



In the intense environment in which pilots and crew members fly, better fitting and functioning helmets are one less potential distraction.
Eric Lian Photo

weight and apparent smallness of this very European product. It has the feel of a sports car, if a helmet can feel like that. Gallets come in 12 colours, all available at no extra charge. The test unit was a stylish gray that felt like a Mirage or a Rafale jet. And the literature states that custom colors are also available. The two visor provisions,

meanwhile, can be supplied with any one of three shades, clear, yellow and gray, all included in the same price.

The Gallet fit snugly and seemed well balanced. Its small size was a unique experience. I could move my head freely in the confines of the cockpit without fear of banging into something, not always the case with the other products.

This helmet also sported a very nice sliding handle for the visor that was spring loaded to the up position. A quick squeeze of the handle and the visor slipped up to the stowed position.

The earphones were a good, firm fit and offered Bose-like sound. The microphone boom was multi-jointed, each joint with its own small twist lock, so adjustment options were near infinite, though you had to work with each one a little to get a comfortable fit. For all-around comfort, style and ease of use, this French design gets a pretty high grade.

GENTEX

Taking the HGU-56 out of its bag, you immediately notice the wide ear receptacles. The stark white exterior (colors are available as options) only adds to its Star Wars warrior look. Slipping it on my head, it fit like it was built for me, probably in part because of the wide range of sizes available, and in part because of the super comfort liner (SCL), a proprietary cushioning liner that's removable for cleaning. The SCL is an upgrade from the older liner that was made with four layers of plastic padding. The SCL uses the same padding, but in different form, for greater comfort. It sat perfectly balanced on my head, not too much aft, and not tilting forward.

With the helmet securely on, you reach for the visors, and their controls are right where you'd expect them to be. Both the clear one or the sun shade (other colors are optional) slip smoothly down and lock in place in one of several detents.

What you can't see ...can hurt you.



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