

Steps for the United States Military Academies Application Process

Mission Statement

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.

Eligibility

To be eligible to enter an Academy, you must be:

- A citizen of the United States
- Of good moral character
- Unmarried with no dependents
- At least 17, but less than 23 years of age by July 1 of the year you would enter.

Selections

It takes a well-rounded program of leadership, academic, and athletic preparation to be one of the few who can meet the Service Academies high admission standards and the fierce competitions for appointment. Carefully consider the characteristics of dedication, desire to serve others, ability to accept discipline, sense of duty, and morality, and the enjoyment of challenge in deciding if you want to pursue an Academy education.

Academic Preparation

It is recommended that young persons who aspire to go to one of the service academies take a college preparatory curriculum in high school that stresses English and Math. Also, they should plan on taking the ACT and SAT test as early as possible and more than once.

Physical Preparation

During the admissions process prospective cadets will be given the Candidate Fitness Assessment. All three academies have the same physical fitness events: the basketball throw; pull-ups (men & women) or flexed-arm hang (women); shuttle run; modified sit-ups; push-ups; and the one-mile run. The purpose of these tests is to evaluate a candidate's upper body strength and endurance. Please check with each academy on their specific requirements for the Candidate Fitness Assessment.

General Information

The minimum SAT scores for the academies are 500 verbal and 500 math. The average SAT scores at the academies are 540-620 verbal and 630-710 math. The minimum ACT scores for the academies are 21 English, 19 Social Studies, 24 Mathematics, and 24 Natural Science. The average ACT scores are 23-27 English; 24-29 Social Studies; 27-32 Mathematics; 28-32 Natural Science (minimum and average scores are slightly higher for the Naval Academy). Virtually all cadets are from the top 25% of their high school class.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/vice-president-biden/academy-nominations/steps>

10 TIPS TO GIVE YOU AN EDGE IN GETTING INTO ONE OF THESE ELITE INSTITUTIONS:

1. Get the grades. Ninety percent of cadets were in the top 20% of their class. But, the academies want well-rounded people. Good grades are a starting point, not the finish line.

2. Practice testing. The ACT and SAT are critical. Scores listed under “general Information” on the General Application sheet.

3. Be an athlete. Not everyone is an intercollegiate athlete, but most cadets play intramural sports, face fitness tests and undergo strenuous physical training.

4. Be a leader. The academies are looking for leaders. Participation in clubs and extracurricular activities is not enough. Become a club officer or class officer. Work hard to earn school, athletic and community awards. Awards separate you from the pack.

5. Be involved in the community. Leaders care. Show you care by routinely volunteering or working in community programs.

6. Ace the interview. Your interview with the academy liaison officer is a big deal. You will be asked about citizenship, reasons for attending and even about current events. Read the newspaper before your interview. Practice with your family. Answer in clear, thoughtful sentences.

7. Know your Congressman. You need an official nomination to get into the academies (except the Coast Guard Academy). These come from Senators, Congressmen, the Vice President and the President. Apply to all the sources, but get to personally know the ones you can. Volunteer in their office. Write them letters. Make appointments to see them.

8. Go for more than one. Congressman and Senators have a limited number of nominations for each academy. By considering all four academies you increase your chances of getting in.

9. Attend summer programs. Each academy offers programs for exceptional students during the summer before their senior year. These programs provide an up close look at the academies and what cadet life is like. Your counselor can help you apply.

10. Start now! While the academies don't start official applications until your junior year in high school, you should start early. Write and get the pre-candidate questionnaires and candidate kits. Talk to your high school counselor. Talk to your Congressman. Meet the academy liaison officer for your area. Let everyone know you have a dream and a plan to make it real.

<http://www.military.com/join-armed-forces/us-military-academies-overview.html>

Air Force Academy

www.academyadmissions.com/

- **Location:** Colorado Springs, Colorado
- **Enrollment:** 4,461 (all undergraduate)
- **Nomination Requirement:** From a member of Congress
- **Service Requirement:** Five years in the Air Force

Naval Academy

www.usna.edu/Admissions/

- **Location:** Annapolis, Maryland
- **Enrollment:** 4,441 (all undergraduate)
- **Nomination Requirement:** From a member of Congress
- **Service Requirement:** 5 years or longer

Coast Guard Academy

www.cga.edu/admissions/

- **Location:** New London, Connecticut
- **Enrollment:** 963 (all undergraduate)
- **Nomination Requirement:** None. Admissions are entirely merit-based.
- **Service Requirement:** 5 years in the Coast Guard

Merchant Marine Academy

www.usmma.edu/admissions

- **Location:** Kings Point, New York
- **Enrollment:** 986 (all undergraduate)
- **Nomination Requirement:** From a member of Congress
- **Service Requirement:** At least 5 years

West Point

www.usma.edu/admissions

- **Location:** West Point, New York
- **Enrollment:** 4,487 (all undergraduate)
- **Nomination Requirement:** From a member of Congress
- **Service Requirement:** 5 years in the Army; 3 years in the Reserves