Navy Speak

Navy Acronyms

APG
Advanced Pay Grade
Opportunity to advance to a higher pay grade based on previously obtained experience.

ASVAB
Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery
Test administered by the military to determine qualification for enlistment in the armed forces.
Learn more >

BMT
Basic Military Training
Initial instruction given to new military personnel.
Learn more >

BS
Battle Stations
The final test at Boot Camp that determines the passage to becoming a U.S. Navy Sailor. On board ship, a location and conditions to respond to when under attack or experiencing an emergency such as a fire.

BUD/S
Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL
A SEAL training course that develops mental and physical stamina as well as leadership skills.
Learn more >

BUPERS
Bureau of Navy Personnel
Organization served to provide administrative leadership, policy planning and general oversight of the Navy.
CB
Construction Battalion (Seabees)
The Navy community of construction workers.
Learn more >

CDR
Commander
Navy Senior Officer rank (0–5).

CEC
Civil Engineer Corps
Officer corps that oversees the construction, renovation, maintenance and building of Navy projects all over the world.
Learn more >

CNO
Chief of Naval Operations
The highest ranking Officer in the U.S. Navy.

CO
Commanding Officer
A commissioned Navy Officer in charge of a designated Navy command.

CTI
Cryptologic Technicians Interpretive
Navy linguists tasked to gather highly classified intelligence information for the Navy’s top-level decision makers using foreign language skills.
Learn more >

DEP
Delayed Entry Program
Program that allows recruits to join the Navy but postpone reporting for duty for up to a year.
Learn more >

DLA
Dislocation Allowance
Money provided to Sailors to aid in moves from one duty station to another.

DMI
Departmental Material Inspection
An inspection of bed making, folding and stowing of gear.

DOD
Department of Defense
Federal department in charge of organizing and supervising all agencies related directly to national defense, specifically the Armed Forces.
DON
Department of the Navy
Department established by Congress to provide support and leadership to the U.S. Navy.

DT
Dental Technician
Enlisted Sailor tasked with assisting Navy Dentists in providing dental care to Navy personnel and their families.
Learn more >

EAOS
End of Active Obligated Service
Date at which one’s Naval service has been officially completed.

ENL
Enlisted
Rank achieved by Sailors who have completed the minimum educational requirement of a high school diploma.
Learn more >

EOD
Explosive Ordnance Disposal
Technicians tasked to safely dispose of explosive materials.
Learn more >

FAC
Forward Air Controller
An individual who directs the action of military aircraft engaged in close air support of land forces.

HM
Hospital Corpsman
Enlisted Sailor tasked with assisting Navy Medical Officers in providing medical care to Navy and Marine Corps personnel and their families.
Learn more >

IT
Information Technology
Naval community made up of communications experts who process, transmit and analyze a wide variety of data.
Learn more >

JAG
Judge Advocate General
Corps that provides legal services and advice in all legal matters involving the Navy or the Command.
Learn more >
JTF
Joint Task Force
The combination of more than one military service.

LSO
Landing Signal Officer
Naval Aviators specifically trained to facilitate the safe recovery of aircraft aboard aircraft carriers.

MCPON
Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy
The senior most Enlisted member of the U.S. Navy.

MEPS
Military Entrance Processing Station
Station where recruits take the ASVAB, physical exam, select a rating and take the Oath of Enlistment.
Learn more >

MSC
Medical Service Corps
Navy Officer corps consisting of health-care administrators, optometrists, pharmacists, scientists and other specialized practitioners.
Learn more >

NEX
The Navy Exchange
A department store for military personnel and their families.

NFO
Naval Flight Officer
Officer who specializes in aircraft weapons and sensor systems (2nd seat in the cockpit).
Learn more >

NPS
Non-Prior Service
Someone without any previous military experience.

NRC
Navy Recruiting Command
Main headquarters for Navy recruiting, located in Millington, Tennessee.

NROTC
Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps
A college scholarship program used to recruit future commissioned Officers for the Navy and Marine Corps.
Learn more >
**NSAWC**  
Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center  
Center that provides training and service to aircrews and squadrons.

**OCS**  
Officer Candidate School  
A 12-week training program designed to give Officers a working knowledge of the Navy. It is the equivalent to Officer Boot Camp.

**OIC**  
Officer in Charge  
A commissioned Navy Officer in charge of an organization, facility or function, responsible for a group of Officers and Sailors in the organization.

**PAO**  
Public Affairs Officer  
Officer responsible for preparing and disseminating information relative to military operations through news releases, photographs, radio and television, and other informational material. [Learn more >]

**PFA**  
Physical Fitness Assessment  
A required basic physical test conducted to determine the physical fitness of Navy personnel.

**PI**  
Personal Inspections  
An inspection of a recruit’s personal appearance and uniform.

**PIR**  
Pass In Review  
Boot Camp graduation. Bring tissues!

**PRD**  
Projected Rotation Date  
Date on which a Navy Officer or Sailor’s next duty station is established based on their pay grade and community.

**PRT**  
Physical Readiness Test  
A required basic physical test conducted to determine the physical fitness of Navy personnel.

**RDC**  
Recruit Drill/Division Commander  
Sailor responsible for training recruits at the Navy Recruit Training Command (RTC).

**RL**  
Restricted Line  
A Line Officer is a commissioned Officer who is not eligible for sea command.
RTC
Recruit Training Command
Campus located in Great Lakes, Illinois, where Navy recruits train to become Sailors. Also known as Boot Camp.
Learn more >

SEAL
Sea-Air-Land (Team)
Members of the Navy Special Operations Force who specialize in direct action and special reconnaissance missions.
Learn more >

SECNAV
Secretary of the Navy
Civilian head of the Department of the Navy, responsible for conducting all affairs related to the Department.

SIQ
Sick In Quarters
Term used when a medical condition or injury is such that in-hospital care is not required to return the patient to a full- or limited-duty status.

SWCC
Special Warfare Combatant-Craft Crewman (pronounced: swick)
Navy Special Operations Force member who operates the inventory of boats used for mission support.
Learn more >

SWO
Surface Warfare Officer
Navy Officer corps who pilot, operate and manage a surface ship such as destroyers and cruisers.
Learn more >

TAD
Temporary Additional Duty
A temporary assignment of additional duty.

UCMJ
Uniform Code of Military Justice
The foundation of all military law in the United States, applicable to all members of uniformed services of the United States.

URL
Unrestricted Line Officer
Officer of the line in the U.S. Navy who is qualified to command ships, subs and aviation units and can rise to high Navy leadership positions such as CNO.
**USN**
United States Navy
The sea branch of the U.S. Armed Forces.
[Learn more >](#)

**USNA**
United States Naval Academy
The undergraduate college in Annapolis, Maryland, that educates and commissions Navy Officers and Marine Corps Officers.

**WSO**
Weapons System Officer
Specific to the F/A-18F and F/A-18D aircrafts, an Officer who specializes in airborne weapons and sensor systems.
[Learn more >](#)

**XO**
Executive Officer
Naval Officer who is second in command, reporting to the Commanding Officer (CO).

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**Navy Terms**

**ADrift**
Loose from moorings and out of control. Applied to anything lost or out of hand.

**AFT**
Towards the stern (tail) of a ship.

**ALL HANDS**
The entire ship’s company, both Officer and Enlisted.

**ALLOTMENT**
An amount of money a Sailor has coming out of regular pay.

**AYE, AYE**
Response acknowledging the understanding of a command/statement.

**BARRACKS**
A building where Sailors live when ashore.
BELOW
Downstairs, like the next deck below.

BLACKSHOE
Non-aviation rate for Enlisted personnel as well as Officers. A “shoe” is a ship driver/Surface Warfare Officer.

BLUE NOSE
A Sailor who has crossed either the Arctic or Antarctic Circle. Also applies to Officers.

BOW
The forward part of a ship or boat.

BRIGHTWORK
Brass or shiny metal kept polished rather than painted.

BROWNSHOE
Aviation rate Enlisted personnel.

BULKHEAD
The wall.

BUNK
A bed.

BUOY
An anchored float used as an aid to navigation or to mark the location of an object.

CARRY ON
An order to resume work or duties.

CAST OFF
To throw off, to let go, to unfurl.

CHAIN Locker
Compartment in which anchor chain is stowed.

CHIT
Forms used to request taking leave, a day off, etc.

CHIT BOOK
Coupon or receipt booklet.

CHOW HALL
(MESS DECK) A place to eat.
COLORS
Raising and lowering of the National Ensign, the American flag and organization flags.

CUP OF JOE
A cup of coffee. Named after Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy 1913–1921, who under General Order 99 in June 1914 prohibited the use of alcohol on board U.S. Navy ships.

DECK
The floor.

DEEP SIX
To dispose of or throw away.

ENSIGN
The rank of an Officer between Chief Warrant Officer and Lieutenant Junior Grade.

FAST
Snugly secured.

FATHOM
A unit of length equal to 6 feet used for measuring the depth of water.

FIELD DAY
Full-blown cleaning, sort of like spring cleaning in overdrive.

FIRST LIEUTENANT
The Officer responsible to the XO for the deck department/division aboard ship.

FLAG OFFICER
Any commissioned Officer in pay grade 0–7 or above.

GALLEY
The kitchen.

GANGWAY
An opening in the bulwark or lifeline that provides access to a brow or accommodation ladder; when shouted means to get out of the way.

GEAR LOCKER
A storage room.

GEEDUNK
Candy, gum or cafeteria, sometimes called pogey bait.

GENERAL QUARTERS
Battle Stations.
GRAD AND GO
A Boot Camp graduate who leaves for the next duty station three hours after graduation.

GROUND TACKLE
The equipment used in mooring or anchoring a ship.

HATCH
The door.

HEAD
The restroom.

JACK BOX
Access box to sound-powered phone circuitry.

LADDER
A device to move personnel from one level to another. Stairs.

LEAVE
Authorized absence, like vacation.

LIBERTY
Permission to leave the base, usually for not more than 48 hours.

LIFELINE
Lines erected around the weather decks of a ship to prevent personnel from falling or being washed over the side.

MARLINSPIKE
A life-size model ship where recruits practice mooring, line handling, putting out to sea and other aspects of basic seamanship.

MESS DECK
The crew’s dining area.

MESS DUTY
A 90-day obligated duty working on the mess decks when first reporting aboard. (aka MESS-CRANK’N)

MID-WATCH
The midnight watch, the most dreaded watch because one loses the most sleep out of the rotation.

NAVY RESERVE
Reserve component of the U.S. Navy in which part-time Sailors and Officers are called into Active Duty, or mobilized, as needed.

Learn more >
OMBUDSMAN
Volunteer who is the well-trained link between Sailors and their families.

OVERHEAD
The ceiling.

P-DAYS
“Processing days.” When recruits first arrive at Boot Camp, they are issued initial equipment, uniforms and supplies.

PASSAGEWAY
A hallway.

PORT
A place on a waterway with facilities for loading and unloading ships.

PORT SIDE
The left side of a nautical vessel.

QUARTERS
Assembling all hands for muster. Also refers to a home on base, a residence.

RACK
A bed.

RATING
A job specialty title.

REVEILLE
A signal signifying the start of a work day.

RICKY
A recruit.

SCULLERY
A place to wash dishes.

SCUTTLEBUTT
Originally meant to describe a water fountain. Quickly became a place Sailors would gather and talk. Term now used primarily for rumors and rumor control.

SECURE
To stop or quit work.

SICK BAY
Medical facility located in a hospital, aid station or on board ship.
SNIPES
Anyone who works in the Engineering department.

STARBOARD
The right side of a nautical vessel.

STERN
The aft part (rear) of a ship or boat.

SWEEPERS
Cleaning ritual that involves sweeping assigned areas.

SWAB
A mop.

TAPS
Lights out, time for sleep.

TURN TO
Begin work.

WORKING ALOFT
Working above the highest deck, generally performing maintenance on the ship’s mast.