

# How Iran Could Escalate

by [Dana Stroul \(/experts/dana-stroul\)](/experts/dana-stroul)

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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## In the wake of retaliatory strikes on U.S. targets, a former Pentagon official assesses Tehran's bad options and Washington's best response.

**L**ess than 48 hours after Washington's strikes against Iran's nuclear program, Tehran launched a ballistic missile attack on the largest U.S. military installation in the Middle East, Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar. The symbolism of the decision to target this base—the same one that President Trump visited only two months ago during his tour of Gulf states, and one located in a country that maintains close ties to and shares an offshore gas field with Iran—is unmistakable. Tehran will respond to strikes on its territory, will punish others it perceives to have enabled U.S. military operations, and remains undeterred from pursuing an approach that holds the entire stability of the Middle East at risk...

[Read the full article on the Foreign Affairs website. \(https://www.foreignaffairs.com/iran/how-iran-could-escalate\)](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/iran/how-iran-could-escalate) ❖

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