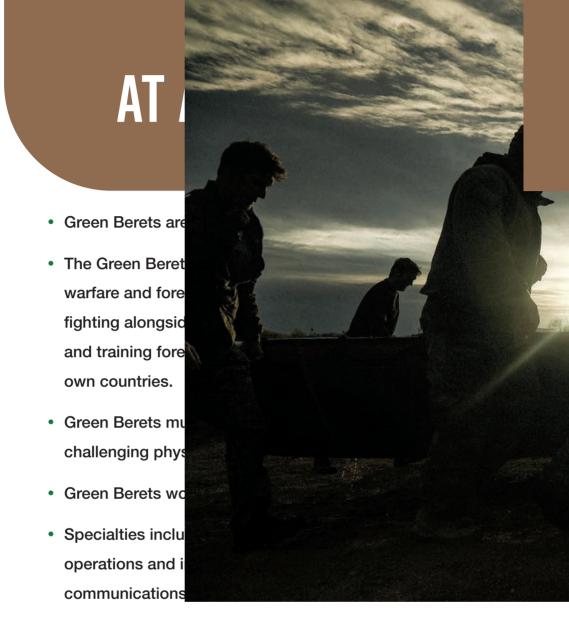


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- Green Berets adapt equipment, weapons, and vehicles for their special missions.
- Many Green Berets work in groups such as dive teams. These groups receive additional training.



- Green Berets have worked in more than eighty countries.
- Green Berets are known for their ability to work with and train soldiers in different languages and cultures.

BECOMING A GREEN BERET

E ach year, approximately 3,000 soldiers begin Green Beret training. Candidates must be US citizens. They must join the Army or National Guard. Candidates need high scores in reading and math on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). This series of tests covers science, math, reading, and more. They must also qualify for a security clearance. Government

officials check each candidate's past.

They also talk to friends, family, and past employers about the candidate's character.

Candidates first enter the Special
Operations Preparation Course (SOPC).
This lasts two weeks for enlisted soldiers
and three weeks for National Guard or

In addition to traditional academics, the ASVAB measures knowledge in electronics, mechanics, and assembling objects.





The ability to work well as part of a team is just as important as individual skills in the Green Berets.

newly enlisted candidates. The SOPC focuses on physical fitness training and basic skills such as navigation. The course prepares candidates for the Special Forces Assessment and Selection (SFAS) course. The SFAS is designed to weed out candidates who don't have the physical or mental strength to become a Green Beret.

The first part of the SFAS tests physical ability. Candidates march, swim, and do push-ups and sit-ups. The second part of the SFAS tests a soldier's ability to work as part of a team. Some exercises test the candidate's ability to think while stressed and exhausted. Many exercises require creative solutions. Candidates must use the energy and resources they have to make a situation work.

Typically, fewer than half of all SFAS class members qualify to move on to Green Beret training. In one 2021 class, 44 percent made it through. Sergeant 1st Class Philip A. Taraska explains that trainers "are looking for humble individuals who care about the mission and have no concern for awards."²

THE Q COURSE

The Special Forces Qualification Course is commonly called the Q course. The Army adapts the course to the needs of the military. At times, the course takes almost two years to complete. In 2019, the course was shortened to about six months. Major General Kurt Sonntag explains, "Today's [old] qualification course is for exactly the

type of Green Beret we needed for 2008. It is not what we need for 2028."³

During the Q course, enlisted candidates receive training in their specialty area.

The five specialties are weapons, medical, communications, intelligence, and engineering. Officer candidates receive some training in each specialty plus leadership training.

One Q course is small unit tactics.

Candidates learn to work with other

WOMEN WEAR THE GREEN BERET

Captain Kathleen Wilder completed the Q course in 1980. But she was not allowed to graduate. The US Army did not open combat jobs for women until 2016. In 2020, the first woman joined the Green Berets. Her name was not released for security reasons.

GLOSSARY

amputations

removing limbs with surgery

guerrillas

members of a small group of fighters who fight in nonconventional ways

infrastructure

the basic structures of an area, including buildings, roads, and bridges

marksmanship

skill in shooting

optics

devices used to precisely aim a weapon

recruit

to enlist people into the armed forces

sabotaging

destroying something for political or military gain

turret

a rotating structure on a vehicle that protects a gun mounted inside it

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