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10 STEPS TO JOINING THE MILITARY

Step 2: Decide if you're ready

Eligibility Basics

Eligibility rules can be a little confusing. There are different rules for enlisting and for officer programs.

Enlisting: Enlisted members do the hands-on work of the military. They need at least a high school degree (a GED may or may not suffice).

Officer: Officers are the managers of the military. Most officer programs require a college degree at minimum, and are very competitive. Many officers have master's or higher degrees.

Before you visit your local recruiter, be sure you meet the minimum qualifications for serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. Some qualifications are required by all five services:

- You must be a U.S. citizen or resident alien.
- You must be at least 17 years old (17-year old applicants require parental consent).
- You must (with very few exceptions) have a high school diploma.
- You must pass a physical medical exam.

[10 Steps to Joining the Military](#)

Step 2: Decide if you're ready

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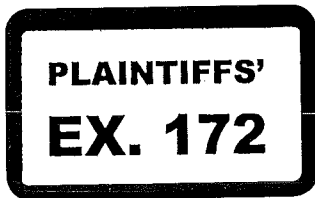
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For each branch, there are slightly different enlistment requirements:

To join the...	You must:
Air Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be between the ages of 17-27. * • Have no more than two dependents. • Pass the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude test. (Minimum AFQT Score: 40)
Army	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be between the ages of 17-34. * • Have no more than two dependents. • Pass the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude test. (Minimum AFQT Score: 31)
Coast Guard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be between the ages of 17- 39* • Have no more than two dependents. • Pass the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test. (Minimum AFQT Score:45) • Have a willingness to serve on or around the water.
Marines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet exacting physical, mental, and moral standards. • Be between the ages of 17-29. * • Pass the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test. (Minimum AFQT Score: 32) • Women are eligible to enlist in all occupational exception of combat arms specialties: infantry, tank and amphibian tractor crew members.
Navy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be between the ages of 17-34. * • Pass the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test. (Minimum AFQT Score: 35) • Women are eligible to enlist in all occupational fields, with the exception of serving in the Navy Seals or on submarines.

** Age limits vary based on active-duty, prior service or reserve. In addition, 17-year old applicants require parental consent.*

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