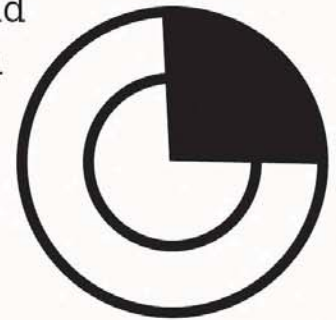


AIR FORCE AIRMAN



JOB DESCRIPTION

Air Force airmen fly some of the most advanced aircraft in the world. They provide defense and safety for national airspace, serving at home and abroad. Airmen operate weapons and perform defense tactics for air and ground targets. From conducting search and rescue missions to giving humanitarian aid, airmen serve one of the most powerful military operations in the world.



SALARY

Enlisted airman ★★★★★
Chief of staff ★★★★★

INDUSTRY PROFILE

Highly competitive entry • With a small force and a large number of applicants, there are fewer opportunities, which can result in a wait for joining this branch of the military

▼ RELATED CAREERS

- ▶ **AIRLINE PILOT** *see pp. 214–215*
- ▶ **ARMY SOLDIER** *see pp. 230–231*
- ▶ **HELICOPTER PILOT** Flies helicopters and can choose from a variety of work such as cargo delivery, law enforcement, firefighting, search and rescue, emergency medical services, and aerial photography. Training is expensive and working hours can be irregular. Fewer companies operate helicopters than planes; opportunities are scarce.

The first female fighter pilot in the US Air Force entered training in 1993.

AT A GLANCE



YOUR INTERESTS Aviation • Serving your country • Mathematics • Engineering • Technology • Firefighting



ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS Age, education, and residency requirements must be met in order to join the military. Physical and written exams are required.



LIFESTYLE The job is highly varied, with a range of intellectual and physical demands. Working hours are long when on operations.



LOCATION Airmen live, work, and train on or near military bases and facilities around the globe. They can expect to travel anywhere in the world.



THE REALITIES Navigating top-secret missions is stressful and high-risk. Airmen work long hours and are away from home and family often.

CAREER PATHS

Some specialized positions require additional training and qualifications. Airmen can advance to senior roles that might include commanding an air base, making tactical decisions, or liaising with government officials. After leaving the armed forces, airmen may choose to retrain as commercial pilots or instructors.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE

You must have a high school diploma or a GED with 15 or more college credits to enlist in the US Air Force. Strong math and English skills are necessary for passing the military's entrance exam.

COLLEGE GRADUATE

With a college degree, you are able to enter the Air Force as an officer. Some specialties may require a master's degree.



AIR FORCE AIRMAN You begin your training with Basic Combat Training (BCT); airmanship skills are taught along with conditioning to become physically fit. After BCT, airmen become experts in their fields of choice by attending Air Force Technical Training.



SPACE SYSTEMS OPERATIONS SPECIALIST

Detects sea-launched ballistic missiles, and tracks satellites to assist in rocket launches and space flight operations.



COMBAT RESCUE OFFICER

Organizes and strategizes recovery missions. Conducts rescue and recovery operations to evacuate injured servicemen from the front lines.



AIRCRAFT LOADMASTER

Loads aircraft and ensures passengers or cargo arrive safely at their destination. May participate in air deliveries using parachutes.



FUELS SPECIALIST

Receives, stores, and tracks all fuel for vehicles and aircraft on a daily basis. Maintains the facility where the fuel is stored; ensures planes and helicopters are properly fueled before they head out on a mission.

SKILLS GUIDE



The ability to communicate critical, often very technical information clearly and quickly.



The ability to create an effective work unit while supporting the objectives of a team.



Flexibility and readiness to carry out training and missions, often at a moment's notice.



An analytical approach and the ability to solve problems quickly and think clearly under stress.



Capability of meeting the many physical and mental challenges that come with air operations.



Attention to detail and precise thinking to fly advanced aircraft and correctly carry out orders.