

LIFE IN THE MILITARY

LIFE IN THE
**US AIR
FORCE**

by Douglas Hustad



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For more information, contact:
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AT A GLANCE

- The US Air Force protects the United States in the air.
- The US Air Force is one of the youngest military branches. It was formed in 1947.
- Both male and female members of the air force are called airmen. Some airmen are pilots. Pilots need special training. The process to become a pilot is competitive.
- The process of joining the air force is called enlisting. People can become enlisted airmen or officers. Their position depends on their level of education and training.
- Recruits must go through basic training. This training takes several weeks.

HOW DO PEOPLE JOIN THE AIR FORCE?

People join the air force for many reasons. Some people want to be pilots. Others want to get training for a future job. The air force also helps people pay for college. This benefit draws many people to the air force. Others just want to defend their country.



Recruiters help future airmen find out whether the air force is right for them.

The process of joining the air force is called enlisting. People who enlist are called recruits. The enlisting process often starts with a visit to a recruiter. Air force recruiters are located around the country. They are airmen. They can answer

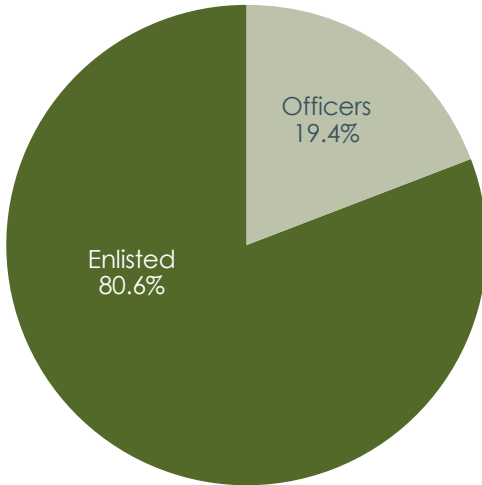
recruits' questions. They guide recruits through the enlistment process.

People can join the air force as enlisted airmen or officers. This decision depends on their schooling and career goals. Enlisted airmen are ranked lower than officers.

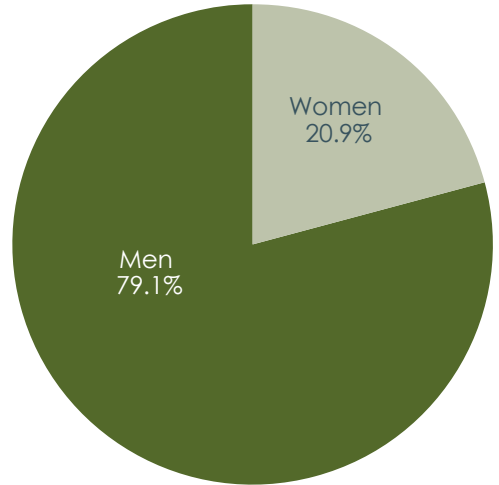
Officers lead enlisted airmen. They often have more specialized jobs.

Most people join as enlisted airmen. They do not need a college degree. They must be between seventeen and thirty-nine years old. They must be US citizens or permanent residents. Permanent residents have the legal right to live in the United States.

The Makeup of the Air Force



Officers vs. Enlisted



Women vs. Men

"Military Demographics," US Air Force, January 1, 2020. www.afpc.af.mil.

The US Air Force is made up of more enlisted airmen than officers. More than three-quarters of the people in the US Air Force are men.

Recruits must also have a high school degree or a General Education Diploma.

People who want to become officers have to meet the same requirements. But they must also have a college degree.



The US Air Force Academy is known for its famous chapel.

This can be a degree from any traditional college. Officer recruits do additional training after they earn a degree. Then they can enter the air force.

Officer recruits can go to the US Air Force Academy. This school is in Colorado Springs, Colorado. It is very tough to get

Officer Training School (OTS). They receive special training at OTS.

BASIC MILITARY TRAINING

Enlisted air force recruits go through BMT. This training happens at Lackland Air Force Base (AFB). This base is in San Antonio, Texas. The program lasts about

LACKLAND AFB

Training at Lackland AFB is older than the US Air Force itself. The first recruits arrived at Lackland on February 4, 1946. Back then, the air force was still part of the US Army. It was known as the US Army Air Forces. The US Air Force became its own military branch on September 18, 1947.

GLOSSARY

altitude

height above the ground

civilian

someone who is not in the military

cyberspace

having to do with the internet

discipline

carefully controlled behavior

jet

a type of aircraft engine in which burning fuel makes a stream of gas that propels the plane forward

recruits

people who are new to the military

satellites

machines that fly in space around Earth and have a useful purpose

veteran

someone who served in the military

SOURCE NOTES

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