

Uranium Cheat Sheet

Did Iraq have stockpiles of Uranium?

Yes – 500 tons of yellow cake uranium (1.8 tons of uranium it had begun to enrich)

Was Iraq developing a Nuclear Weapons Program?

Kay's successor, Charles Duelfer, also has confirmed that nuclear research at al Tuwaitha was continuing right up until the U.S. invasion, telling Congress in March that Saddam's scientists were "preserving and expanding [their] knowledge to design and develop nuclear weapons."

One laboratory at al Tuwaitha, Duelfer said, "was intentionally focused on research applicable for nuclear weapons development."

Did Iraq have the plans and/or capabilities to produce nuclear weapons?

After he was captured by U.S. forces in Baghdad last year, Dr. Mahdi Obeidi, who ran Saddam's nuclear centrifuge program until 1997, had some disturbing news for coalition debriefers.

He kept blueprints for a nuclear centrifuge, along with some actual centrifuge components, stored at his home - buried in the front yard - awaiting orders from Baghdad to proceed.

If Iraq was to enrich the 500 tons of uranium they had how many WMD's could have they produced?

"You have a warehouse containing 500 tons of natural uranium; you need 25 kilograms of U235 to build one weapon. How many nuclear weapons can you build? The answer is 142."

How much enriched uranium do you need to make a WMD?

75-120 pounds....

Some 120 pounds of highly enriched uranium would be needed for a basic "gun-type" nuclear weapon—enough to fit neatly into eight soda cans. More advanced designs using explosives would need less highly enriched uranium, perhaps as little as 75 pounds.

How many weapons could have Iraq made if the 1.8 tons of uranium that they had begun to enrich was ready to use?

1.8 tons = 3600 pounds / (75-120 pounds) = 30 to 48 WMDs

[Can nuclear bombs be made without uranium?](#)

Nuclear bombs can also be made out of plutonium which is much more rare.

The original U.S. plutonium weapon, used on Nagasaki in 1945, used approximately 13 pounds of plutonium, and modern U.S. weapons require less.

[Check out the NY Times story on Iraq uranium](#)

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THE STRUGGLE FOR IRAQ: NUCLEAR MATERIALS; U.S. Announces It Intends to Move Tons of Uranium From Sealed Baghdad Repository

By JAMES GLANZ (NYT) 1028 words
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ABSTRACT - US informs International Atomic Energy Agency that it intends to move hundreds of tons of uranium from repository in Tuwaitha to more secure place outside Iraq; Western diplomat says agency has taken position that uranium is Iraqi property and that it cannot give permission to remove it