

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 your child, 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 that your child 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 your child scores on the ASVAB, the more job opportunities — and choices — he or she 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 your child is interested in enlistment, education is very important.

### **Step 2: Recognize abilities and find relevant jobs in the Military.**

The Military uses students' ASVAB scores to identify the occupations that best suit their abilities. Most people prefer career fields that relate to their abilities. The sooner your child identifies his or her abilities, the better the chances of him or her 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 child's point of contact with the Services, recruiters are also his or her best allies when it comes to discovering a career path — they are ready and willing to answer questions, provide advice and address concerns.

You should also feel comfortable talking with the recruiter to answer your own questions and calm your fears.

### **Step 4: Consult with a military career counselor.**

In addition to talking with a recruiter, at the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) your child will meet with a military career counselor to further discuss career possibilities, provide a list of job preferences or 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**

Your child should know that his or her first military career does not have to be his or her last. While it depends on Service needs and the availability of training, it is possible to switch careers while serving. Keep in mind that many military careers have an associated contract and your child may have to serve in that role until he or she has fulfilled that commitment. Your child should talk to his or her recruiter before joining to get a sense of contract lengths for various careers.

Your child should also try to identify people more senior to him or her at every duty station and try to cultivate a mentor/advocate relationship. Senior personnel can really help young people forge successful career paths —especially if that means changing jobs.