



Branches of the Military

The U.S. military consists, in equal parts, of ground soldiers, seaborne soldiers, airborne soldiers, and coastal soldiers. These **federal military jobs** further consist of hierarchical ranks of military officers, along with medical, technical, and administrative staff members. Furthermore, each state has its own military system made up of both army and air-force soldiers it can summon during troubled times. These soldiers are collectively known as the National Guard or the National Reserve. As the largest military in the world, the U.S. military is an economy unto itself in terms of industries and occupations. Each occupation in the civilian economy has its equivalent in the U.S. military, except that the military often imparts more benefits and allowances to the occupation holder.

While most all **military careers** require specialized defense-related knowledge and military field training, these careers do not necessarily entail becoming a **military officer**. The military employs huge numbers of linguists, medics, chaplains, computer programmers, chefs, engineers, educators, writers, photographers, and graphics artists. Even those interested in music have their place in the military, as the famous Marine Band illustrates.

In fact, pledging a commitment to the military will enable people in these professions to receive military funding while pursuing their higher education and training. In most cases, this translates into the soldier entering a Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program at a college or university. In this program, students are eligible for military scholarships as they pursue their bachelor's degree in a military or nonmilitary field. This program also requires going through Basic Camp, a summer program similar to Basic Training, and signing a contract specifying the soldier's duration of service. With so many college students immersed in never-ending debt, these merit-based military scholarships are attracting new recruits in spades.

The military also provides career-counseling services to its newly enlisted soldiers. After completing their form of Basic Training, soldiers pursue an Advanced Individual Training (AIT) program that offers vocational exams to help them narrow down their chosen career. It also gives them openings in the military as they initiate their job search. AIT is composed of multiple schools where students receive training of their choice. For instance, there is a Chemical School for chemists, a Finance Corps School for accountants, and a Quartermaster School for providing food and other provisions during hectic military operations. Naturally, there is an Infantry School for those who want to continue their foot-soldier path, along with Officer Candidate School (OCS) or Officer Training School (OTS) for those who want become military officers. It is fair to say that for each soldier, the military offers a compatible profession.

Besides providing for countless jobs, the military also offers a payment and benefits package that rivals those offered by top-tier companies. As soon as they enlist, soldiers receive compensation for both active-duty and reserve-duty, and allowances for meals, lodging, clothing (both military and civilian), relocation, and for their families during times of active duty. Furthermore, soldiers often receive a comprehensive health insurance plan that covers both themselves and their families. They also receive paid vacation leave for a period of 30 days per year. While the pay may seem on the lower end of the scale (especially if one is a private soldier), these combined benefits and allowances tip the balance to make **military careers** decidedly lucrative.

Those who are struggling to find jobs, especially in this fraught economic period, would do well to consider a military career. The military is likely the most stable institution in the country, as the country will always need a defense system. The military is also always in need for dedicated people. As a business, it is extremely profitable, since the U.S. government pours more money into its national defense than perhaps any other administration. Furthermore, the military provides a remarkably structured career-training program to be found nowhere else in the national economy. The military supports all forms of job-training and considers each of equal importance for promoting national security. It boasts a high record of retention both because people are satisfied with their job compensation, and genuinely enjoy serving their country.

Those who enter **military careers** will also receive ample compensation following their retirement. As veterans, they receive a government pension along with a benefits plan including free or discounted healthcare services. Because the military demands physical and mental fitness above all other qualities, many military workers retire early. This early retirement means that their pension plan could begin once the worker reaches his or her mid-thirties. This allows the plan to accumulate more money than civilian retirement plans that take effect in the mid-sixties. In fact, many retired soldiers



Military Career Feature

have no need to take on a civilian job. Moreover, each soldier's pension plan is individualized, containing enough money to

take care of the cost-of-living in the soldier's surrounding residential area.

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