



MILITARY RANKS

This handout provides information about the difference between types of rank (enlisted vs. officer) and the hierarchy of the ranks.

Each rank is listed from lowest to highest in the chain of command for each branch.

E	Enlisted	An enlisted member is one who has joined the military or “enlisted.” A minimum of a high school diploma is required.
NCO	Noncommissioned Officer	An NCO is an enlisted member who has risen through the ranks by promotion. NCOs serve as the link between enlisted personnel and commissioned officers. They hold responsibility for training troops to execute missions. Training for NCOs includes leadership, management, specific skills, and combat training.
W	Warrant Officer	A warrant officer is a highly trained specialist. One must be an enlisted member with several years of experience, be recommended by his or her commander, and pass a selection board to become a warrant officer.
O	Commissioned Officer	A commissioned officer’s primary function is to provide management and leadership in his or her area of responsibility. This level of command requires a bachelor’s degree and later, as one progresses through the ranks, a master’s degree for promotions. Specific commissioning programs exist (e.g., military academies, Reserve Officer Training Corps [ROTC]).





ARMY RANKS

Pay Grade	Title	Abbreviation
E-1	Private	PVT
E-2	Private 2	PV2
E-3	Private First Class	PFC
E-4	Specialist	SPC
E-4	Corporal	CPL
E-5	Sergeant	SGT
E-6	Staff Sergeant	SSG
E-7	Sergeant First Class	SFC
E-8	Master Sergeant	MSG
E-8	First Sergeant	1SG
E-9	Sergeant Major	SGM
E-9	Command Sergeant Major	CSM
E-9 Special	Sergeant Major of the Army	SMA
W-1	Warrant Officer	WO1
W-2	Chief Warrant Officer 2	CW2
W-3	Chief Warrant Officer 3	CW3
W-4	Chief Warrant Officer 4	CW4
W-5	Chief Warrant Officer 5	CW5
O-1	Second Lieutenant	2LT
O-2	First Lieutenant	1LT
O-3	Captain	CPT
O-4	Major	MAJ
O-5	Lieutenant Colonel	LTC
O-6	Colonel	COL
O-7	Brigadier General	BG
O-8	Major General	MG
O-9	Lieutenant General	LTG
O-10	General	GEN
Special	General of the Army	GA

For more information, visit <http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/communityproviders/index.asp>.





AIR FORCE RANKS

Pay Grade	Title	Abbreviation
E-1	Airman Basic	AB
E-2	Airman	Amn
E-3	Airman First Class	A1C
E-4	Senior Airman or Sergeant	SrA
E-5	Staff Sergeant	SSgt
E-6	Technical Sergeant	TSgt
E-7	Master Sergeant	MSgt
E-8	Senior Master Sergeant	SMSgt
E-8	Senior Master Sergeant	SMSgt
E-9	Chief Master Sergeant	CMSgt
E-9	Command Chief Master Sergeant	CCM
E-9 Special	Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force	CMSAF
O-1	Second Lieutenant	2d Lt
O-2	First Lieutenant	1st Lt
O-3	Captain	Capt
O-4	Major	Maj
O-5	Lieutenant Colonel	Lt Col
O-6	Colonel	Col
O-7	Brigadier General	Brig Gen
O-8	Major General	Maj Gen
O-9	Lieutenant General	Lt Gen
O-10	General Air Force Chief of Staff	Gen
Special	General of the Air Force	GOAF





NAVY/COAST GUARD RATES

Pay Grade	Title	Abbreviation
E-1	Seaman Recruit	SR
E-2	Seaman Apprentice	SA
E-3	Seaman	SN
E-4	Petty Officer 3rd Class	PO3
E-5	Petty Officer 2nd Class	PO2
E-6	Petty Officer 1st Class	PO1
E-7	Chief Petty Officer	CPO
E-8	Senior Chief Petty Officer	SCPO
E-9	Master Chief Petty Officer	MCPO
E-9	Command Master Chief Petty Officer	MCPOC
E-9	Fleet Master Chief Petty Officer	FLTCM
E-9	Force Master Chief Petty Officer	FORCM
E-9 Special	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard	MPCOCG
E-9 Special	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy	MCPON
W-1	Warrant Officer	WO1
W-2	Chief Warrant Officer 2	CWO2
W-3	Chief Warrant Officer 3	CWO3
W-4	Chief Warrant Officer 4	CWO4
W-5	Chief Warrant Officer 5	CWO5
O-1	Ensign	ENS
O-2	Lieutenant, Junior Grade	LTJG
O-3	Lieutenant	LT
O-4	Lieutenant Commander	LCDR
O-5	Commander	CDR
O-6	Captain	CAPT
O-7	Rear Admiral (lower half)	RDML
O-8	Rear Admiral (upper half)	RADM
O-9	Vice Admiral	VADM
O-10	Admiral Chief of Naval Operations / Commandant of the Coast Guard	ADM
O-10 Special	Fleet Admiral	FADM





MARINE CORPS RANKS

Pay Grade	Title	Abbreviation
E-1	Private	Pvt
E-2	Private First Class	PFC
E-3	Lance Corporal	LCpl
E-4	Corporal	Cpl
E-5	Sergeant	Sgt
E-6	Staff Sergeant	SSgt
E-7	Gunnery Sergeant	GySgt
E-8	Master Sergeant	MSgt
E-8	First Sergeant	1stSgt
E-9	Master Gunnery Sergeant	MGySgt
E-9	Sergeant Major	SgtMaj
E-9 Special	Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps	SgtMajMarCor
W-1	Warrant Officer 1	WO1
W-2	Chief Warrant Officer 2	CW2
W-3	Chief Warrant Officer 3	CW3
W-4	Chief Warrant Officer 4	CW4
W-5	Chief Warrant Officer 5	CW5
O-1	Second Lieutenant	2ndLt
O-2	First Lieutenant	1stLt
O-3	Captain	Capt
O-4	Major	Maj
O-5	Lieutenant Colonel	LtCol
O-6	Colonel	Col
O-7	Brigadier General	BGen
O-8	Major General	MajGen
O-9	Lieutenant General	LtGen
O-10	General	Gen

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