

Variants

At first glance, a K-8 is just a K-8. But as the aircraft recognition buffs out there know, the devil is in the detail. Before we give an overview of the operators and their individual aircraft, it is good to have a grasp on the various distinguishing features.

Type	Features:	Customers:
K-8 (1998-1999)	Large auxiliary air inlet on starboard side, No satnav/gps bulge on spine, Rectangular antennae under nose, No L-shaped antennae on starboard side of nose, Long thin antennae on spine, No HUD.	Pakistan (1st), Zambia, Myanmar (1st).
K-8 (2000-2005)	Large auxiliary air inlet on starboard side, Satnav/gps bulge on spine, Rectangular antennae under nose, No L-shaped antennae on starboard side of nose, No antennae on spine, Square HUD.	Namibia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan (2nd) Zimbabwe.
K-8E (2001-2005)	Two auxiliary air inlets on starboard side, Satnav/gps bulge on spine, Backward angled antennae under nose, No L-shaped antennae on starboard side of nose, No antennae on spine, Some have large belly canister, No HUD.	Egypt (1st).
K-8E (2006-2010)	Large auxiliary air inlet on starboard side, Satnav/gps bulge on spine, Backward angled antennae under nose, No L-shaped antennae on starboard side of nose, No antennae on spine, Rectangular HUD.	Egypt (2nd).



Historic pictures may be grainy we think. This is the only photograph circulating on the internet of the very first K-8 that took to the sky, in November 1990. This K8-001, was one of four prototypes. Number two was a Static Test Article, K8-003 and K8-004 were used for various dynamic and aerial tests, the latter being brought up to pre-production standard and reserialled 1001 later. (scan from magazine, date unknown)

K-8P (2003-2005)	Large auxiliary air inlet on starboard side, Satnav/gps bulge on spine, Rectangular antennae under nose, L-shaped antennae on starboard side of nose, No antennae on spine, Some have large belly canister, Rectangular HUD.	Pakistan (3rd), Tanzania.
K-8W (2007-2016)	Two auxiliary air inlets on port side, Satnav/gps bulge on spine, Rectangular antennae under nose, L-shaped antennae on starboard side of nose, T-shaped antennae on spine, Some have large belly canister, Rectangular HUD.	Myanmar (2nd), Ghana, Sudan, Bolivia, Venezuela, Bangladesh.
JL8 (1999-2003)	Two auxiliary air inlets on port side, No satnav/gps bulge on spine, Rectangular antennae under nose, No L-shaped antennae on starboard side of nose, No antennae on spine, No HUD?	China (1st).
JL8W (2004-2016)	Large auxiliary air inlet on port side, No satnav/gps bulge on spine, Rectangular antennae under nose, L-shaped antennae on starboard side of nose, Long thin antennae on spine, Some have large belly canister, Small circular HUD.	China (2nd).

Customers

We start off with China and Pakistan and the others are then listed in alphabetical order rather than chronological. We have included the prototypes under the China caption.

Colour coding:

Red c/n = serial known but tie-up to this c/n assumed
Red s/n = (part of) serial assumed



The PLAAF have a demoteam with K-8s too, the Red Falcons they are called. Yearly, they perform at the opening of the academic year at the Air Force Aviation University at Changsun-Dafangshen. It is unclear if this venue is open to us westerners.... Anyway, the last couple of years the most modern stuff is being shown off, but luckily some K-8s are always present like this one from the aforementioned team. ('09', Dafangshen, 3 September 2016, Wu Miany)