <u>Ilyushin Il-18</u>

<u>Progress</u>	 <u>Ukraine</u>	<u>AI24T</u>	600	1880	<u>Antonov An-24</u> , <u>Antonov An-26</u> , <u>Antonov An-30</u>
<u>LHTEC</u>	 <u>United States</u>	<u>LHTEC T800</u>	517	2013	<u>AgustaWestland Super Lynx 300 (CTS800-4N)</u> , <u>AgustaWestland AW159 Lynx Wildcat (CTS800-4N)</u> , <u>Ayres LM200 Loadmaster (LHTEC CTP800-4T)</u> (aircraft not built), <u>Sikorsky X2 (T800-LHT-801)</u> , <u>TAI/AgustaWestland T-129 (CTS800-4A)</u>
<u>OMKB</u>	 <u>Russia</u>	<u>TVD-20</u>	240	1081	<u>Antonov An-3</u> , <u>Antonov An-38</u>
<u>Pratt &amp; Whitney Canada</u>	 <u>Canada</u>	<u>PT-6 Series</u>	149–260	430–1500	<u>Air Tractor AT-502</u> , <u>Air Tractor AT-602</u> , <u>Air Tractor AT-802</u> , <u>Beechcraft Model 99</u> , <u>Beechcraft King Air</u> , <u>Beechcraft Super King Air</u> , <u>Beechcraft 1900</u> , <u>Beechcraft T-6 Texan II</u> , <u>Cessna 208 Caravan</u> , <u>Cessna 425 Corsair/Conquest I</u> , <u>de Havilland Canada DHC-6 Twin Otter</u> , <u>Harbin Y-12</u> , <u>Embraer EMB 110 Bandeirante</u> , <u>Let L-410 Turbolet</u> , <u>Piaggio P.180 Avanti</u> , <u>Pilatus PC-6 Porter</u> , <u>Pilatus PC-12</u> , <u>Piper PA-42 Cheyenne</u> , <u>Piper PA-46-500TP Meridian</u> , <u>Shorts 360</u> , <u>Daher TBM 700</u> , <u>Daher TBM 850</u> , <u>Daher TBM 900</u> , <u>Embraer EMB 314 Super Tucano</u>
<u>Pratt &amp; Whitney Canada</u>	 <u>Canada</u>	<u>PW120</u>	418	1491	<u>ATR 42-300/320</u>
<u>Pratt &amp; Whitney Canada</u>	 <u>Canada</u>	<u>PW121</u>	425	1603	<u>ATR 42-300/320</u> , <u>Bombardier Dash 8 Q100</u>
<u>Pratt &amp; Whitney Canada</u>	 <u>Canada</u>	<u>PW123 C/D</u>	450	1603	<u>Bombardier Dash 8 Q300</u>
<u>Pratt &amp; Whitney Canada</u>	 <u>Canada</u>	<u>PW126 C/D</u>	450	1950	<u>BAe ATP</u>
<u>Pratt &amp; Whitney Canada</u>	 <u>Canada</u>	<u>PW127</u>	481	2051	<u>ATR 72</u>
<u>Pratt &amp; Whitney Canada</u>	 <u>Canada</u>	<u>PW150A</u>	717	3781	<u>Bombardier Dash 8 Q400</u>
<u>PZL</u>	 <u>Poland</u>	<u>TWD-10B</u>	230	754	<u>PZL M28</u>
<u>RKBM</u>	 <u>Russia</u>	<u>TVD-1500S</u>	240	1044	<u>Sukhoi Su-80</u>
<u>Rolls-Royce</u>	 <u>United Kingdom</u>	<u>Dart Mk 536</u>	569	1700	<u>Avro 748</u> , <u>Fokker F27</u> , <u>Vickers Viscount</u>
<u>Rolls-Royce</u>	 <u>United Kingdom</u>	<u>Tyne 21</u>	569	4500	<u>Aeritalia G.222</u> , <u>Breguet Atlantic</u> , <u>Transall C-160</u>

<u>Rolls-Royce</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> United Kingdom	<u>250-B17</u>	88.4	313	<u>Fuji T-7</u> , <u>Britten-Norman Turbine Islander</u> , <u>O&amp;N Cessna 210</u> , <u>Soloy Cessna 206</u> , <u>Propjet Bonanza</u>
<u>Rolls-Royce</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> United Kingdom	Allison <u>T56</u>	828–880	3424–3910	<u>P-3 Orion</u> , <u>E-2 Hawkeye</u> , <u>C-2 Greyhound</u> , <u>C-130 Hercules</u>
<u>Rolls-Royce</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> United Kingdom	<u>AE2100A</u>	715.8	3095	<u>Saab 2000</u>
<u>Rolls-Royce</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> United Kingdom	<u>AE2100J</u>	710	3424	<u>ShinMaywa US-2</u>
<u>Rolls-Royce</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> United Kingdom	<u>AE2100D2</u> , <u>D3</u>	702	3424	<u>Alenia C-27J Spartan</u> , <u>Lockheed Martin C-130J Super Hercules</u>
<u>Rybinsk</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Russia	<u>TVD-1500V</u>	220	1156	
<u>Saturn</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Russia	<u>TAL-34-1</u>	178	809	
<u>Turbomeca</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> France	<u>Arrius 1D</u>	111	313	<u>Socata TB 31 Omega</u>
<u>Turbomeca</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> France	<u>Arrius 2F</u>	103	376	
<u>Walter</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Czech Republic	<u>M601 Series</u> <sup>[38]</sup>	200	560	<u>Let L-410 Turbolet</u> , <u>Aerocomp Comp Air 10 XL</u> , <u>Aerocomp Comp Air 7</u> , <u>Ayres Thrush</u> , <u>Dornier Do 28</u> , <u>Lancair Propjet</u> , <u>Let Z-37T</u> , <u>Let L-420</u> , <u>Myasishchev M-101T</u> , <u>PAC FU-24 Fletcher</u> , <u>Progress Rysachok</u> , <u>PZL-106 Kruk</u> , <u>PZL-130 Orlik</u> , <u>SM-92T Turbo Finist</u>
<u>Walter</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Czech Republic	<u>M602A</u>	570	1360	<u>Let L-610</u>
<u>Walter</u>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Czech Republic	<u>M602B</u>	480	1500	

## See also

- Jet engine
- Jet aircraft
- Jetboat
- Propfan
- Ramjet



- [Scimitar propeller](#)
- [Supercharger](#)
- [Tiltrotor](#)
- [Turbocharger](#)
- [Turbofan](#)
- [Turbojet](#)
- [Turboshaft](#)

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- Wikibooks: Jet propulsion

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