

With thousands of jobs in hundreds of career fields, there are obviously numerous opportunities to seize and avenues to explore in the Services.

However, with so many military jobs available to you, finding and obtaining the right one may seem a bit overwhelming at first. But the truth is, with the proper preparation and direction, the path to a successful and fulfilling career in the Military is a lot easier to realize. Here's a look at four steps you should take into account when going through the enlistment process and considering job options:

Step 1: Do not underestimate the importance of doing well on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test and in school.

Each job in the Military has a corresponding ASVAB score or range that an individual must achieve or fall within in order to qualify. Of course, the needs of the Military at the time, candidates' backgrounds and the physical demands of certain jobs do play a role. However, the higher you score on the ASVAB, the more job opportunities — and choices — you will have in the Services.

As in college, doing well in high school and taking part in extracurricular activities also play a role in getting a specific job in the Military. So if you are interested in enlistment, education is very important. A high school diploma, or a GED in some cases, is required.

Step 2: Recognize your interests and find relevant jobs in the Military.

A major benefit to the ASVAB is that it also helps you identify what you're interested in, through a self-scoring interest inventory. Based on the interest inventory, you can explore military jobs and figure out which jobs you would most enjoy.

Most people prefer career fields that relate to their interests. The sooner you identify your interests, the better the chances of your finding a job that will be rewarding and fulfilling.

For an overview of jobs available in the Services, please visit <http://todaysmilitary.com/working/career-fields-and-profiles>.

Step 3: Consult with a recruiter.

As your point of contact with the Services, a recruiter is also your best resource when it comes to discovering a career path — he or she is ready and willing to answer questions, provide advice and address concerns.

You should talk with a recruiter about potential jobs on a continual basis and get the following:

- Information regarding available jobs in your branch
- Recommendations about which military careers might be appropriate for you
- ASVAB scores and qualifications you'll need to obtain each job

Remember, it's fine to bring a parent or friend along on recruiter visits for support or a second opinion.

Step 4: Consult with a military career counselor.

In addition to talking with a recruiter, at the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) you will meet with a military career counselor to further discuss career possibilities and actually select a job.

A military career counselor's duties primarily include:

- Determining what jobs candidates qualify for
- Conveying the job needs of the respective Service
- Assigning candidates to specific jobs

Final Thoughts

Once you've chosen a career, it is helpful to try to identify people more senior to you at every duty station and try to cultivate a mentor/advocate relationship. Senior personnel can really help you forge a successful career path and stay aware of new opportunities.