

MILITARY CAREER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

The United States Military Services provide challenges and offer career training opportunities for high school graduates. The military recruiters can provide complete information about the benefits and requirements involved in a military career. Students must know that entrance into the armed forces is based upon rigid standards on aptitude test scores as well as a physical examination. The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (A.S.V.A.B.) is the test which determines admission and eligibility for military training programs. It may be taken through arrangements with a local military recruiter. Sophomores, juniors, and seniors are welcome to take the test whether they are planning a military career or not. No special testing provisions for special education students are available. In addition to full-time military service, opportunities exist in reserve units, National Guard units, university Reserve Officer Training Corps (R.O.T.C.) programs, and military academies. A variety of educational benefit programs can help finance a college education for members of the military. The information which follows will help you decide if a military career can assist you with your future.

General Enlistment Qualifications

Although specific enlistment requirements for each service or enlistment option within a particular service may vary, all branches have certain general qualifications. Enlistees may be either single or married, but they must be between the ages of 17 and 35. All branches prefer a high school diploma. Both a written examination (A.S.V.A.B.) and a physical examination are required.

Delayed Entry Program

High school students who decide they definitely wish to enlist into a branch of the military should investigate the advantages of enlistment up to one year before reporting for duty.

Occupations in the Military

Each year the Armed Forces provide hundreds of thousands of men and women basic and advanced training that can be used in both military and civilian careers. Although many people make the Armed forces a career, some plan to use the skills and training obtained in the military as a stepping stone for a civilian career. A discussion of the relation of each military job category to civilian occupations can be found in the Military Careers publication and the military files in each high school's Student Services area.

Military Academies

U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, U.S. Merchant Marine Academy: The federal service academies provide a four-year college program leading to a Bachelor of Science degree. Free room and board, tuition, medical care, and a monthly allowance are provided. Graduates receive regular or reserve commissions and have a five-year active duty obligation. Applications to the service academies should start at the end of the junior year. **Admission is very competitive** and based on a strong high school academic record, leadership activities, athletic ability, college entrance exams, and recommendations from teachers or school officials. The first step is to request a nomination to an Academy from your U.S. representative or senator. Individuals desiring to seek academy appointments should confer with their counselor early in the junior year to verify their eligibility and ensure their proper direction in pursuing an application and nomination.

R.O.T.C.

The Reserve Officer Training Corps trains students in about 500 Air Force, Army, and Navy/Marine Corps units at participating colleges and universities. Trainees take two to five hours of military instruction a week in addition to regular college courses. Students in the last two years of an R.O.T.C. program and all those on R.O.T.C. scholarships receive a monthly allowance while attending school and additional pay for summer training. After graduation, they serve as officers for a stipulated period of time. Upon being commissioned, they may receive an appointment to active duty or to a reserve or National Guard unit.

R.O.T.C. Scholarships

The scholarship partially or fully funds college tuition, textbooks, fees, and other academic expenses. Students also receive a tax free subsistence allowance each school year. The scholarships apply to any university which has an R.O.T.C. Program. Competition for these scholarships is very high. 90% of the recipients rank in the top quarter of their high school class and have high ACT or SAT I scores. Leadership potential demonstrated in extracurricular activities also is an important factor. Application procedures should start at the end of the junior year or early in the senior year.

Officer Candidate School

College graduates also may earn a commission in the Armed Forces through Officer Candidate School Programs in the Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy, as well as in the National Guard. A limited number of outstanding enlisted personnel are eligible for promotion through this program.

Air National Guard/Army National Guard

This is equivalent to having a part-time job while still in school or working full time. Students may join while still in high school (if 17 years or older). After initial training, commitment is for one weekend a month and two weeks of annual training. Membership after a stipulated period of time in the State of Illinois National Guard qualifies for grants of 100% in tuition and most fees at any state supported institution.

Reserves (Army/Air Force/Coast Guard/Marines/Navy)

Military Reserve units involve individuals committing to an initial basic and specific job training period followed by continued regular meetings and training activities. Educational benefits may be acquired in a similar manner to other active branches of the military while obligations are met over a protracted period of time in a manner like that of the National Guard.