THESE TWO GUYS SPENT 40 YEARS BUILDING A WORKING JETPACK THAT USES REAL JET ENGINES

News / Events / Festivals



When it comes to “the technology of the future” – whether it be flying cars, teleportation, or robot maids – many still wonder when the inventions dreamed up by Hollywood will become a reality.

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But **JetPack Aviation** has finally created something that's only been done a couple of times since 1919: build a working jetpack that's powered by **actual jet engines**.

JetPack Aviation claims its JB-9 jetpack is “the world’s only true JetPack" due to its reliance on real jet engines. And while that might not be entirely accurate — DARPAbuilt a working jetpack owered by a turbojet engine back in 1965 — there's no doubt the JB-9 certainly looks like a giant step forward in the personal VTOL (Vertical Take-Off and Landing) industry.

For its public debut on November 3rd, JetPack Aviation's CEO and test pilot David Mayman flew the jetpack across the Hudson River and circled the Statue of Liberty. The Australian entrepreneur has spent the last 10 years helping design prototypes of the personal flying machine with Nelson Tyler, a Hollywood-based inventor and three-time Academy Awards winner, which explains the grand spectacle for its public unveiling.

The jetpack seems like something straight out of an episode of "The Jetsons." The JB-9 is an agile, lightweight machine that has the same grace as a helicopter, swaying seamlessly left to right and gaining and dropping altitude with ease, as demonstrated in its promotional videos.

The flying backpack has a 10 gallon tank that runs on kerosene and is propelled by two vectored jet engines, which can keep it in the air for over 10 minutes, depending on the pilot’s weight.

This jetpack has been an on-going project since the 1970s, and after over 40 years, it seems to have finally gotten the formula for personal flight right. The two say they've “spent millions of dollars and thousands of hours secretly developing the device” to bring the JB-9 jetpack to the public.

The invention is approved for flight by the FAA and US Coast Guard, and could technically begin selling models in the “ultralight category” – or packs with a 5-gallon tank that could run for 5 minutes – tomorrow, as Mayman told GizMag in a lengthy interview. But that doesn’t mean those with deep pockets will be getting one that soon.

"I’d wanna feel like we have an infrastructure to train them,” Mayman explained, adding that people have approached the company with checks in hand. “We could technically just send them the unit in a box and say 'good luck' but it’s not necessarily going to end well if you’re doing 200 km/h, 5 feet off the ground, you know? It could be a monster. But we’re working on it."

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