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Dec. 2, 2020, 1:30 p.m. | 4 minute read | 20,722 views

Changing Jobs in the Military: Is It Possible?

Every service member has a specific job, often called a military occupational specialty or rating, usually assigned very soon after enlistment or basic training. Each specialty includes specific duties you will be expected to perform to help your service branch protect the peace and fulfill its mission.

Specialties are assigned based on your personal talents and skills, available “billets” or job openings, and the overall mission needs of your service branch, both current and future.

Can I transfer to a new military MOS if I don't like my current one?

Check out the different military jobs.

From armored tank drivers and infantry units to musicians and mechanics, the military offers professional opportunities for almost every career.



[LEARN MORE](#)

If you'd like to change specialties and try something new, there are steps you can take to find a new position as you continue your service. But be aware, a change in military specialty is not always possible or guaranteed.

The Army and Marine Corps calls this type of change a "reclassification" or "change of military operations specialty." The Navy calls it a "cross-rate," and in the Air Force it is "re-training." But no matter what it's called in your branch, be aware the military expects service members to stay in their first specialty for a while – usually several years. After all, it's taken time and resources to train you – the military wants to see a return on its investment.

Occasionally, a branch may run a "mandatory reclassification" to maintain a balanced fighting force.

Increasing your chances of transferring to a new military position

You must ask for a transfer through your chain of command. Your branch's approval depends a lot on your personal situation. If your service record is clean, and you have a good reputation with your chain of command, your request is more likely to be considered.

In addition, a transfer may be more likely if:

- **You are re-enlisting.** You can request a specialty reassignment [when you re-enlist](#), during which you agree to serve for another few years in your new position. This is likely the best time to make a move to a new position.
- **There are too many personnel in your current position.** If your current specialty is overstaffed, it may be easier to move to a different specialty with fewer staff positions.
- **Your desired specialty is understaffed.** If the specialty you would like to join is in need of more personnel, you are more likely to be able to make the change. Your service branch may even send out a call looking for people interested in switching to critically understaffed positions.
- **You've received more training or education, [like a college degree](#),** that makes you more valuable in a different position. Some specialties aren't available until you've served for a few years, like [many positions in the special operations units](#).

Will I be able to use my military MOS to find a civilian job?

You can absolutely use the skills and experience you've gained in the civilian workforce. In fact, many of the specialties require civilian-based credentials and training to operate effectively. For example, both [military and civilian air traffic controllers are FAA-certified](#).

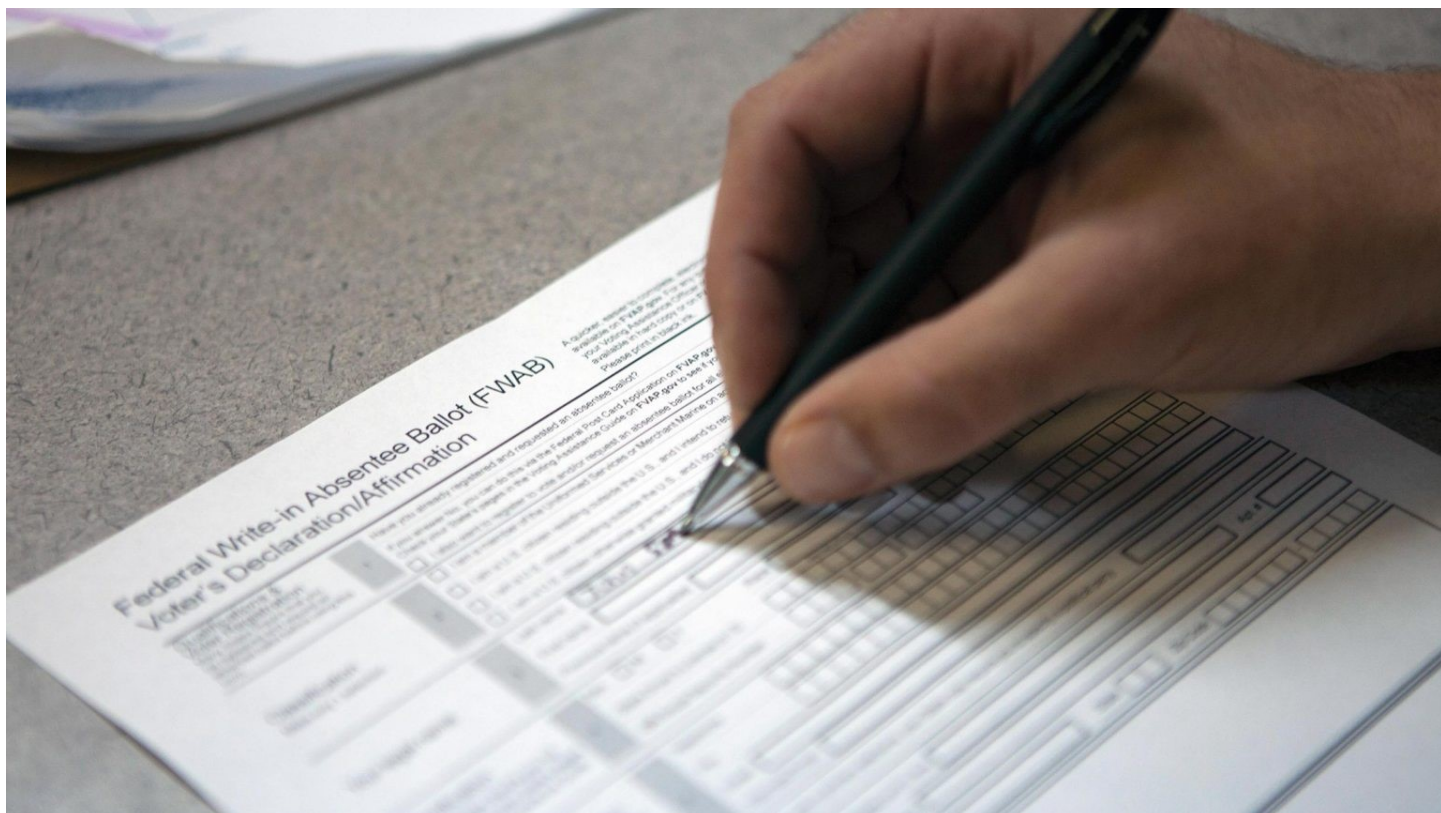
There are several Department of Defense programs dedicated to helping [separating service members find solid civilian careers](#). For example, each service branch runs [a credentialing program designed to translate a service member's specialty](#) and general military experience into a civilian-style resume hiring managers can understand. And remember, [Military OneSource is here to connect you to the resources and services you need](#) to live your best military life.

TAGS:

career

service member





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Nov. 4, 2020, 4:21 p.m. | 5 minute read | 90,239 views

Voting While You're Away From Home: The Absentee Voting Process

When military life takes you away from home, you and your family can use an absentee ballot and ensure your voices are heard on Election Day. It only takes a few quick steps to cast your vote no matter where you are in the world:

Getting Started with Absentee Voting

Here's how to make sure you cast your absentee ballot correctly.

- **Complete the Federal Post Card Application.** The Federal Voting Assistance Program encourages the use of the Federal Post Card Application to register to vote, request an absentee ballot, and update any contact information. If you (service member, military spouse or of-age dependent) are stationed or relocated outside of your voting jurisdiction, you are encouraged to submit a new FPCA every year and each time you move. You can [fill it out online](#) with an assistant's help, download a PDF version or pick up a hard copy from your unit voting assistance officer.
- **Sign and send the FPCA to your local election office.** Your local election office is in the county where you have established residency. Most states accept the FPCA by email or fax, while other states require the FPCA by mail. You can find the email, mailing address and phone number of [your election office](#). You can also ask for the contact information from your voting assistance officer.



- **Receive your absentee ballot.** In Section 5 of the FPCA, you can even request to receive your ballot by email.
- **Vote, sign and return the ballot.** After voting and signing your ballot, return it to your state before the ballot return deadline arrives. Check your state's specific deadline for military and military families on [FVAP.gov](#).

Votes from service members and their families who are away from their home state matter in every election. The outcome of a close race often can't be announced until after absentee ballots are counted.

How to handle any voting issues

What if you don't receive your ballot on time and the deadline is approaching? What if you don't know your state's deadline because you just moved? Here are your options:

- **Use an emergency backup ballot.** If you do not receive your ballot and are in danger of missing the absentee voting deadline, your voting assistance officer can provide you with an emergency or backup ballot called an [SF 186 Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot](#), or you can use the FWAB ([Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot](#)) online assistant to help you fill out the form. All states accept this ballot for all federal elections. In most states, voters need to have previously submitted an FPCA earlier in that election year to be eligible to use a FWAB.
- **Know your state's absentee deadline.** Every state sets its own due date for absentee ballot applications and the actual ballot, so make sure you know it ahead of time. Learn everything you need to know about [your state's deadlines](#) by selecting your state from the FVAP.gov home page. Also, the Military Postal Service Agency estimates [mail delivery times](#) from all over the world before each election, which eliminates guesswork. To be on the safe side, follow the recommended mailing dates.
- **Submit a new FPCA every year and when you move.** Add this task to your moving checklist so you'll be prepared for every election.

Where can I ask for help?

You can get assistance online or face-to-face:

- **Get to know your voting assistance officer.** Your [voting assistance officer](#) at the installation is responsible for helping you register to vote and file an absentee ballot. If you're new to installation living, you can [look up their contact information](#) or ask your sponsor for help.
- **Become familiar with all the resources available through the Federal Voting Assistance Program.** The [FVAP](#) helps service members and their eligible family members vote from anywhere in the world. The FVAP website includes helpful fact sheets (both on your [Federal Post Card Application](#) and your [absentee ballot, service-specific information, details for spouses and eligible family members](#), applications, contact information and more. You can also contact them at 800-438-VOTE (8683) or [vote@fvap.gov](#).

Your vote matters and no matter where you are, you should cast your ballot in every election. It's your right. Learn more about [primary elections](#). Keep track of your state's primary election dates and take these simple steps to ensure your voice is heard on Election Day.

TAGS:

deployment

fvap



Was this article helpful?



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NO



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April 15, 2020, 2:21 p.m. | 6 minute read | 10,294 views

Frequently Asked Questions About Military Funeral Honors

The Military Funeral Honors program includes several key elements that your casualty assistance officer or Military Funeral Honors coordinator can guide you through. In addition, here are some [frequently asked questions and answers](#) to navigating the traditional process.

Who is eligible for Military Funeral Honors?

- Military members who died while on active duty.
- Veterans who served in the active military, naval, or air service and were discharged or released from that service by means of an “honorable” or “under honorable conditions” discharge.
- Members or former members of the Selected Reserves and were discharged or released from service by means of an “honorable” or “under honorable conditions” discharge.



- Members of the Commissioned Officers Corps of the Public Health Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.
- Certain civilian or contractual groups who have been given active-duty determinations may also be eligible for funeral honors, as they may have been named active-duty designees for the military, Navy or Air Force services.

What do Military Funeral Honors consist of?

A minimum of a two-person military service detail who provide the [three core elements](#) of the playing of Taps, the folding of the flag, and the flag presentation. Additional elements such as aircraft flyover, color guard and rifles are subject to eligibility, availability and approval

Who receives the burial flag?

The Veterans Administration verifies eligibility in accordance with Title 38 USC 2301. Your funeral director will assist you in obtaining a flag. More information is available at: <https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/memorial-items/burial-flags/>.

The VA authorizes only one flag and the order of precedence is surviving spouse, children according to age, parents (including adoptive, stepparents, and foster parents), brothers or sisters (including brothers or sisters of half-blood), uncles or aunts, nephews or nieces, and others such as cousins or grandparents.

When there is no next-of-kin, the VA will furnish the flag to a friend making a request for it. If there is no living relative or one cannot be located, and no friend requests the flag, it must be returned to the nearest VA facility. The VA is not able to provide replacement burial flags even for lost or damaged flags.

In the case of in-service deaths (active duty), the Defense Department provides a U.S. flag to drape the casket or to be presented at a memorial service. After the service, the flag is given to the next of kin.

How can Military Funeral Honors be requested?

Families of eligible veterans may request Military Funeral Honors through their funeral director. The funeral director will contact the appropriate [Military Funeral Honors coordinator](#) to arrange for the Military Funeral Honors detail. Families in possession of their veteran loved ones' cremated remains, who now desire to have a burial ceremony, may contact the appropriate [Military Funeral Honors coordinator](#) who will assist in arranging honors. At least 48 hours is recommended to organize a funeral detail. The services will request that a copy of the veteran's DD Form 214, "Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty," or other supporting discharge information be provided in order to verify eligibility.

How do I obtain a copy of military records and DD Form 214, "Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty," to establish eligibility?



You may submit a request following the [guidance on the Veterans Service Records website](#). There are specific [Emergency Requests](#)

and Deadlines procedures for those who need a replacement DD Form 214 in order to schedule Military Funeral Honors.

What is a Presidential Memorial Certificate?

This is a parchment certificate with a calligraphic inscription expressing the nation's grateful recognition of an honorably discharged, deceased veteran's service in the Armed Forces. The veteran's name is inscribed and the certificate bears the signature of the President.

Next of kin, other relatives and friends may request the certificate in person at any VA regional office or by mail or fax. For information about requesting a Presidential Memorial Certificate, please visit <http://www.cem.va.gov/pmc.asp>.

How much does Military Funeral Honors cost?

This ceremony is provided to eligible veteran's families by the Department of the Defense at no cost to the family.

How do I request a grave headstone, marker, or medallion?

The VA furnishes a government headstone, marker, or medallion at no charge. Your funeral director or cemetery representative will assist you with ordering. [More information is available from the VA or at 800-697-6947.](#)

Where can I get a list of national and state cemeteries?

[The VA hosts an interactive state map of national and state cemeteries.](#)

Who performs Military Funeral Honors?

A partnership comprising the Department of Defense, Veteran's Service Organizations, or VSO, and other approved organizations play a valuable role in honoring our veterans. VSO and entities in the [Authorized Provider Partnership Program, or AP3](#), are authorized to participate with the military services in providing funeral honors. These entities augment the legislated two-person uniformed member detail by providing additional detail elements for veteran funerals. AP3 focuses on using volunteers who are trained to assist in providing Military Funeral Honors.

TAGS:

casualty

funeral honors





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Oct. 30, 2020, 4:28 p.m. | 5 minute read | 59,512 views

The Army's Elite Forces: What to Expect If You Join Army Special Operations Rangers, Green Berets or the SOAR Night Stalkers

Each branch of the U.S. Armed Forces has its own elite forces in addition to their regular enlisted units. The Army's Special Operations units include the Rangers, the Green Berets and the Night Stalkers. Here's what Army soldiers can expect from a career as a member of one of these special forces units.

The Army Rangers: Duties, qualifications and training

Do you have what it takes to join [the Army Rangers of the 75th Ranger Regiment](#)? This light infantry unit has its roots in the 1700s under the command of frontiersman Robert Rogers. His unit was known for unconventional yet effective battle tactics, outlined by [his "28 Rules of Ranging,"](#) which modern Rangers keep today.

Today's Army Rangers specialize in raids and missions deep inside enemy territory. They receive some of the best training and opportunities the Army can provide, making the Rangers a great long-term military career choice.



To be considered for the 75th Ranger Regiment, enlisted soldiers must:

- Be physically fit
- Be able to get a secret clearance
- Have a General Technical Score of at least 106 on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, or ASVAB

For a complete list of basic qualifications for both enlisted members and officers – as well as the current Ranger-supported military occupational specialties, or MOS, see the [Army Ranger's official website](#).

Qualified enlisted soldiers must also [pass the Ranger Assessment and Selection](#). The RASP involves physical fitness and first responder tests. It also teaches new skills like combat driving and explosives. Finally, all future Rangers attend the [Army Ranger School](#).

The Army's Green Berets: Duties, qualifications and training

The Army's Special Forces Soldiers known as "Green Berets" are military legends for service members and civilians alike. They [take on terrorists through quiet, guerilla war-style missions in foreign countries](#). Green Beret teams operate in any environment, from city fighting to jungle warfare to desert scouting.

You can qualify for assignment to the Green Berets straight from basic training. If you're an [enlisted soldier who'd like to become a Green Beret](#), though, you must:

- Have a [pay grade of at least E-3](#)
- Be able to get a secret clearance
- Be airborne qualified – or volunteer for the training
- Have an ASVAB General Technical score of at least 110
- Serve for at least 36 months after graduating from training

You'll [complete that training in six stages over 63 weeks](#). The first trial is a two-week Special Operations Preparation Course, or SOPC. This course prepares possible candidates for the actual Special Forces Assessment and Selection – the first official phase of Green Beret training.

Selected candidates will participate in the Special Forces Qualification Course for another 61 weeks. These courses teach languages, new MOS and other skills needed to pass the "Robin Sage" training test. This simulation tests candidates' ability to complete missions through "Pineland," a huge training ground in North Carolina that mimics a hostile foreign country.

The Night Stalkers of SOAR: Duties, qualifications and training

Have you heard of the [SOAR Night Stalkers](#)? Elite soldiers in the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment run international nighttime operations from helicopters. If you're scared of the dark or of heights, this is not the unit for you. However, if you want to operate some of the most specialized helicopters flying – like the [MH-60K/L Black Hawk or the A/MH-6 Little Bird](#) – consider this special ops career.

Enlisted soldiers and officers are eligible for SOAR if they:

- Can get a secret clearance
- Are financially stable
- Are physically fit



- Have an ASVAB General Technical score of at least 100
- Have an authorized MOS that SOAR needs

If you're selected for SOAR, you'll need to finish the [Basic Mission Qualification course, better known as the Green Platoon](#). This six-week test and training program will beef up candidates' physical condition and new skills needed by Night Stalkers. If you're a flight-trained warrant officer, you might go to the [Warrant Officer Flight School](#) to learn advanced helicopter combat maneuvers.

Talented and dedicated enlisted soldiers are welcome in any of the Army's special operations teams. If you'd like to pursue a career as a special ops unit member of the Army Rangers, Green Berets or Night Stalkers, talk to your commanding officer about what it'll take to transfer. [Or learn more about other branches' elite units as well as other military careers. Discover all the ways Military OneSource](#) is your connection to information, answers and support to help you overcome challenges, reach your goals and thrive in your military life.

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Nov. 2, 2020, 3:16 p.m. | 4 minute read | 21,560 views

Air Force Special Forces: Applying to Become a Combat Controller, Pararescueman, or Special Operations Weatherman

Each branch of the U.S. Armed Forces has its own elite forces, including the Air Force's Special Tactics teams. The pararescue specialists, combat controllers and special operations weathermen in these teams are some of the most highly trained service members in the force.

If you're a currently enlisted airman thinking about Air Force Special Operations, talk to a career counselor about transferring. [You can apply and participate in the special ops selection process while enlisted and can return to your old assignment if you don't make the cut.](#)

Here's a look into what it takes to join these elite teams for your [future military career](#).

Air Force pararescue specialists: Duties, qualifications and training

The primary mission for [Air Force Special Operations pararescue specialists](#) – also known as “PJs” for “para-jumpers” – is personnel recovery. They save service members from hostile or hard-to-reach locations.

Since 9/11, PJs have successfully run over 12,000 combat rescue missions. That doesn't include the more than 5,000 civilians rescued from natural disasters.

Anyone who wants to become a pararescue specialist must be:



- Between 17 and 39 years old
- A [basic training](#) graduate
- Able to get a secret security clearance
- Financially responsible
- EMT-certified
- Physically fit enough to jump from an airplane and SCUBA dive
- Intelligent, with high general ASVAB scores

If you're selected for transfer, expect about 70 weeks of training before your first mission. This training covers diving, parajumping and emergency medical treatment.

Air Force combat controllers: Duties, qualifications and training

The support provided by an [Air Force Special Operations combat controller](#) is second to none. After all, they have all the duties of a civilian air traffic controller – only in foreign territories made dangerous by extreme weather or enemy fire. They need to be able to safely get to foreign air strips while supporting air crews from all service branches.

Those interested in becoming a combat controller must be:

- Between 17 and 39 years old
- A basic training graduate
- Physically fit enough to dive, jump from airplanes and serve on air strips
- Financially responsible
- Skilled as a mechanic

Combat controller training involves learning how to drive a snowmobile, SCUBA dive and parachute. In all, technical training will take more than 94 weeks to complete.

Air Force Special Operations weathermen: Duties, qualifications and training

If you're fascinated by weather and new technology, becoming an Air Force Special Operations weatherman might be a great career choice for you. These military meteorologists deploy with other Special Forces units from both the Army and Marine Corps to provide mission-critical weather reports. Special Forces may be able to take down the enemy, but no one can stop flash floods, looming storms or sudden brushfire – all of which the Air Force weathermen can see coming and is a vital piece of mission planning.

Service members interested in joining a special operations weather team must be:

- Between 17 and 39 years old
- A basic training graduate
- Physically fit and able to parachute
- Financially responsible
- State licensed to drive
- Qualified to bear firearms



- Good with electronics

Advanced training to become a special ops weatherman takes more than 138 weeks to complete. During those two-and-a-half years, you'll learn how to report on environmental and weather conditions, use sensitive instruments and join special operations tactics.

[Learn about other branches' elite units as well as other military careers](#) to pursue. [Discover all the ways Military OneSource](#) is your connection to information, answers and support to help you overcome challenges, reach your goals and thrive.



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Nov. 4, 2020, 2:23 p.m. | 4 minute read | 41,346 views

The Marine and Navy Special Forces: What to Expect If You Join Marine Force RECON, Marine Raiders or the Navy SEALs

Are you looking to pursue a career in the Marine Corps or Navy special forces? Here's what you need to know if you're considering the Marine's Force RECON or Raiders and the Navy SEAL teams.

Marine Force RECON: Duties, qualifications and training

Marine Reconnaissance units are some of the most elite warriors in an already superior fighting force. Recon Marines gather information through reconnaissance and surveillance missions deep behind enemy lines.

Force RECON is overseen directly by the Marine Corps. Recon Marines have a [military occupation specialty code](#) of 0321.

Enlisted Marines and new recruits can qualify to become a Recon Marine candidate if they:

- Are a U.S. citizen
- Score a 105 or higher on your ASVAB's General Technical section. This score includes both reading and math.



- Be very physically fit as a swimmer and for fitness tests
- Can get a secret security clearance
- Pass a screening for selection. Check out a [preparation course](#) to get ready.

Qualified candidates can request a transfer from their commanding officers to attend the nine-week Basic Reconnaissance Course, or BRC, at the School of Infantry in Camp Pendleton.

This training will cover everything from ocean swimming to helicopter rope suspension and various reconnaissance training. Those who pass get additional specialized training before heading out on missions around the world.

The Marine Raiders: Duties, qualifications and training

Have you considered [joining the Marine Raiders](#)? They're part of the Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command, or MARSOC. They complete special ops missions assigned by the joint forces U.S. Special Operations Command, or SOCOM. These missions are rooted in their Marine heritage: Small, lethal teams that win strategic battles before a war can break out. The Raider MOS is 0372.

Enlisted Marines who want to become a special forces Raider must:

- Have a minimum ASVAB General Technical score of 105
- [Excellent physical fitness scores](#) and pass a MARSOC swim test
- Be able to get a secret clearance
- Able to transfer to [a required skills MOS](#)

Once you've checked your eligibility, you'll undergo the first three-week phase of [Assessment and Selection course](#). Completing the first phase doesn't guarantee selection, but you may make it through to the second phase of A&S. After that, you'll proceed to a nine-month Individual Training Course for your new MOS.

The Navy SEALs: Duties, qualifications and training

Navy SEAL teams are [a special ops fighting force completing missions from air, land and sea](#) by whatever means necessary. These teams specialize in unconventional warfare tactics to complete missions all around the world – from capturing high-profile terrorists to detonating bombs for beach landings.

You can apply to become a Navy SEAL as a civilian, a Navy sailor or even as a service member from another military branch. Both [new recruits](#) and [active military](#) future SEAL candidates must:

- Be incredibly physically fit. For example, a SEAL candidate would ideally swim 500 yards in 9:30 minutes, with a similar time for the 1.5 mile run.
- Have high ASVAB scores in math, science, electronics and other subjects
- Be younger than 29 years old
- Have U.S. citizenship



Enlisted service members must also visit a career counselor to see if they can transfer, as well as pass a dive physical.

Qualified candidates then go through the [Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL training, or BUD/S](#). Candidates continue physical training

while learning new skills like combat diving, land warfare and advanced tactics. Not everyone will graduate, but those who do become some of the most elite fighters in the world.

Talented and dedicated enlisted Marines and sailors are welcome in any of the special operations teams. If you want to become part of a special ops unit like the Recon Marines, Raiders or Navy SEALs, talk to your commanding officer or career counselor about possible transfers.

[Learn about other branches' elite units as well as other military careers](#) to pursue. [Discover all the ways Military OneSource](#) is your connection to information, answers and support to help you overcome challenges, reach your goals and thrive.



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