

Why was the german panther tank the most influential weapon of world war ii

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



your thesis; explain what your weapon is, which country side of the war used this weapon, what influence it had during WWII, & WHY it was the most influential weapon used by any side during WWII. The Panther served as a formidable weapon at the disposal of Nazi Germany during the Second World War. A host of factors such as low weight, appropriately placed armor, mechanical efficiency and a fitting gun allowed the Panther to perform exceptionally throughout the war. The success of the Panther can be gauged from the fact that it served as a strong model for post war tank development both in Allied and the Soviet circles. The development and the influence of the Panther during the Second World War are a strange tale in themselves. The Panther was originally planned out as a replacement for the previously manufactured Panzer III and Panzer IV tanks that had been deployed on the Eastern and Western fronts. The ragged histories of the Panzer III and Panzer IV during service meant that a new and more reliable replacement had to come through that was based on new technology (Hart). The Soviet tactics during the war concerning armored warfare was simple - the enemy was to be overwhelmed using numbers even if the quality of the armor was compromising. The T-34s were produced in huge numbers in order to overwhelm the Nazi armor. The tactics deployed by the Soviets were successful given that their superior numbers were nearly always able to overpower Nazi armor arrangements. The situation demanded that a lighter, more efficient and capable tank be deployed to the battle zone in order to deal with the superiority of Soviet armor numbers. Ironically when the Panther was deployed to the battlefield it proved to be a total failure. The first deployment of the Panthers was made to the Eastern front where the

Russians were bashing through German lines through their armor. The newly deployed Panther tanks suffered from a host of mechanical problems. The initial deployment of tanks suffered huge losses at the hands of their crews who had to destroy tanks to prevent the enemy from taking control of them. For one thing the Panthers suffered from engine overheating issues along with common failures of the connecting rods as well as bearing failures. The fuel system was also compromised often making it dangerous to operate the Panther in combat. Since the engine ran on gasoline and leaks were common from both the fuel pump and carburetor so tank fires were a common occurrence. In a similar manner the transmissions along with the final drives often broke down on the Panther's first lot making it difficult to rely on in the battlefield. The Panther was built to enhance the very reliability that it was only scantily offering. In order to deal with this situation, the German high command decided to undergo a major tank rebuilding program based on the problems detected in these early Panthers. Between the April and May of 1943 all of the early Panthers were moved over to Falkensee or Nurnberg for a large rebuilding effort to take place. This effort was able to rectify most but not all problems being faced by the Panthers. In order to deal with this situation, another major rebuilding program was ensued in June 1943. The second rebuilding effort was able to ensure that the Panthers would last not only through the war but for years to come (Jentz). The first major deployment of the Panthers came through for Operation Zitadelle which had been delayed time and again in anticipation of the incoming Panthers. Only six days after the final Panthers arrived, the Operation was set in motion by the German commanders. As soon as the Panthers were issued to the

armored brigades, similar problems were experienced again. The 200 Panthers that had been delivered to the armored formations reduced to only 40 by July the seventh. However, only this time the Panthers' numbers had not reduced due to mechanical issues but rather due to the fighting. The German General Heinz Guderian reported to Hitler that the heavy fighting had proved the metal of the Panthers. The damaged Panthers were patched up quickly and were sent off once again to the front. This in itself testifies to the simplicity of the design such that the Panthers could be repaired in the field and sent into service again with little trouble (Speer). During Operation Zitadelle the Panthers were able to claim some 267 destroyed enemy tanks (Healy). This is impressive given that only some 25 Panthers were fully operational throughout the entire operation at one point in time. The Panthers were also able to prove their advantage in range as they were able to destroy Soviet armor without coming into range themselves. By the March of 1944 the Panthers had been able to work out all of the problems confronting them but by this point in time the tide of the war had turned. In the later months of the war, the Panthers were used purely in order to defend against any major attacks. The Panthers could also be seen as the reason why the Allied advance was slow in the beginning. Though the Panthers saw most of the action on the Eastern front but their role on the Western front cannot be denied. It was only because of the Panthers working in tandem with the German infantry that the fall of the Third Reich was slowed down. Works Cited Hart, Stephen. Panther Medium Tank 1942-45. London: Osprey Publishing, 2003. Healy, Mark. Zitadelle: The German Offensive Against the Kursk Salient 4-17 July 1943. London: History Press,

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