



# Career of the week

## Army Officer

Army officers command, manage and motivate teams of soldiers.

**Average salary (a year):** £31,000 (starter) to £48,000 (experienced)

**Typical hours (a week):** variable (you could work evenings/weekends/bank holidays and away from home)

You can get into this job through:

### College

You could work towards becoming an officer by doing a college course, for example in public services. You would then apply to the army for officer training.

Specific courses include:

- Level 1 Diploma in Sport and Public Services
- Level 2 Extended Certificate in Public Services
- Level 3 Diploma in Public Services (Uniformed)

### Entry requirements

You may need:

- Some GCSEs at grades 1-3 may be required for a level 1 course
- 2 or more GCSEs at grades 9 to 3 (A\* to D), or equivalent, for a level 2 course
- 4 or 5 GCSEs at grades 9-4 (A\* to C), or equivalent, including English and maths, or a level 2 qualification in a relevant subject, for a level 3 course

### Apprenticeship

You could start your army career by doing an HM Forces Serviceperson Level 2 Intermediate Apprenticeship.

You would apply directly to the army to find the best apprenticeship route for you.

### Entry requirements

To do this apprenticeship, you'll need:

- some GCSEs, usually including English and maths, or equivalent, for an intermediate apprenticeship

## Volunteering

You can join the Army Reserve as a part-time officer to get some experience of what life is like in the regular army. You'll also learn new skills at the same time.

You'll need to:

- be between 18 and 49
- commit to at least 27 days a year, though this can fall to 19, if you apply for a specialist unit
- attend a 2-week training camp each year

If you're between 12 and 18 years old, you can join the Army Cadet Force.

## Skills and knowledge

You'll need:

- leadership skills
- excellent verbal communication skills
- thinking and reasoning skills
- persistence and determination
- patience and the ability to remain calm in stressful situations
- concentration skills
- the ability to accept criticism and work well under pressure
- the ability to work well with others
- to be able to use a computer and the main software packages competently

## Day-to-day tasks

As an army officer, your duties will depend on your unit.

In a combat role you could:

- command infantry soldiers on operations
- pilot a helicopter and lead your crew and ground troops
- co-ordinate surveillance to locate tank and artillery targets

In a medical or healthcare role, you could:

- care for injured soldiers as a doctor or nurse
- provide dental care for army personnel and their families
- work with military animals as a veterinary officer

You could also:

- co-ordinate supplies for disaster relief efforts and military deployments
- manage engineering projects from setting up camps to building bridges
- plan operations based on intelligence gathering
- provide support and guidance to soldiers and their families as a chaplain

## Working environment

- You could work at a military base, be based overseas or in a warzone.
- Your working environment may be physically and emotionally demanding and outdoors in all weathers.
- You may need to wear a uniform and protective clothing.

## Career progression

Your first command post will usually be for 12 years though you can leave during training or after 3 years' service. With training and experience, you could move up through the ranks from lieutenant to captain, major and beyond.

Throughout your army career, you'll have the opportunity to gain qualifications in your chosen field.