



Naval Services FamilyLine Guideline Series Resources

NAVY TERMS & ACRONYMS

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NAVY TERMS

ABOARD – on or in a ship. Close aboard; near a ship.

ADVANCE PAY – an advance on your base pay for a move. This must be repaid.

AFT – toward the stern; opposite of forward.

AIRDALE – slang, a naval aviator.

ALLOTMENT – assignment of part of military pay directly to a person or bank.

ALONGSIDE – beside a pier, wharf or ship.

ANCHOR – the hook used at the end of a chain and dropped to the sea bottom to hold a ship in one particular place. The smallest Navy anchors can be lifted by one person; anchors used by an aircraft carrier can each weigh up to 30 tons.

ANCHORAGE – suitable place for ship to anchor. A designated area of a port or harbor.

ANCHORS AWEIGH – said of the anchor when just clear of the bottom.

AYE-AYE – term used to acknowledge receipt of a command or order from senior. It means “I have heard the order; I understand it; I will carry it out.”

BARNACLE – small marine animal that attaches itself to hulls and pilings.

BELAY – to cancel an order; stop; firmly secure a line.

BERTH – space assigned ship for anchoring or mooring.

BERTHING – where Sailors sleep onboard ship.

BILLET – an allotted sleeping space; an individual’s position in the ship’s organization.

BLACK SHOE – an officer who is not an aviator; the latter is a brown shoe. Usually only used by Surface Warfare Officers.

BLUEJACKET – Navy enlisted member below the grade of CPO.

BOATSWAIN – pronounced “bosun,” refers to the mate, warrant officer or petty officer in charge of boats, rigging and ground tackle aboard ship.

BOW – most forward part of a ship.

BRAVO ZULU (BZ!) – Good job!

BRIDGE – platform or area from which ship is steered, navigated and conned; usually located in forward part of ship.

BRIG – Sailor’s universal term for jail.

BROW – large gangplank leading from a ship to a pier, wharf or float; usually equipped with handrails.

BULKHEAD – one of the upright, crosswise partitions dividing a ship into compartments.

CAPTAIN – rank, or commanding officer of a ship or squadron.

CARRY ON – to proceed with any duty.

CATAPULT – shipboard mechanism for launching aircraft.

CHAIN OF COMMAND – the military’s management concept.



CHAPLAIN – the military men and women of the cloth who nurture the spiritual well-being of service members.

CLASSIFIED MATTER – information or material of aid to possible enemy, if improperly divulged. There are currently three categories: Top Secret, Secret and Confidential.

COMMISSARY – grocery store on or near base where service members and families can purchase food, beverages, etc., at prices usually lower than in civilian stores.

COMMISSION – to activate a ship or station; written order giving an officer rank and authority.

COMMISSIONING CEREMONIES – ceremonies during which a new ship is placed in service. It is customary to invite friends of officers and others interested to attend the ceremony, along with the sponsor who christened the ship.

COMMODORE – the title of an officer commanding a squadron or flotilla of submarines, destroyers or smaller ships.

COMPARTMENT – space enclosed by bulkheads, deck, and overhead, same as a room in a building.

CONUS – the Continental United States. (48 states and the District of Columbia.) Flying in CONUS determines certain limitations to space-available travel on military aircraft.

COURSE – direction steered by a ship or plane.

COURT-MARTIAL – military court for trial of serious offenses. There are three types: summary, special and general courts-martial.

CROW – slang, eagle on petty officer's rating badge.

CRUISE – to sail with no definite destination. More commonly used to describe round trip.

DECK – a floor or platform extending from end to end of a ship.

DETAILER – the person responsible for deciding your Sailor's next duty station.

DEPLOY – tactical term used for dispersal of troops; also disposition of ships in battle formations.

DIVISION – in the organization of ship or plane groups, the unit between sections and squadrons; in shipboard organization, Sailors and officers grouped together for command purposes.

DSN – Defense Switched Network; Department of Defense internal telephone system (formerly Autovon).

EMBARK – to go aboard ship preparatory to sailing.

ENLISTED EVALUATION – written report of enlisted service member's performance of duty, informally referred to as an EVAL.

ENSIGN – lowest ranking commissioned officer.

EXCHANGE – department store run by the military.

EXECUTIVE OFFICER (XO) – regardless of rank, the officer second in



command of a ship, squadron or shore activity. In early days, such an officer was the first lieutenant.

FAIR WINDS AND FOLLOWING SEAS – A salutation meant to wish good fortune.

FANTAIL – the after end of the main deck.

FATHOM – in measuring depth of water, six feet. From Anglo-Saxon faehom. Originally distance spanned by man's outstretched arms.

FITNESS REPORT – written report of an officer's performance of duty, including chief petty officers, informally referred to as a FITREP.

FLAG AT HALF-MAST – this tradition began in times of mourning in old sailing days to indicate that grief was so great it was impossible to keep things shipshape. Half masting of colors is the survival of days when slack appearance characterized mourning on shipboard.

FLAG OFFICER – Rear Admiral, Lower Half; Rear Admiral, Upper Half; Vice Admiral; Admiral, and Fleet Admiral are flag officers.

FLANK SPEED – certain prescribed speed increase over standard speed; faster than full speed; as fast as a ship can go.

FLEET – from Anglo-Saxon fleet. Organization of ships and aircraft under one commander.

FLIGHT DECK – deck of ship on which planes land, takeoff.

FORECASTLE – pronounced "focsul." In the days of Columbus, ships were fitted with

castle-like structures fore and aft. The structures have disappeared, but the term forecastle remains; refers to upper deck in forward part of ship. Abbreviated fo'c'sle.

FORWARD – toward bow; opposite of aft.

FROGMAN – slang, member of underwater demolition team or SEALs.

GALLEY – the kitchen of the ship.

GANGPLANK – see Brow.

GANGWAY – opening in bulwarks or rail of ship to give entrance; order to stand aside and get out of the way.

GEEDUNK – slang, ice cream soda, malted milk, anything from soda fountain or Geedunk stand.

GENERAL QUARTERS – battle stations for all hands.

GOUGE – the real story behind rumors and stories which may or may not be accurate.

GRUNT – slang, a Marine.

GTMO – abbreviation for U.S. Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

GUNG-HO – slang, eager and aggressive beyond normal requirements.

HASH MARK – slang, service stripe worn on uniform of enlisted personnel.

HEAD – place in ship or on shore station that might otherwise be called a restroom, washroom or toilet.

HOLIDAY ROUTINE – followed aboard ship on authorized holidays and Sundays.

HONORS – ceremonies conducted in honor of a visiting dignitary, usually involving sideboys and, occasionally, a band and honor guard.



KNEE-KNOCKERS – A passageway opening through a bulkhead. The lower lip of the opening sits at shin height.

KNOCK OFF – cease what is being done; stop work.

KNOT – measure speed for ships and aircraft, as “the destroyer was making 30 knots,” or “the top speed of the plane is 400 knots.”

LADDER – in a ship, corresponds to stairs in a building.

LEATHERNECK – term probably applied to U.S. Marines by Sailors because of the leather-lined collar once part of Marine Corps uniforms. The collar, about the same height as that of the present uniform collar, was designed to give a greater military appearance to the uniform; when damp with perspiration, it was highly uncomfortable and caused throat trouble. Abolished by Marine Corps in about 1875.

LINE OFFICER – officer who may succeed to operational command as opposed to staff corps officer who normally exercises authority only in a specialty (e.g., hospitals, supply centers, etc.).

LOOKOUT – seaman assigned to watch and report any objects of interest; lookouts are “the eyes of the ship.”

MAST – captain’s mast, or merely mast, derived from the fact that in early sailing days, the usual setting for this type of naval justice was on the weather deck near ship’s mainmast. Currently, it means a type of hearing with commanding officer presiding, in which any punishment administered is non-judicial in nature and is an alternative to court-martial.

MESS – meal; a place or group of officers and crew who eat together as in “crew is at mess,” “meeting was held in CPO mess,” or “she was the guest of wardroom mess.” Mess comes from Latin mensa, or table.

MID-WATCH – Watch from 0001-0400 or 0001-0600 based upon the ship’s schedule, usually results in no sleep before or after this watch.

MILITARY CLAUSE – protects you from paying the rest of a rental home’s lease, if you are asked to move due to military orders.

MUSTER – to assemble crew; roll call.

OLD MAN – seaman’s term for captain of a ship.

PASSAGEWAY – corridor or hallway on ship.

PLAN OF THE DAY – schedule of day’s routine and events approved by Executive Officer (XO); published daily aboard ship or at shore activity.

PORT – left side of ship looking forward.

QUARTERDECK – part of main (or other) deck reserved for honors and ceremonies and the station of the officer of the deck (OOD) in port.

QUARTERS – living spaces assigned to personnel aboard ship; government-owned housing assigned to personnel at shore stations; assembly of personnel for drill, inspection or meeting.

RANK – grade or official standing of commissioned and warrant officers.

RATE – grade or official standing of enlisted personnel; identifies pay grade or level of advancement; within each rating a rate reflects



levels of aptitude, training, experience, knowledge, skill, and responsibility.

RATING – job classification with the Navy, such as electronics technician.

SAILOR – When capitalized "Sailor" is used to demote a Navy service member – from Seaman to Admiral.

SCUTTLEBUTT – a drinking fountain in Navy is called scuttlebutt. A scuttlebutt in old days was a cask that had openings in the side, fitted with a spigot; also rumor, from the fact that Sailors used to congregate at the scuttlebutt or cask of water to gossip or report on day's activities – sometimes true, sometimes not.

SEA BAG – large canvas bag for stowing gear and clothing.

SEA DUTY (or SEA TOUR) – assignment to ship whose primary mission is accomplished while underway/deployed.

SHAKEDOWN CRUISE – cruise of newly commissioned ship to test machinery and equipment and train crew as a working unit.

SHIPMATE – anyone who is attached to the same command as a Sailor—ship or not.

SHORT TIMER – one whose enlistment or tour of duty is almost completed.

SICK BAY – ship's hospital or dispensary.

SIDEBOYS – impeccably-uniformed Sailors who participate in honors ceremonies on the quarterdeck.

SKIPPER – from Dutch schipper, meaning captain.

SPOUSE – wife or husband.

STARBOARD – right side of ship looking forward.

STERN – after part of ship.

STOW – to put gear in its proper place.

SWAB – rope or yarn mop; also an unflattering term for a Sailor.

TOPSIDE – from Pidgin English, meaning upper level, or above decks.

TRICARE – Health Care Program for the Uniformed Services

TURN TO – an order to begin work.

WARDROOM – a compartment aboard ship near officers' stateroom used as officers' mess room.

WATCH – watch standing concerns the positioning of qualified personnel, in various time increments, to operate a ship or other naval asset continuously around the clock.



ACRONYMS

AAFES – Army and Air Force Exchange Services

ADAPT – Active Duty Assistance Program Team

ADSW – Active Duty for Special Work

AC – Active Component

ADT – Active Duty for Training

AOC – Aviation Officer Candidate

APO – Army and Air Force Post Office

ARC – American Red Cross

ASAP – As soon as possible

AT – Annual Training

AWOL – Absent without leave

BAH – Basic Allowance for Housing

BAS – Basic Allowance for Subsistence

BEQ – Bachelor Enlisted Quarters

BUMED – Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

BUPERS – Bureau of Naval Personnel

CACP – Casualty Assistance Calls Program

CACO – Casualty Assistance Calls Officer

CDC – Child Development Center

CHINFO – Chief of Information

CIAC – Command Individual Augmentee Coordinator

CMC – Command Master Chief

CMDCM – Command Master Chief

CNAFR – Commander Naval Air Force Reserve

CNIC – Commander, Navy Installations Command

CNO – Chief of Naval Operations

CNP – Chief of Naval Personnel

CNR – Chief of Naval Reserve

CNRFC – Commander Navy Reserve Forces Command

CO – Commanding Officer

COB – Chief of the Boat

COLA – Cost of Living Allowance

COMRATS – Commuted Rations

CONUS – Continental United States

CORE – Continuum of Resources and Education

CPO – Chief Petty Officer

CST – Command Support Team

DEERS – Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System

DIC – Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

DLA – Dislocation Allowance

DRT – Deployment Readiness Training

DTF – Military Dental Facilities

DTS – Defense Travel System

DoD – Department of Defense

DoDDS – Department of Defense Dependents Schools

DoDEA – Department of Defense Education Activity

EAOS – End of Active Obligated Service

ECC – Emergency Coordination Center

EFMP – Exceptional Family Member Program

ESGR – Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

ETA – Estimated time of arrival



ETD – Estimated time of departure
FAP – Family Advocacy Program
FERP – Family Employment Readiness Program
FFSP – Fleet and Family Support Program
FPCON – Force Protection Condition
FPO – Fleet Post Office
FITREP – Fitness Report
FMF – Fleet Marine Force
FRG – Family Readiness Group
FRO – Family Readiness Officer
FFSC – Fleet and Family Support Center
FTS – Full-Time Support
HFP/IDP – Hostile Fire/ Imminent Danger Pay
HQMC – Headquarters, Marine Corps
IDC – Independent Duty Corpsman
IDC – Information Dominance Corps
IDT – Inactive Duty Training
IDTT – Inactive Duty Training Travel
IRR – Individual Ready Reserve
ISP – Individual Service Plans
JAG – Judge Advocate General (lawyer)
JCS – Joint Chiefs of Staff
JFSAP – Joint Family Support Assistance Program
JNROTC – Junior Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps
KVN – Key Volunteer Network
LES – Leave and Earnings Statement
LDO – Limited Duty Officer
MCAS – Marine Corps Air Station
MCPON – Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy

MEB – Marine Expeditionary Brigade
MEF – Marine Expeditionary Force
MESP – Military Spouse Employment Partnership
MEU – Marine Expeditionary Unit
MFIT – Military Families in Transition
MKC – Military Kids Connect
MOS – Military Occupational Specialty
MSCCN – Military Spouse Corporate Career Network
MWR – Morale, Welfare, and Recreation
MyCAA – Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts Program
NAS – Naval Air Station
NAVFAC – Naval Facility
NAVSTA – Naval Station
NCO – Non-commissioned Officer
NECC – Navy Expeditionary Combat Command
NEX – Navy Exchange
NFAAS – Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System
NLSO – Naval Legal Service Office
NMC – Naval Medical Command
NMCB – Naval Mobile Construction Battalion
NMCRS – Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society
NOK – Next of Kin
NOSC – Navy Operational Support Center
NPS – New Parent Support
NROTC – Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps
NSF – Naval Support Facility
OCNR – Office of the Chief of the Navy Reserve
OCS – Officer Candidate School
OMBUDSMAN – Official liaison between a command and its families



OOD – Officer of the Deck
OPSEC – Operational Security
OSO – Operational Support Officer
OPNAV – Office of Chief of Naval Operations
OSD – Office of the Secretary of Defense
OCONUS – Outside Continental United States
PAO – Public Affairs Officer
PCO – Prospective Commanding Officer
PCS – Permanent Change of Station
PHOP – Psychological Health Outreach Program
POC – Point of Contact
POD – Plan of the Day
POE – Port of Embarkation
POW – Plan of the Week
PSD – Personnel Support Detachment
PTSD – Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
PXO – Prospective Executive Officer
RAP – Relocation Assistance Program
RAPIDS – Real-Time Automated Personnel Identification System
RC – Reserve Component
RCC – Reserve Component Command
ROTC – Reserve Officers' Training Corps
RWW – Returning Warrior Workshop
SADT – Special Active Duty for Training
SARP – Sexual Assault Prevention and Response
SATO – Scheduled Airlines Ticket Office
SBP – Survivors Benefit Plan
SEA – Senior Enlisted Advisor
SECO – Spouse Education and Career Opportunities

SEL – Senior Enlisted Leaders
SELRES – Selected Reserve
SECDEF – Secretary of Defense
SECNAV – Secretary of the Navy
SGLI – Servicemen's Group Life Insurance
SITREP – Situation Report
SMCR – Selected Marine Corps Reserve
SOCNAV – Servicemember's Opportunity Colleges
SOPA – Senior Officer Present Afloat
SPACE A – Space Available
TAD – Temporary Additional Duty
TAMP – Transition Assistance Management Program
TBD – To be determined
TDP – Tricare Dental Plan
TDY – Temporary Duty
TLA – Temporary Lodging Allowance
TNR – The Navy Reservist
TO – Transportation Office
TSP – Thrift Savings Plan
UA – Unauthorized Absence
UCMJ – Uniformed Code of Military Justice
USERRA – Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994
USO – United Service Organizations
VA – Department of Veterans' Affairs
WAAN – Wide Area Alert Network
WO – Warrant Officer
XO – Executive Officer
YRRP – Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program

