Odd looking and finicky to fly, the Ryan PT-22 offered a challenge to cadet pilots that the Boeing PT-17 (N2S-4) or the Fairchild PT-19 did not. The PT-22 was known for its demanding ground handling characteristics. Though not as successful or as well known as the PT-17 or the PT-l9, the Army Air Force utilized the PT-22 as a primary trainer throughout World War II and, today, the aircraft is sought after by warbird collectors around the world.

Designer Claude Ryan became famous following the success of Charles Lindbergh's Trans-Atlantic flight. Yet, despite the fame and attention that the "Spirit of St. Louis" brought to the Ryan Aeronautical Company, Ryan decided to concentrate more on building his flight training schools rather than additional aircraft. By 1933, however, Ryan was once again designing aircraft and introduced a low-wing monoplane with fixed landing gear, the Sport-Trainer (more commonly referred to as the "Ryan ST"). The ST became a force in the home and export markets.

In 1940, with America's entrance into World War II only months away, the U.S. Army Air Corps (AAC) evaluated a ST (called the XPT-16 by the AAC) and ordered 100 for use as primary trainers. Fitted with a powerful Kinner radial engine, the XPT-16 went through a number of different variants before the definitive PT-22 entered service. Considered similar in layout, the PT-22 differed from earlier versions in that it was not equipped with faired landing gear or wheel spats. A total of 1,043 PT-22s were built for the AAC, with an additional 100 NR-1 aircraft purchased by the U.S. Navy, and 25 purchased by the Dutch (these aircraft were later turned over to the AAC as the PT-22A). Not surprisingly, most AAC PT-22s served at Ryan-operated training schools that were contracted by the AAC to provide primary pilot training to Army cadet pilots.

CEILING