

Will the Drone War Come Home? Ukraine and the Weaponization of Commercial Drones

Description

Benjamin Fogel and Andro Mathewson

Hours after Russia's invasion of Ukraine began in February, Ukraine's Ministry of Defense [appealed](#) for civilian drone owners to donate or fly their commercially bought drones to help defend Kyiv. Donations [poured](#) in and consumer [unmanned aerial vehicles \(UAVs\)](#) took to the skies amid Russia's advance. Throughout the war, commercial UAVs have been used by Ukrainian [regular](#) and [special](#) operations forces, Belarusian [partisans](#), Russian [infantry](#), and Russian-led [separatists](#); they demonstrate the challenges, opportunities, and threats emerging from the [proliferation of consumer drones](#). The most common are small, light, and inexpensive rotary-wing quadcopters produced by the Chinese drone maker DJI.

This Irregular Warfare Initiative article was originally posted through our partner organization, the Modern War Institute at West Point. Continue reading the full article [here](#).

Image credit: Gunnery Sgt. Melissa Marnell, US Marine Corps

Date Created

2022/08/22