

**YOUR GREATNESS
IS NOT WHAT
YOU HAVE,**

**BUT WHAT YOU
WILL GIVE**



BASIC TRAINING SURVIVAL GUIDE

**WHAT TO EXPECT, WHAT YOU'LL LEARN
AND WHAT IT TAKES**

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**BCT LASTS FOR 10 WEEKS
AND IS HELD AT ONE OF
THESE LOCATIONS:**

- Fort Benning, GA
- Fort Jackson, SC
- Fort Leonard Wood, MO
- Fort Sill, OK

After you officially join, you will be told which of these locations you've been assigned to.

**SEE FOR YOURSELF
WHAT BCT IS REALLY LIKE AT
NationalGuard.com/Experience-Basic**

**10 WEEKS
THAT WILL
CHANGE
YOUR LIFE**

Once you've decided to join the Guard, passed the eligibility requirements and taken the oath, the next step on your journey from civilian to Soldier is Basic Combat Training (BCT). While physical fitness training is a big part of it, BCT is not all about push-ups and sit-ups. You'll also learn the benefits of discipline in all you do. You'll learn core Army Values, along with critical combat and occupational skills. You'll learn to depend on your fellow Soldiers. You'll earn their trust as well.

Following is some information and insights into the Basic Training experience. We're providing this guide as a source to help you decide whether becoming a Soldier is the right path for you.

Yes, the physical and mental training is rigorous. On the other hand, the rewards are extraordinary and last a lifetime.

FIRST STOP: RECEPTION BATTALION

Reception Battalion is also known as Week Zero. Here, you'll undergo blood testing, get hearing and vision exams, and be screened for pregnancy and tuberculosis. You'll receive immunizations and undergo a dental exam and X-rays. And you'll fill out forms. Memorize your social security number before you get on the bus to Basic.



At Reception Battalion, you'll receive items such as ear plugs, eyewear and sunscreen that help you maintain a state of medical readiness.



HERE'S A TYPICAL RECEPTION BATTALION SCHEDULE:

ZERO DAY

DAY 1

AMNESTY BRIEF:

When you arrive, you'll be told what you can and cannot have at Reception Battalion. This will be your last chance to get rid of any prohibited items without being penalized.

MILITARY RECORD KEEPING:

With the paperwork you brought with you, you'll set up the medical, financial and personnel records that will last for your entire military career.

PAY STATION:

After getting up at 5 a.m. and eating breakfast in the chow hall, you'll go to the Pay Station to receive your ID card if you don't already have one.

CIF (CENTRAL ISSUING FACILITY):

Here, you'll be issued your first Army equipment, including your uniform. Your civilian clothes will be returned to you after Basic.

MEDICAL EXAMS:

You'll take a general medical exam, including a blood test. Females will have a blood test for pregnancy, and then a regular blood test on Day 2.

BRIEFINGS:

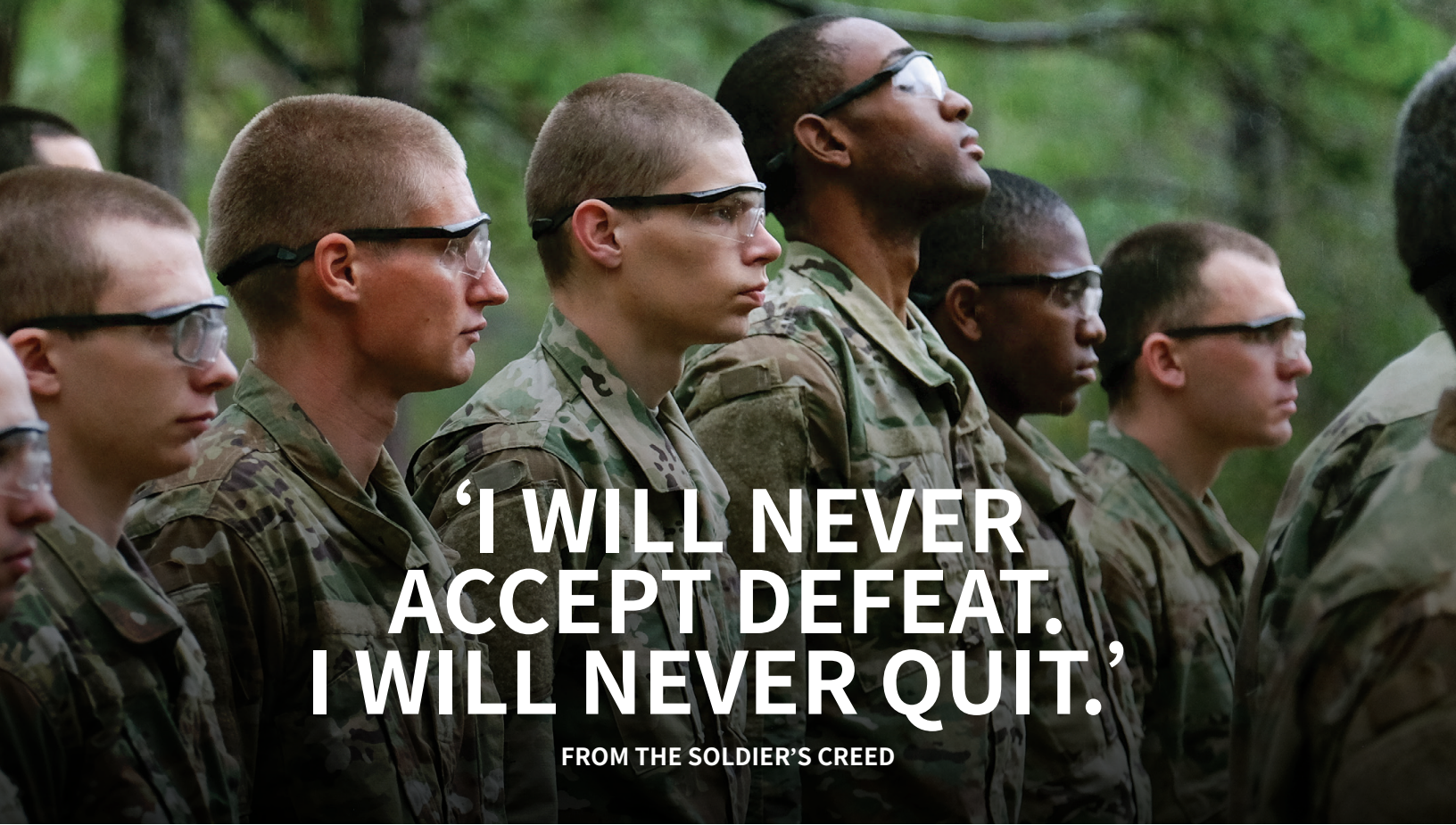
You'll be briefed on the GI Bill, Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) and the Reserve Component. You'll also have a "Moment of Truth" briefing, in which you need to disclose any obligations you haven't dealt with.

GENERAL ORIENTATION:

This station will introduce you to some Army basics, such as the chaplain's role, the Red Cross, the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), company policies and managing your personal affairs.

PX (POST EXCHANGE):

If you don't have items you need for BCT, you'll be able to buy them here. During in-processing, your feet will be evaluated for the proper type of running shoes. You may be told to purchase a new pair.



‘I WILL NEVER ACCEPT DEFEAT. I WILL NEVER QUIT.’

FROM THE SOLDIER’S CREED

DAY 2

VACCINATIONS:

You’ll get up to six vaccination shots—measles, mumps, diphtheria, flubicillin, rubella and smallpox.

VISION AND DENTAL EXAM:

You’ll have a general vision checkup, along with a dental exam (including X-rays). At the dental exam, you’ll be issued a protective mouth guard, which you’ll use during certain BCT training exercises.

PERSONAL AFFAIRS DIVISION:

Here, you’ll review your personal affairs and verify that everything is complete. If anything remains unresolved by the time you get here, it can be a stumbling block, so make sure you’ve settled your affairs before you get to Reception Battalion.

DAY 3

EYEGLASSES/INSERT LENSES PROVIDED:

If you need glasses, they’ll be made on site. You’ll receive two pairs of glasses, plus insert lenses for your protective mask.

PHOTOS, YEARBOOK, BCT VIDEO AND RING:

You’ll be photographed in military uniform for the yearbook. At this station, you might be given the option to pay in advance for a yearbook, BCT video or graduation ring.

DAYS 4-5

FINAL PROCESSING:

If everything is complete, you’ll get assigned to a unit and ship on Day 4. If you missed anything for any reason, you’ll do it on this day and then ship on Day 5. Before you ship, you’ll clean the barracks, get your ID tags and stencil your name on your bags.

THIS IS WHERE HAIRCUTS HAPPEN.

If you don’t already have a standard military haircut, this is where you’ll get one. You’ll also be issued your uniforms: one for physical fitness training and an Army Combat Uniform (ACU). You’ll receive footwear and other items. What’s more, you’ll be taught how to properly wear your clothing. It sounds elementary, but you’ll be surprised at what you don’t know about getting dressed, Army style.

MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION

The Army has strict rules about appearance that you should know before you show up for BCT. You don't want the first drill sergeant you meet to single you out as an example. That almost never goes well. Personal appearance is important from the very first day. It demonstrates pride and self-discipline, and it helps to build camaraderie in your unit. If you don't think this is true, it honestly doesn't matter. At this point, it's all about what the Army thinks. Specifically, it's about what your drill sergeant thinks.

HERE ARE A FEW ARMY POLICIES REGARDING YOUR APPEARANCE:

JEWELRY

You are allowed to wear up to two rings with your uniform, as long as they are tasteful. Some units may allow you to wear a wristwatch. You can wear a religious medal on a chain around your neck provided neither the medal nor chain can be seen. Earrings can be worn, but they should not exceed one-fourth inch in diameter and must be unadorned and spherical. Females may wear earrings only as a matched pair, with only one stud earring per earlobe.

BODY PIERCING

Other than earrings, no jewelry or ornamentation attached or affixed to or through the skin may be worn while in uniform. If you're on a military base, you also cannot wear such items when you are out of uniform.

COSMETICS

Males are prohibited from wearing cosmetics unless medically prescribed. Females may wear cosmetics with their uniforms, as long as they are applied modestly and conservatively. It's a good idea to avoid pushing the boundaries of these admittedly subjective standards when you show up for BCT testing. You'll need to comply with the cosmetics policy while in uniform or in civilian clothes while on duty.

FINGERNAILS

Every Soldier is expected to keep fingernails clean and neatly trimmed. For males, the nails should not extend beyond the fingertips. Females should not let their fingernails extend one-fourth inch beyond the tips of their fingers. If a commander determines nails present a safety, image or job performance concern, they may require that you cut your nails shorter.

TATTOOS

Tattoos that can be considered extremist, indecent, sexist or racist cannot be worn anywhere on a Soldier's body. Tattoos also cannot be worn on the head, face, wrists or hands. And tattoos cannot be covered by bandages or cosmetics to avoid violating Army policy.

In addition to making sure your appearance meets the standards, your superiors will study your actions and your ability to follow instructions from the day you arrive. This is a good time to learn to focus on details. This skill is going to be key to your success in BCT.



YOUR EAGLE CASH CARD

At Reception Battalion, you'll receive a stored value card that includes an advance amount of \$350. You can use the card at Exchange Service sites instead of using cash or writing checks. You're encouraged to spend the full amount before your training is over, but if there's a balance left, it will be returned to you.

MEET YOUR BATTLE BUDDY

When you arrive at Basic Training, you will be assigned a partner, or what the Army calls a battle buddy. The purpose is to give you the chance to provide encouragement and reinforcement to a fellow Soldier and receive the same in return. Here are a few rules that you should take very seriously:

- Never abandon your battle buddy—on or off duty
- Never let your battle buddy go into an office or room alone
- Keep your battle buddy safe
- Pass information to your battle buddy
- Encourage your battle buddy to train harder and do better, and expect the same in return
- Help your battle buddy solve problems
- Inform superiors of any changes in your battle buddy's behavior

IT'S TIME TO TRAIN

Once you complete the Reception Battalion stage, you'll be assigned to a training company. Drill sergeants will come to get you and bring you to your assigned BCT company location. Males and females will sleep in separate bays, or living spaces.

At some point, you may be told to line up your bag in a certain way to see if you can follow instructions. Then you'll be ordered to empty your bag. If any contraband falls out, this will be your first opportunity to see a drill sergeant, well, express disappointment.



**“YES,
DRILL SERGEANT.”**
**“NO,
DRILL SERGEANT.”**

There's a proper way to address your superiors in the Guard, and you'll start learning them right away with your drill sergeants. Remember that they are responsible for shaping you into a Soldier. They coach, counsel and mentor along the way. Show them and their position the respect they deserve by answering them with a strong **“Yes, Drill Sergeant”** or **“No, Drill Sergeant.”**

YOUR TRAINING COMPANY—A WHO'S WHO

Part of your training will be to learn the different ranks of leadership and understand who you'll report to and what their responsibilities are at BCT.

Drill sergeants and cadre (all the non drill sergeant personnel assigned to the company) will in-process you and assign you to a platoon. A platoon is a group of 60 Soldiers and three drill sergeants.

The company commander (captain) is in charge, establishes policy and has legal

discipline authority over all company personnel.

The first sergeant (1SG) assists the commander and supervises the drill sergeants as well as other company personnel.

The training officer/executive officer (XO) maintains your training records and coordinates daily training schedules.



CONQUER BASIC TRAINING IN THREE PHASES

Basic Training is divided into three phases. Each phase includes a physical fitness test and is designed to challenge your body and mind. The completion of each stage is a notable achievement and signifies an important milestone in your young Guard career.

RED PHASE

In this phase, also known as Patriot Phase, you'll learn the fundamentals of soldiering. Things like discipline, values and teamwork. You will participate in physical readiness training, road marches and confidence-building exercises. You'll learn first aid and participate in hand-to-hand combat and guerrilla exercises. Most of your classroom training occurs during Red Phase. You'll study Army heritage, Army traditions and the seven core Army Values. Occasionally, you may be assigned tasks such as guarding your barracks overnight. Red Phase introduces you to the intensity of Army training and prepares you for the challenges to come in the next two phases.

A TYPICAL DAY'S SCHEDULE DURING BCT

This is a general outline; your actual schedule may be different. But this is no 9–5 job.

0500 – First Call

0530 – Physical Readiness Training

0630 – Breakfast

0830 – Training

1200 – Lunch

1300 – Training

1700 – Dinner

1800 – Drill sergeant time

2030 – Personal time

2130 – Lights out

If you don't recognize these times, it's because it's what's known as military time. You'll want to learn this system ASAP.

WHITE PHASE

Your physical training will continue, of course. In White Phase, you'll also learn rifle marksmanship and qualify with your assigned weapon. You'll learn Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills—basic Soldier skills necessary to meet the needs of the U.S. Army. Put your heart and soul into it, and your confidence will continue to grow. You'll earn your rifle qualification badge when you successfully complete White Phase.

WARRIOR TASKS AND BATTLE DRILLS

While you're in the Reception Battalion, you will receive a copy of the "Soldier's Manual of Common Tasks, Warrior Skills." Here's an early look at the skills you'll learn in BCT:

SHOOT

- Maintain, employ and engage targets with individually assigned weapon systems
- Employ hand grenades

MOVE

- Perform individual movement techniques
- Navigate from one point to another using a map and compass
- Move as a member of a team

COMMUNICATE

- Perform voice communications
- Use visual signaling techniques

SURVIVE

- React to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear attack/hazard
- Perform immediate lifesaving measures
- Maintain situational awareness
- Assess and respond to threats

BATTLE DRILLS

- React to contact
- Establish security in a combat zone
- Perform tactical combat casualty care
- React to ambush

BLUE PHASE

In the third and final phase, also known as Warrior Phase, you'll throw live hand grenades. You'll learn to operate additional weapons, train in urban warfare and learn to survive in the field for multiple days. You'll continue to build on everything you learned in the Red and White phases, with a special focus on teamwork and discipline. After passing all your BCT tests and meeting all your BCT challenges, you'll qualify to wear the Army black beret.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE THINGS YOU'LL FOCUS ON DURING BLUE PHASE:

- Advanced Rifle Marksmanship (including the use of aiming tools such as lasers)
- Maneuvering and engaging targets as part of a team
- Guard ethics and standards, with continued study of Army Values
- Convoy operations
- Additional weapons training: machine guns, grenade launchers and mines
- Defeating improvised explosive devices (IEDs)/mines
- Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT)—close quarters combat in hallways, rooms, buildings and stairwells)
- 10-kilometer and 15-kilometer tactical foot marches
- Training exercise in the field (FTX), where you'll tie all your training together
- The End of Cycle Test (EOCT)—212 tasks, which you're required to pass
- The Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT)—which you must pass to graduate from BCT

BCT GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

TO COMPLETE BCT, YOU'LL HAVE TO PASS SOME TESTS AND DEMONSTRATE YOUR SKILLS IN A NUMBER OF AREAS. FOR EXAMPLE, YOU'LL NEED TO:



- Complete the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) by scoring at least 50 points in each event (push-ups, sit-ups, 2-mile run) — just don't forget: After Basic, your standard goes up to 60 points in each event
- Safely handle, provide proper maintenance and qualify with your individual weapon
- Complete the protective mask confidence exercise
- Demonstrate proficiency in the Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills
- Demonstrate proficiency in basic first-aid techniques
- Complete the obstacle and confidence courses
- Complete combative training
- Throw live hand grenades
- Complete a 16-kilometer foot march
- Pass the four-person team land navigation course
- Complete the tactical field training and/or situational training exercises
- Complete the Buddy Team Live Fire

ARMY PHYSICAL FITNESS TEST (APFT)

You are required to pass the APFT before you can graduate from BCT. When you take the APFT, push-ups come first, followed by sit-ups, then the 2-mile run. You'll have a rest period of around 10 minutes between sets. You'll be tested in small groups for the first two exercises, and there will be a demonstration of proper form before the exercise begins. For the 2-mile run, you'll be tested in a large group and wear a number on your chest that must remain visible at all times.

GRADUATION

In the final week of BCT (Week 10), you'll clean and turn in gear you received from the CIF, and you'll clean the barracks. You'll also receive a day with your family to catch up on your recent experiences—and you'll have plenty to discuss. The next day, you'll graduate. What follows that depends on your military job. Some combat jobs, such as infantry, combine both Basic Training and a type of training called Advanced Individual Training, or AIT. This combination is called OSUT, or One Station Unit Training. If you won't be in one of those types of combat jobs, the next step after BCT is usually AIT as a separate phase.

We know you still have lots of questions about BCT, so we encourage you to speak with your recruiter to get answers. You can also call **1-800-GO-GUARD** or visit www.NATIONALGUARD.com.



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TRAINING IS THE
FIRST STEP TOWARD
BECOMING A SOLDIER.**

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