

Which Branch is Best for you?

Throughout the school year the different branches of the military visit with students during the lunch period. If you are interested in a career with the military, talk to the different recruiters to look at their options. The following can serve as a guide for students:

The requirements for all are:

- Age 17 to 35 for the Army, Navy and Coast Guard
- Age 17 to 29 for the Air Force and Marines
- U.S. citizen or resident alien
- Men: 5'0" to 6'8" and 100 to 255 pounds
- Women: 4'0" to 6'7" and 90 to 214 pounds
- Good eyesight (glasses are OK)
- Good general health
- High school diploma or GED in some cases
- Single or married, with or without dependents

Benefits for all:

- Standard salary and raises
- Housing (or tax-free allowance)
- Dining (or a tax-free allowance)
- Uniform allowance (tax free)
- Free medical and dental care
- 30 days paid vacation each year
- Free travel on leave (when available)
- Low-cost life insurance
- Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) education benefits (up to 36 month of education benefits)
- Exchange and commissary privileges (items at reduced or duty-free prices)
- Veterans Administration benefits ranging from low-interest home and business loans to burial in national cemeteries
- Preference for many federal, state and local government jobs

Choosing a branch

To choose the branch that is best for you, review the chart, visit the branch Web sites and talk to recruiters for each branch you are interested in.

When you enlist:

- Take the Armed Service Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), a multiple-choice test that assesses your abilities
- Pass a medical physical
- Pass a background check
- Attend basic training

	Navy	Air Force	Army	Marine Corps	Coast Guard

Roles according to Department of Defense	The Navy maintains, trains and equips combat ready maritime forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression and maintaining freedom of the seas.	The Air Force provides a rapid, flexible, and when necessary, a lethal air and space capability that can deliver forces anywhere in the world in less than 48 hours.	The Army defends the landmass of the United States, its territories, commonwealth's and possessions.	The U.S. Marine Corps maintains ready expeditionary forces, sea-based and integrated air-ground units for contingency and combat operations, and the means to stabilize or contain international disturbance.	The U.S. Coast Guard provides law and maritime safety enforcement, marine and environmental protection and military naval support.
Web Site	www.navy.com	www.airforce.com	www.goarmy.com	www.marines.com	www.gocoastguard.com
Size	384,000 active 152,000 reserve	350,000 active 136,000 reserve 112,000 National Guard	488,00 active 206,000 reserve 350,000 National Guard	174,000 active and reserve	43,000 active and reserve
Job Opportunities	More than 80 jobs, such as aviation, electronics, emergency, fire and rescue, intelligence and communications, medical, dental, media and special	Categories are mechanical, administrative, general and electronics.	More than 200 jobs, such as combat specialty, engineering, science, technical, medical, military intelligence and protective service.	More than 400 jobs in aviation, combat arms, computers, communications, intelligence, electronics and combat service support.	Categories of jobs are deck, operations, engineering, aviation and support.

	operations.				
Promotions*	1 st at 9 mos. 2 nd at 18 mos. 3 rd at 24 mos.	1 st at 6 mos. 2 nd at 16 mos.	Every 6 mos.	1 st at 3 mos. 2 nd at 6 mos. 3 rd at 12 mos.	Every 6 mos.
Incentives for enlisting	Vary according to ASVAB score and job selected.	Vary according to ASVAB score and job selected.	\$20,000 based on job and length of service. \$6,000 for 60 college credits. \$3,000 for certain jobs and training.	Vary according to ASVAB score and job selected.	Vary according to ASVAB score and job selected, guaranteed geography districts.
Minimum enlistment term	4 years	4 years; 15 months subject to job and enlistee	2 years	4 years	3 years

Location and length of basic training	8 weeks and 5 days in Chicago, IL	6 weeks in Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, TX	9 weeks in: Fort Knox, KY Fort Sill, OK Fort Benning, GA Fort Jackson, SC Fort Leonard Wood, MO	13 weeks in Paris Island, SC or San Diego, CA	8 weeks in Cape May, NJ
Educational Requirements	High school diploma; GED is occasionally accepted.	High school diploma; GED is occasionally accepted with 15 college credit hours.	High school diploma; GED is occasionally accepted.	High school diploma; GED is occasionally accepted with 15 college credit hours.	High school diploma; GED is occasionally accepted with 15 college credit hours.
Education benefits (in addition to MGIB)	Full tuition while serving. \$15,000 extra from the Navy College Fund for certain jobs. Classes available on ships.	Full tuition while serving. Receive credit for training at Community College of the Air Force (the largest Community College in the world).	Full tuition while serving. Up to \$50,000 (including MGIB) from the Army College Fund. Money for qualifying federal student loans.	Full tuition while serving. Classes available on base.	\$4,500 tuition assistance while serving. Coast Guard Institute available.