

The Squadron of Evolution—sometimes referred to as the "White Squadron" or the "ABCD ships" after the first four— was a transitional unit^[clarification needed] in the [United States Navy](#) during the late 19th century. It was probably inspired by the French "[Escadre d'évolution](#)" of the 18th and 19th centuries. The squadron was composed of the [protected cruisers](#) [USS Atlanta](#), [USS Boston](#), [USS Chicago](#), and dispatch boats [USS Dolphin](#) and [USS Yorktown](#). *Yorktown's* sister ships [USS Bennington](#) and [USS Concord](#) joined the squadron in 1891.^[1]

Rear Admiral [John G. Walker](#) served as its Commander with *Chicago* as his flagship. Walker was a proponent of the relatively new practice of concentrating ships into formations controlled by a single commander, and used his position to carry out exercises in [squadron](#) tactics, ship-to-ship signalling, and landing operations.^[2] Having both full rigged masts and steam engines, the White Squadron was also influential in the beginning of steel [shipbuilding](#) in the United States