

The Australian Army, Navy and Air Force offer careers, training and study options. If you're thinking about joining the ADF as an officer or general entry, start planning early – don't wait until the end of Year 12.

Getting started early lets you try ADF work experience or join Cadets which gives you an idea of what it's like. Remember, this is about **researching your options**, not making a final decision.



Getting ADF ready?

- Research roles and [entry options](#) (Officer or General Entry)
- [Register your interest](#) with the ADF to get updates
- Do your best in Years 10–12 at school – for trade entry, you must pass Yr 10 English, Maths and Science (sometimes with a physics component)
- Build leadership and teamwork through sport, volunteering and/or a part-time job
- Work on fitness and overall wellbeing (sport alone may not be enough) – [what are they looking for?](#)
- Consider [ADF work experience](#) (you must be 15+)
- Join [ADF Cadets](#) (13 years)
- Not sure yet? Look into an [ADF Gap Year](#) after school
- Always have a back-up plan

Basic ADF entry requirements

- Be an Australian citizen
- Be at least 16.5 years old (16 for ADFA)
- Have passed Year 10 English and Maths (Science needed for some roles)
- Be physically fit and healthy
- A citizen of New Zealand, the United Kingdom, United States of America, Canada or Papua New Guinea
- be a permanent resident living in Australia or holding a 444 sub-class visa
- be able to demonstrate 'Competent English' ability at the time of application, as defined by the [Department of Home Affairs website](#).

Entry Levels

Officer Entry

Officer roles involve professional and academic training	
ADFA: Australian Defence Force Academy (Officer entry)	Start in the Army, Navy or Air force and be paid to study in Canberra at the University of New South Wales campus. You need to be ATAR eligible and gain entry into one of the ADFA specified university courses (apply through UAC – search ADFA).
Officer Entry (Royal Military College Canberra – (RMC))	The ADF will teach you to lead teams, mentor others and manage complex scenarios as an officer. This could be either Direct Entry (by completing officer training) or via Tertiary Education options (combining officer training with studying for a degree).
Graduate entry (Officer entry)	Enter the ADF after completing a degree such as medicine, law, dentistry, nursing, engineering, business, IT etc
Graduate Medical Program (Officer entry)	Apply after acceptance into a postgraduate medical qualification for sponsorship as a medical practitioner.
Undergraduate Entry (currently studying) (Officer entry)	Be accepted into a recognised Australian University degree and you can apply for a Defence University Sponsorship (DUS) and have your fees paid and earn an income in return for a commitment to an officer role in the ADF after graduation.
Royal Military Naval College (RANC)	The New Entry Officers Course (NEOC) is an 18-week initial entry program, conducted residentially at HMAS Creswell.
Air Force Graduate Pilot (Officer entry)	Apply for Mission and Pilot pathways. Can gain entry through ADFA or Officer entry.
Tertiary Aviation Reimbursement scheme (TARS)	The Tertiary Aviation Reimbursement Scheme (TARS) is for candidates who join the Air Force with a relevant Bachelor level degree in aviation from an Australian university.

General Entry

The following general entry roles are more trade-related and team-related roles. To apply, you need a pass in Year 10 English, Maths and for a trade-related pathway, Year 10 Science.

General entry positions	
General non-technical positions	Choose roles in administration, communications, logistics etc. Some roles require a pass in Year 10 Maths & Science or passes in Year 11 and above.
Technical and trade apprenticeships	Choose from roles in aviation, mechanical, electrical and construction trades, communications and more. Some trade roles also require Science with a Physics component.
Qualified positions	Apply under this category if you already have a trade and/or qualification
Army Reserve (not a general entry role)	If you are looking at serving on a part time basis you can apply to join the Army, Navy or Air Force Reserve. There are a range of Reserve jobs.

How do I go about joining up?

Steps in Applying for entry to the ADF	
Step 1 – Apply online	Provide your personal details, academic achievements and up to 3 job preferences. You'll gain access to your Candidate Hub to complete your Supplementary Application Form with your education, work experience, hobbies and other experiences. If applying for ADFA you will need to apply to both the ADF and Uni of New South Wales through UAC.
Step 2 – Jobs Opportunities Assessment	This is a series of multiple-choice general ability and mathematical ability questions to help determine which service and position(s) you are most likely to be suited to.
Step 3 – Attend virtual YOU Session	Your Opportunities Unlimited (YOU) Sessions can be done on multiple days or in a group at an ADF Careers Centre. Once done you then log back into your Candidate Hub and complete your Medical History Questionnaire.
Step 4 – Attend assessment and officer session	All Applicants are invited to attend an Assessment Session for a medical assessment, a psychological assessment, and an ADF interview. Check details on ADF website. If you've applied for an officer role, you'll also attend an Officer Selection Board (OSB) where you'll be interviewed by a panel of officers and a psychologist and participate in group and individual activities.
Step 5 – Fitness test if required	You may be required to take a Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA), completing a number of exercises based on the fitness requirement for your chosen job role. Check fitness requirements on the ADF website .
Step 6 – Attend Enlistment and Appointment day	If you are successful, you will attend a ceremony to formalise your enlistment and then commence military training.

Steps in Applying for Entry to the ADFA – Officer

It's best to apply in Year 11, but you can still apply in **Year 12**

Check the application steps online so you understand the full process from start to finish.



Opportunities to Consider

Defence Work Experience Placement

You can apply to do **ADF work experience**, with set dates and locations. Places fill fast, so research early and apply early. You must be **at least 15** when the placement starts.

How to apply:

1. Visit the **ADF Defence Work Experience Program** and choose a placement that interests you
2. Talk to your school (Guidance Officer, Careers Advisor, Counsellor or VET Coordinator) to check your Principal will approve the time out of school (usually 3 days) and to get help with the application
3. Complete the online application
4. The ADF will contact your school to confirm permission
5. If accepted, you and your school will receive acceptance and work experience forms. These must be signed by you, your parent/carer and the school, and returned by the due date (insurance forms may also be required)



ADF Cadets

ADF Cadets is a youth program that builds leadership, teamwork and discipline through Defence values and traditions. You can find details on the [ADF website](#) and check if there's a unit near you.

Who can join:

- Army or Navy Cadets: ages 13–18 (must be in high school)
- Air Force Cadets: ages 13–18

Good to know:

- You can stay in Cadets until the end of the year you turn 18
- A parent or guardian must sign the application form
- You'll need a doctor's note confirming you can take part in cadet activities

[The ADF Gap Year](#) lets young people aged 17–24 spend a year in the Army, Navy or Air Force. Many continue in the ADF afterwards, but there's no obligation to stay longer than the year.

What you need to know:

- Start researching in Year 11
- Apply in late Year 11 or Year 12 to start the year after school
- Build leadership and work skills while testing if ADF life is right for you
- Apply for a specific role listed on the ADF [website](#)
- You are paid for the year
- Applications are online and ask about school results, activities, leadership and work experience
- Talk to your school Guidance Officer or Careers Advisor before applying
- If shortlisted, you'll complete interviews and assessments like a regular ADF application

Final thoughts

The ADF is a great career path when it is a 'good fit' for you. Doing your research is really important in any career decision. The ADF provide many career opportunities for you to find out about and what the ADF offers, before you sign up.

To Lead, To Excel