

EA College Counseling: APPLYING TO SERVICE ACADEMIES



The EA College Counseling team is here to support you in your application to a Service Academy. We expect all candidates to do their research and take ownership of this experience.

The mission of the U.S. Service Academies is to provide instruction and experience to all cadets so that they graduate with the knowledge and character essential to leadership and the motivation to become career officers in the U.S. military.

TIMELINE

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Research what each Academy represents, what branch they serve, and all academic, physical, and administrative requirements.

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Understand the application process and military obligations associated with each academy.

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Attend regional informational meetings or Zoom sessions where you can interact with academy representatives. Schedule on-campus admission tours and information sessions. Fill out the Candidate or Pre-Candidate questionnaire to open your admission file. Apply to a summer program, if applicable. Take the SAT or ACT and submit scores, without accommodations. Contact a representative from the admission office. Contact your Representative and both of your US Senators, and initiate the Congressional Nomination process. Prepare for your Fitness Test.

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Complete your application in the fall. Submit official test scores. Take and submit medical exams. (*Note: there are many medical and medicinal disqualifications. Visit the Academy's website for a full list.*) Submit official transcripts. Finalize nominations and attend nomination interviews.

PROGRAMS *to strengthen your candidacy*

Summer military academy programs are excellent opportunities to fully understand an Academy's academic, military, physical requirements, and social life. To find more information about these programs, please visit individual academies' websites.

Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) programs at "civilian" schools provide officer training and offer college scholarships in exchange for military service. When discussing your college plans with admission officers, demonstrate you are serious about serving in the military by discussing your exploration of ROTC options and how that aligns with your desire to serve. [Learn more on page 3!](#)

Keystone Girls State and **Keystone Boys State** are week-long leadership development programs designed to instill the principles of civic engagement, democracy, and patriotism in attendees. Organized and supported by the American Legion Department of Pennsylvania, these programs may help demonstrate your interest in service and stand out on your application.

a note on MEDICAL CLEARANCES

A fundamental part of military academy admission, **medical clearances** require undergoing a medical history and two examinations. The Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DoDMERB) is the agency responsible for medical clearances. The process requires extra time and effort, especially if a medical waiver request is needed. We recommend thoroughly researching medical disqualifications and waivers, speaking with your medical provider, and, if appropriate, discussing with your service academy representative.

For
NCAA
Recruits

Air Force, Army, and Navy compete at the **Division I** level and adhere to most NCAA Division I rules and regulations. Additional rules and regulations specific to Service Academies may vary by sport. **Coast Guard** and **Merchant Marines** compete at the **Division III** level and adhere to NCAA Division III rules and regulations. Contact the specific sports coach to understand any Academy's athletics program. (*Note: Being an athletics recruit will alter your admissions cycle. All questions and concerns should be directed to your specific coaching contact at the academy recruiting you. The College Counseling team will assist you as needed.*)

FIVE SERVICE ACADEMIES: *Requirements, Benefits, and Commitments*

U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY

(Colorado Springs, CO)

Basic eligibility requirements:

- At least 17 but not past your 23rd birthday by July 1 of the year you enter
- A U.S. citizen of good moral character
- Unmarried with no dependents

Application requirements: Obtain a Congressional nomination; qualify scholastically; take the ACT or SAT; and submit an application.

Benefits: Tuition, room and board, and medical care are fully covered. Students receive a salary and additional benefits.

Commitment: Students sign an "Oath of Allegiance" which states the following service obligations: Complete course of instruction at the Academy, accept appointment, and serve as Commissioned officer in the US Air Force or US Space Force for at least 8 years, 5 of which must be active duty. Graduates who complete pilot training incur a longer commitment of 10 years.

U.S. COAST GUARD ACADEMY

(New London, CT)

Basic eligibility requirements:

- A U.S. citizen of sound moral character
- Unmarried with no dependents or financial debt
- 17-22 years of age on July 1 of the year of entry
- High school graduate or GED recipient prior to entry

Application requirements: Submit an application, Physical Fitness Examination results, and ACT or SAT scores.

Benefits: Cadets receive full tuition, room and board, and a salary.

Commitment: Upon graduation, there is a five-year commitment to serve as a commissioned Coast Guard officer.

U.S. MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY

(Kings Point, NY)

Basic eligibility requirements:

- At least 17 years of age and must not have passed your 25th birthday before July 1 in the year of entry
- A U.S. citizen by birth or naturalization, except for a limited number of international midshipmen authorized by Congress
- Meet the physical, security, suitability, and character requirements for commission in the U.S. Navy Reserve
- Be of good moral character

Application requirements: Obtain a Congressional nomination, take the ACT or SAT; complete a medical evaluation; prepare for the Candidate Fitness Assessment; submit an application; and qualify scholastically.

Benefits: Midshipmen receive tuition, room and board, uniforms, and textbooks at no cost, plus basic medical and dental care.

Commitment: Serve in foreign or domestic commerce and the National defense of the US for at least 5 years following graduation as a: 1) Merchant Marine in US flag fleet; 2) Commissioned officer on Active Duty in US Armed Forces or National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); 3) Employee with the federal Government in a Maritime-related position that serves national security interest; or 4) If no afloat position is available, serve ashore in US maritime-related industry, profession, or marine science.

U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY

(West Point, NY)

Basic eligibility requirements:

- At least 17, but not 23 or older, on July 1 of the year you enter
- A U.S. citizen
- Cannot be married, pregnant, or legally responsible for child support

Application requirements: Obtain a Congressional nomination to the Academy; take the ACT or SAT by the end of junior year; connect with a Field Force representative; submit a completed application; and qualify scholastically.

Benefits: Tuition, room and board, medical, and dental costs are covered. Cadets also receive a salary which covers all fees and leaves them between \$225-625/month in spending money.

Commitment: Graduates serve as officers in the US Army for a minimum of 5 years on active duty (F/T) and an additional 3 years in the reserves (P/T) or Individual Ready Reserve. At the beginning of junior year, cadets take an oath to fulfill their service obligation. Before that time, they may leave West Point without incurring a service obligation.

U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY

(Annapolis, MD)

Basic eligibility requirements:

- A U.S. citizen by 1 July of the year of entry
- At least 17 years of age and not passed 23rd birthday on 1 July of the year of entry
- Cannot be married, pregnant, or legally responsible for child support
- Have a valid Social Security Number

Application requirements: Submit a preliminary application, obtain a Congressional nomination to the Academy; take the ACT or SAT, complete a medical examination, interview, qualify scholastically, and submit a completed application.

Benefits: Tuition, room and board, medical and dental care are fully covered. In addition, students receive a salary which covers laundry, activity fees, barbers, cobblers, yearbook, and other services.

Commitment: Students are midshipmen on Active Duty in the US Navy. They graduate with a B.S. degree and commissions as Ensigns in the Navy or Second Lieutenants in the Marine Corps. Naval Academy graduates must serve at least 5 years in the Navy or Marine Corps.



KEYS TO SUCCESS:

Academics, Leadership, and Physical Fitness

ACADEMICS: While specific requirements vary by branch, prepare for the rigorous academics at any of the Academies by completing a challenging high school curriculum comprised of **4 years of English, math** (with a strong foundation in algebra, up to at least Precalculus, and preferably including Calculus), and **science** (including biology, chemistry, and physics lab courses); **3 years of social studies** (with a course in US history); **2 years** (but preferably 4 years) **of a modern foreign language**; and **1 year of computer science**. Course rigor and grades earned are closely reviewed. Standardized test scores are superscored and required.

LEADERSHIP: The Academies seek students who demonstrate leadership qualities. Get involved with leadership roles at EA (like Student Council, EQV, and being a team/club captain) and in the community. This will provide you with experiences you can address during your candidacy.

PHYSICAL FITNESS: All candidates must pass a fitness test, and almost all cadets earned a varsity letter or equivalent. Demonstrate your ability to meet the Academies' physical and time management demands by partaking in athletic programs, non-athletic extracurricular activities, and part-time employment. Excellent physical condition in high school is a must!

RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS (ROTC)

The Army, Navy, and Air Force offer ROTC programs. After completing ROTC training and graduating from college, students earn a commission, attend Basic Officer Leadership Courses, and enlist in the military.

Benefits: Students interested in ROTC participation without military service commitment can join the program for a limited time, typically 3 semesters. Students who earn the ROTC scholarship in high school will receive 4 years of funding if they remain in the program all 4 years. 2- and 3-year scholarships are available to current college students. Funding and stipends vary by branch and class standing.

Commitment (varies by branch):

- **Air Force ROTC and Space Force ROTC:** When students accept their scholarship (typically fall of sophomore year) they begin their commitment to serving in the Air Force. Cadets who aren't receiving a scholarship are not committed to joining the Air Force until the beginning of their junior year. Most cadets make a four-year, active duty service commitment. Pilots make a 10-year service commitment.
- **Army ROTC:** Students are only obligated to serve if they receive a college scholarship. Students may enroll in ROTC Basic Course during their first two years of college without receiving a scholarship and without incurring a service obligation. Students receiving a 4-year ROTC scholarship, must serve 8 years as an Army officer after graduation, or spend 4 years as an officer and another 4 years with the Individual Ready Reserve, or commission into the National Guard, and complete 6 years of 1 weekend/month, 2 weeks of summer training.
- **Navy ROTC:** Midshipmen who receive Naval ROTC of any duration must serve a minimum of 5 years of active military service (Navy) or 4 years of active duty (Marine Corps and Navy Nurse Corps).

Keep in Mind

When researching any of the Academies, it is essential to start early. Investigate and understand what each academy represents, what branch of the armed services they serve, and what the requirements are going to be academically, physically, medically, and congressionally.



REACH OUT.

The EA College Counseling team is always here to help. If you have any questions along the way, please do not hesitate to reach out to your EA college counselor!