

Army Aviation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The following list of FAQs were compiled from conversations with Cadets, Candidates, and Civilians.

GENERAL TOPIC FAQs

Q: Is there anything I need to do in advance to qualify for aviation?

A: Yes. You must take and pass the Selection Instrument for Flight Training (SIFT) and have a qualified flight physical (see details below in the medical FAQs).

First Step – Take and pass the SIFT: The SIFT is a measure of multiple aptitudes. It assesses mathematical skills and aptitude, the ability to extract meaning from written passages, familiarity with mechanical concepts and simple machines, the ability to perform mental rotations to determine the orientation of aircraft in 3-dimensional space, and the ability to quickly recognize patterns within objects and groups of images. The SIFT also measures an examinee's knowledge of aviation terminology, familiarity with aircraft components and function, knowledge of basic aerodynamic principles, and a grasp of basic flight rules and regulations. A passing score is 40. If you score 40 or higher you have completed the first step in qualifying for aviation service and are no longer authorized to retake the SIFT. If you score below a 40 you have one more opportunity to take the test again after 45 days. If you do not pass the test the second time you are disqualified from aviation service. Once you pass the SIFT you will be able to schedule your flight physical.

Second Step - Schedule a Flight Physical: With a passing SIFT score your ROTC Cadre can assist you with scheduling your flight physical. If you experience difficulty with scheduling you can contact the AV Branch through the email at the bottom of this page.

Q: Can I be denied a flight physical if my SIFT score is below 50?

A: No. The minimum passing score is 40. You cannot be denied a flight physical if you pass the SIFT.

Q: When should I take the SIFT and schedule my flight physical?

A: We recommend you take and pass the SIFT and begin your flight physical during the second semester of your junior year. If you have not completed the SIFT and/or flight physical and have questions or concerns about your timeline please reach out to the AV Branch through the email at the bottom of this page.

Q: How do I prepare for the SIFT?

A: Use study guides, take the practice exam and consider a tutor if necessary. There are study guides for sale online. Order the one that is right for you and prepare accordingly. Use the link provided to take the practice test. If you need work on some areas, consider a tutor. The more prepared you are, the better your chances of passing and the less stress you will experience before and during the test. Link to the practice test: (triviumtestprep.com)

Q: Do I need to be a math whiz?

A: No. The SIFT does contain a math skills section but you can prepare for the SIFT like any other test. Order a study guide and get a tutor if necessary to boost your confidence and score.

Q: Do I need to have a degree in aerodynamics or engineering?

A: No. The Aviation Branch desires officers with academic backgrounds that span the entire spectrum of disciplines and majors. Broad individual experiences contribute to the success of the branch.

Q: Do I need to be a private pilot, or be working toward earning a private pilot's license?

A: No. Ground school, flight hours, certificates, or a license will assist you in understanding certain aviation topics while attending flight school but they are not a requirement. You are attending flight school to be taught how to fly for the United States Army. Prior aviation experience is not required.

Q: Do I need to have a high GPA.

A: No. The Aviation Branch takes a holistic look at each Cadet and Candidate. During the accessions process we take many aspects of your packet into consideration to include the difficulty of your degree program, your GPA and extracurricular activities, to name a few. If you happen to have a lower GPA, are enrolled in a challenging degree program, and are active in school programs, volunteer organizations, and your community, you are more likely to be selected than a Cadet that does not participate in any activities with a higher GPA.

Q: I have a fear of water. How will I pass the dunker portion of training?

A: Dunker training is no longer part of the flight school curriculum.

Q: What skills do I need to be an Aviator?

A: Aviation Officers must be able to understand, process, and translate vast amounts of data into understandable concepts. As such, they must master concepts across multiple disciplines (for example, air and ground combat operations) while integrating them into an operational perspective in order to support their maneuver partners. Aviators must also be capable of rapid visualization, possess an acute sensitivity to visual details and spatial relationships, and be able to orient multiple dimensions with ease. Aviation Officers must think creatively, in an

innovative and novel fashion, devising solutions and responses to unforeseen challenges in the most effective, yet prudent fashion. As a result, Aviation Officers quickly and effectively analyze situations, rapidly process and prioritize requirements and actions, communicate effectively, and make independent and integrity-based decisions.

Q: I am prior service and already graduated from SERE-C. If I am selected for Aviation do I need to attend SERE-C again?

A: No. If you already completed SERE-C and have documentation of completion, you will not have to attend.

Q: Can females branch Aviation?

A: Yes. Females have been flying military aircraft for generations. In more recent history, the combat exclusion was lifted from aviation positions by Secretary of Defense Les Aspin on April 28, 1993, permitting women to serve in almost any aviation capacity. During that time some restrictions were maintained on aviation units in direct support of ground units and special operations aviation units. Those restrictions were lifted in March 2016, when Ash Carter approved final plans for military service branches and the U.S. Special Operations Command to open all combat jobs to women, and authorized the military to begin integrating female combat Soldiers "right away."

Bottom line, females can branch Aviation.

Q: Does prior experience with Army aircraft help my odds of being selected?

A: It can help. Aviation Branch looks at everything a Cadet brings to the table and your aviation background will be taken into consideration. If you are wondering where you can present that information, you can do so by annotating your prior experience in your individual file in the free text entry under the "Experience" Tab.

MEDICAL FAQs

Q: I wear glasses / contacts. Can I branch Aviation without perfect vision?

A: Yes. According to ([AR 40-501](#)) dated 27 JUNE 2019, "Standards of Medical Fitness" p. 33, para. 4–5. Vision conditions that do not meet the standards of medical fitness are the following:

a. Class 1. Any disqualifying condition must be referred to optometry or ophthalmology for verification.

(1) Uncorrected distant visual acuity worse than 20/50 in either eye. Each eye must be correctable to 20/20 with no more than one error per five presentations of 20/20 letters, in any combination, on either the Armed Forces Vision Tester (AFVT) or any projected Snellen chart set at 20 feet.

(2) Uncorrected near visual acuity worse than 20/20 in each eye; with no more than one error per five presentations of 20/20 letters, in any combination, on the AFVT or any Snellen near visual acuity card.

In addition to 20/20 vision concerns, qualifying vision is more than visual acuity. AR 40-501 Vision Conditions continued:

(3) Cycloplegic refractive error using the method in aeromedical technical bulletins under cycloplegic refraction.

(a) Hyperopia greater than +3.00 diopters of sphere in any meridian by transposition in either eye. (Spherical equivalent method does not apply.)

(b) Myopia greater than -1.50 diopters of sphere in any meridian by transposition in either eye. (Spherical equivalent method does not apply.)

(c) Astigmatism greater than +/-1.00 diopter of cylinder in either eye.

INTERVIEW FAQs

Q: How will Aviation conduct interviews for Cadets?

A: The interviews will be conducted online through the HireVue platform. Aviation will post questions in the platform and each question will have a time limit. Cadet Command and USMA will be providing instruction on using the HireVue platform in the near future.

Q: When will Cadet Interviews take place?

A: The interviews are scheduled to begin mid-July 2020. Cadet Command and USMA will be communicating with and instructing all Cadets on the format and technology along with providing interview tips.

Q: What can I do to stand out during my interview?

A: Be familiar with the Army Aviation mission, the Aviation Talent Demand Slide, and your Talent Assessment Battery results. Look, act, and be professional. Answer the questions honestly, and most important...be yourself.