

# Essential Navy Knowledge



**2017-2018 Edition**

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Virginia Tech Naval NROTC Unit Website: <http://www.usnavy.vt.edu>

## Qualifications of a Naval Officer

Written by Augustus C. Buell in 1900 to reflect his views of John Paul Jones:

“It is by no means enough that an officer of the Navy should be a capable mariner. He must be that, of course, but also a great deal more. He should be as well a gentleman of liberal education, refined manners, punctilious courtesy, and the nicest sense of personal honor.

“He should be the soul of tact, patience, justice, firmness, and charity. No meritorious act of a subordinate should escape his attention or be left to pass without its reward, even if the reward is only a word of approval. Conversely, he should not be blind to a single fault in any subordinate, though at the same time, he should be quick and unfailing to distinguish error from malice, thoughtlessness from incompetence, and well-meant shortcoming from heedless or stupid blunder.”

# Welcome from Virginia Tech Naval ROTC!

## **NROTC Unit Staff**

<b>Commanding Officer</b>	Captain Michael Fisher, USN	<i>Submarine Warfare Officer</i>
<b>Executive Officer</b>	Commander Jerry Burkette, USN	<i>Naval Flight Officer</i>
<b>Marine Officer Instructor</b>	Captain S. A. Lomeli, USMC	
<b>A Co Advisor</b>	Lieutenant Michael May, USN	<i>Submarine Warfare Officer</i>
<b>B Co Advisor</b>	Lieutenant J. D. Mathews, USN	<i>Surface Warfare Officer</i>
<b>C Co Advisor</b>	Lieutenant C. M. Fearon, USN	<i>Naval Aviator</i>
<b>D Co Advisor</b>	Lieutenant T. E. K. Williams, USN	<i>Submarine Warfare Officer</i>
<b>Assistant Marine Officer Instructor</b>	GySgt A.K. Roess, USMC	
<b>University Administrator</b>	Mrs. Carolynne Dudding	
<b>Supply Technician</b>	Mr. Gregg Snyder	
<b>Human Resources</b>	Mr. Joe Snyder	
<b>Human Resources Assistant</b>	Mr. Michael Holland	

## Chain of Command (Current as of August 3, 2017)

President of the United States  
**The Honorable Donald J. Trump**

Vice President of the United States  
**The Honorable Michael R. Pence**

Secretary of Defense  
**The Honorable James N. Mattis**

Secretary of the Navy  
**The Honorable Richard V. Spencer**

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff  
**General Joseph F. Dunford, USMC**

Chief of Naval Operations  
**Admiral John M. Richardson, USN**

Commandant of the Marine Corps  
**General Robert B. Neller, USMC**

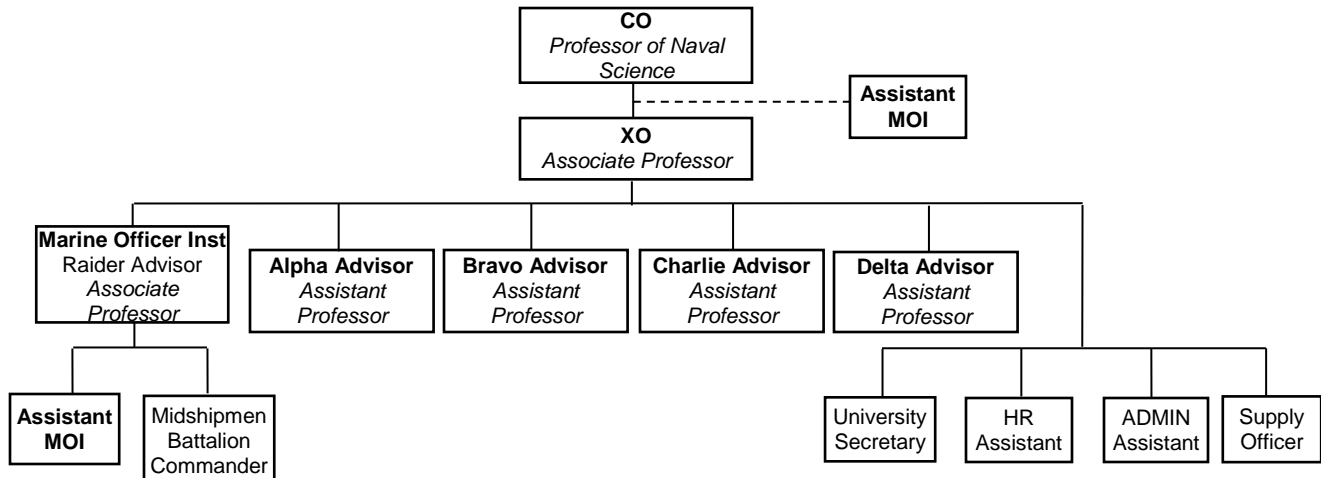
Chief of Naval Education and Training  
**Rear Admiral Michael S. White, USN**

Commander, Naval Service Training Command  
**Rear Admiral Stephen C. Evans, USN**

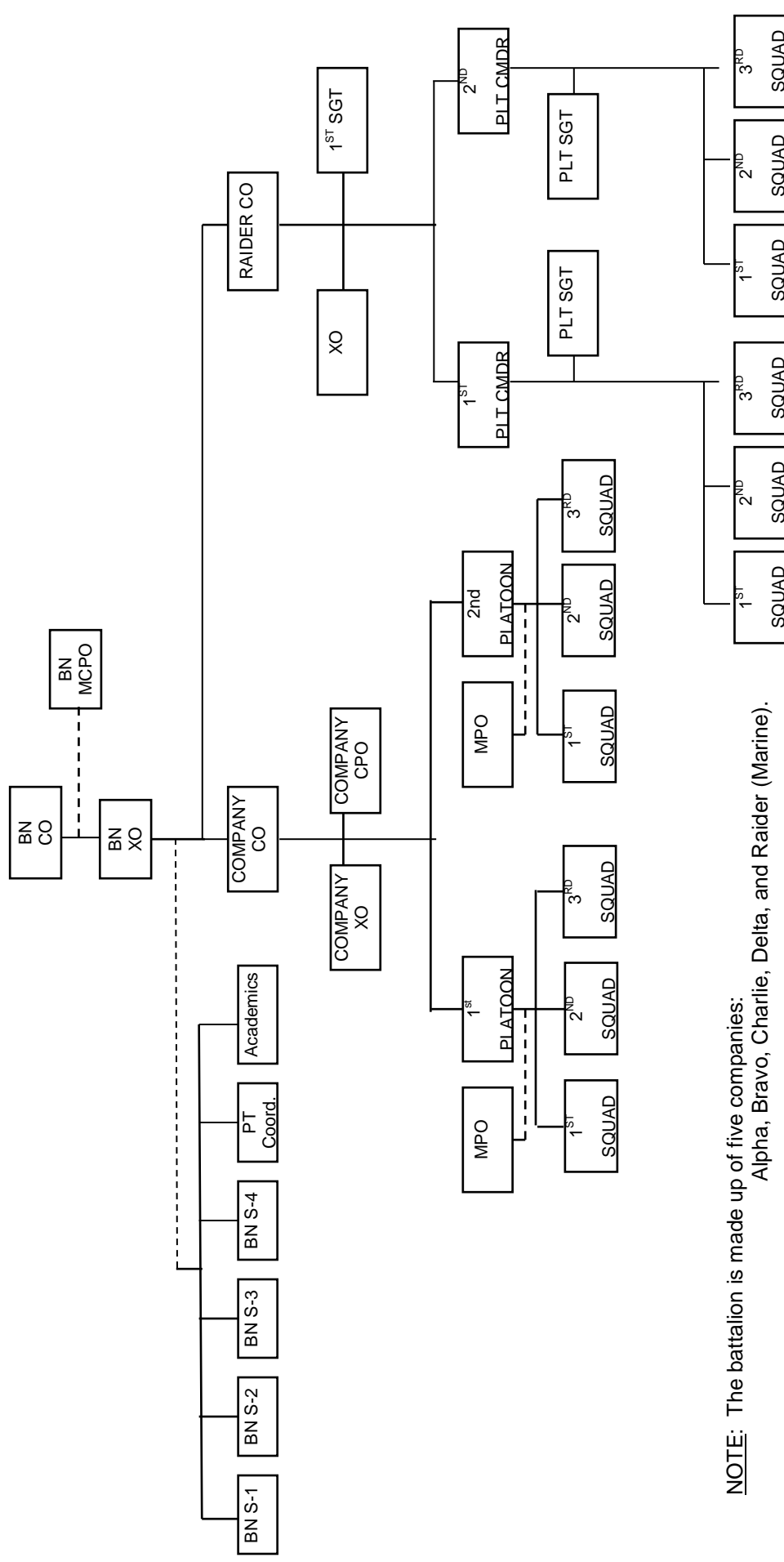
Commanding Officer, NROTC Unit, Virginia Tech  
**Captain Michael Fisher, USN**

Executive Officer, NROTC Unit, Virginia Tech  
**Commander Jerry W. Burkette, Jr., USN**

## NROTC Unit Staff / Naval Science Department Organization



# NROTC Unit Virginia Tech Midshipman Battalion Organization



NOTE: The battalion is made up of five companies:  
Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, and Raider (Marine).

## **14 Leadership Traits**

Judgment  
Justice  
Decisiveness  
Initiative  
Dependability  
Tact  
Integrity  
Endurance  
Bearing  
Unselfishness  
Courage  
Knowledge  
Loyalty  
Enthusiasm

## **11 Leadership Principles**

- Know your people and look out for their welfare
- Keep your people informed
- Know yourself and seek self-improvement
- Be technically and tactically proficient
- Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions
- Make sound and timely decisions
- Set the example
- Develop a sense of responsibility in your subordinates
- Ensure that the task is understood, supervised, and accomplished
- Train your people as a team
- Employ your unit in accordance with its capabilities

## Midshipmen Oath of Office

*I, (state your name) having been appointed a midshipman, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign or domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter; so help me God.*

## Commissioning Oath of Office

*I, (state your name) do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter; so help me God.*

## Code of Conduct

On April 17, 1955, President Eisenhower presented to the nation and its military the Code of Conduct. It contains the ideas of some of our most learned and patriotic Americans and is a statement of principles which we Americans in the military must live by and believe in. The Code of Conduct consists of six articles which declare an American's loyalty and devotion to God, country, and fellow Americans. Although primarily a code for prisoner-of-war conduct, the concepts expressed apply not only to the prisoner of war, but also to the American military person who is free to defend this country.

1. I am an American, fighting in the forces which guard my country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense.
2. I will never surrender of my own free will. If in command, I will never surrender the members of my command while they still have the means to resist.
3. If I am captured, I will continue to resist by all means available. I will make every effort to escape and aid others to escape. I will accept neither parole nor special favors from the enemy.
4. If I become a prisoner of war (POW), I will keep faith with my fellow prisoners. I will give no information nor take part in any action which might be harmful to my comrades. If I am senior, I will take command. If not, I will obey the lawful orders of those appointed over me and will back them up in every way.
5. When questioned, should I become a prisoner of war, I am required to give name, rank, service number and date of birth. I will evade answering further questions to the utmost of my ability. I will make no oral or written statements disloyal to my country and its allies or harmful to their cause.
6. I will never forget that I am an American, fighting for freedom, responsible for my actions, and dedicated to the principles which made my country free. I will trust in my God and in the United States of America.

## General Orders of a Sentry

1. To take charge of this post and all government property in view.
2. To walk my post in a military manner, keeping always on the alert, and observing everything that takes place within sight and hearing.
3. To report all violations of orders I am instructed to enforce.
4. To repeat all calls from posts more distant from the guard house than my own.
5. To quit my post only when properly relieved.
6. To receive, obey, and pass on to the sentry who relieves me, all orders from the commanding officer, officer of the deck, and all officers and noncommissioned officers of the watch only.
7. To talk to no one except in the line of duty.
8. To give the alarm in case of fire or disorder.
9. To call the officer of the deck in any case not covered by instructions.
10. To salute all officers, all colors and all standards not cased.
11. To be especially watchful at night, and during the time for challenging, to challenge all persons on or near my post, and to allow no one to pass without the proper authority.

## Four Basic Responses

When addressing a senior officer, the midshipman will come to the position of attention until told otherwise. The following are the four basic responses to the senior officer's questions or requests:

**"Yes, Sir/Ma'am."**

**"No, Sir/Ma'am."**

**"I do not know, Sir/Ma'am, but I will find out."**

**"Aye-Aye, Sir/Ma'am."**

The term **"No excuse, Sir/Ma'am"** will not be tolerated; if an officer asks you a question, you are expected to be mature enough to take responsibility for your actions and to answer truthfully about why you failed to do something.

The response **"Yes, Sir/Ma'am"** is to be used as an affirmative response to a 'yes' or 'no' question.

The use of **"Aye-Aye, Sir/Ma'am"** is an acknowledgment that an order has been received, is understood, and will be carried out.



## Naval Officer Reporting Procedures

When entering a Naval Officer's office, center yourself in the doorway without breaking the plane of the door. Come to attention (do not strike the bulkhead with your hand), and in a normal speaking voice, say: **"Sir/Ma'am, Midshipman (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>) Class \_\_\_\_\_, (Alpha/Bravo/Charlie/Delta) Company, requests permission to speak to (Alpha/Bravo/Charlie/Delta) Company Advisor, LT \_\_\_\_\_, United States Navy."**

If entering the CO's or XO's office: **"Sir/Ma'am, Midshipman (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>) Class \_\_\_\_\_, (Alpha/Bravo/Charlie/Delta) Company, requests permission to speak to the (Commanding/Executive) Officer, CAPT/CDR \_\_\_\_\_, United States Navy."**

Upon being told to enter, center yourself one pace from the desk, come to attention and announce:

**"Good (morning/afternoon/evening) Sir/Ma'am. Midshipman \_\_\_\_\_, reporting as ordered."**

If you were not previously ordered to report to the Naval Officer, center yourself one pace from the desk, come to attention, and announce the reason for the visit. *i.e.*, *"Good morning, Sir. Midshipman Johnson, requests to speak with you about my grades."*

After speaking to the officer, he/she will tell you either "carry-on" or "dismissed". You will come to attention and respond:

**"Dismissed, Aye-Aye, Sir/Ma'am."**

If you are not told to leave, but your business is completed: **"Sir/Ma'am, Midshipman (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>) Class \_\_\_\_\_, (Alpha/Bravo/Charlie/Delta) Company, requests permission to be dismissed."**

While exiting the office you will give the greeting of the day: **"Good (morning/afternoon/evening), Sir/Ma'am."**

*Remember: Do not "sound off" when entering, exiting, or inside a Navy Officer's office.*

## Marine Officer Instructor (MOI) Reporting Procedures

While facing down the length of the NROTC Unit passage, assume the position of attention with the left shoulder approximately 12 inches away from the small section of the bulkhead between the MOI and the AMOI's office.

Raise the left hand and strike the bulkhead with your palm three times and say: **"Good (morning/afternoon/evening) Ma'am, MIDN \_\_\_\_\_ requests permission to speak to Captain Lomeli, Ma'am."**

Upon being told to enter, center yourself one pace from the desk, come to attention and announce:

**"Good (morning/afternoon/evening) Ma'am, MIDN \_\_\_\_\_ reporting as ordered."**

If told to stand at ease, come to parade rest. If told to sit down, take a seat.

Upon completion of your business with the MOI, she will tell you either "carry on" or "dismissed."

Upon being dismissed by the MOI, you will reply: **"Dismissed Aye-Aye Ma'am"**, then take one 15 inch step back with the left foot while moving the left arm forward 6 inches and the right arm back 3 inches, then reassume the position of attention. When at the position of attention, say, **"Good (morning/afternoon/evening) Ma'am,"** execute an about face, step off to the right, and exit the MOI's office.

## Assistant Marine Officer Instructor (AMOI) Reporting Procedures

While facing down the length of the NROTC Unit passage, assume the position of attention with the left shoulder approximately 12 inches away from the bulkhead just outside the AMOI's office. Raise the left hand, strike the bulkhead with your palm three times and say: **"Good (morning/afternoon/evening) Gunnery Sergeant, MIDN \_\_\_\_\_ requests permission to speak to Gunnery Sergeant Roess."**

Upon being told to enter, center yourself one pace from the desk, come to attention and announce:





















































**"Good (morning/afternoon/evening) Gunnery Sergeant Roess, MIDN \_\_\_\_\_ reporting as ordered."**

If told to stand at ease, come to parade rest. If told to sit down, take a seat.

Upon completion of your business with the AMOI, he will tell you either "carry on" or "dismissed."

Upon being dismissed by the AMOI, you will reply: **"Dismissed Aye, Aye Gunnery Sergeant"**, then take one 15 inch step back with the left foot while moving the left arm forward 6 inches and the right arm back 3 inches, then reassume the position of attention. When at the position of attention, say, **"Good (morning/afternoon/evening) Gunnery Sergeant,"** execute an about face, step off to the left, and exit the AMOI's office.

# Insignia of the United States Armed Forces – Officers

O-1	O-2	O-3	O-4	O-5	O-6	O-7	O-8	O-9	O-10	SPECIAL
<b>ARMY</b>										
 Second Lieutenant (2LT)	 First Lieutenant (1LT)	 Captain (CPT)	 Major (MAJ)	 Lieutenant Colonel (LTC)	 Colonel (COL)	 Brigadier General (BG)	 Major General (MG)	 Lieutenant General (LTG)	 General (GEN)	 General of the Army (GA)
<b>MARINES</b>										
 Second Lieutenant (2ndLt)	 First Lieutenant (1stLt)	 Captain (Capt)	 Major (Maj)	 Lieutenant Colonel (LtCol)	 Colonel (Col)	 Brigadier General (BGen)	 Major General (MajGen)	 Lieutenant General (LtGen)	 General (Gen)	
<b>NAVY</b>										
 Ensign (ENS)	 Lieutenant Junior Grade (LTJG)	 Lieutenant (LT)	 Lieutenant Commander (LCDR)	 Commander (CDR)	 Captain (CAPT)	 Rear Admiral Lower Half (RADML)	 Rear Admiral Upper Half (RADM)	 Vice Admiral (VADM)	 Admiral (ADM)	 Fleet Admiral (FADM)
<b>AIR FORCE</b>										
 Second Lieutenant (2d Lt)	 First Lieutenant (1st Lt)	 Captain (Capt)	 Major (Maj)	 Lieutenant Colonel (Lt Col)	 Colonel (Col)	 Brigadier General (Brig Gen)	 Major General (Maj Gen)	 Lieutenant General (Lt Gen)	 General (Gen)	
<b>COAST GUARD</b>										
 Ensign (ENS)	 Lieutenant Junior Grade (LTJG)	 Lieutenant (LT)	 Lieutenant Commander (LCDR)	 Commander (CDR)	 Captain (CAPT)	 Rear Admiral Lower Half (RADML)	 Rear Admiral Upper Half (RADM)	 Vice Admiral (VADM)	 Admiral (ADM)	

# Insignia of the United States Armed Forces – Enlisted

E-1	E-2	E-3	E-4	E-5	E-6	E-7	E-8	E-9	SENIOR ENLISTED APPROVERS
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## ARMY

no insignia											
Private E-1 (PV1)	Private E-2 (PV2)	Private First Class (PFC)	Corporal (CPL) Specialist (SPC)	Sergeant (SGT)	Staff Sergeant (SSG)	Sergeant First Class (SFC)	Master Sergeant (MSG)	First Sergeant (1SG)	Sergeant Major (SGM)	Command Sergeant Major (CSM)	Sergeant Major of the Army (SMA)












## MARINES

no insignia											
Private (Pvt)	Private First (PFC)	Lance Corporal (LCpl)	Corporal (Cpl)	Sergeant (Sgt)	Staff Sergeant (SSgt)	Gunnery Sergeant (GySgt)	Master Sergeant (MSGt)	First Sergeant (1stSgt)	Master Gunnery Sergeant (MAGySgt)	Sergeant Major (SgtMaj)	Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps (SgtMajMC)

## NAVY

no insignia										
Seaman Recruit (SR)	Seaman Apprentice (SA)	Seaman (SN)	Petty Officer Third Class (PO3)	Petty Officer Second Class (PO2)	Petty Officer First Class (PO1)	Chief Petty Officer (CPO)	Senior Chief Petty Officer (SCPO)	Master Chief Petty Officer (MCPO)	Force or Fleet Command Master Chief Petty Officer (FORMC) (FLTMC)	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON)

## AIR FORCE

no insignia													
Airman Basic (AB)	Airman (Amn)	Airman First Class (A1C)	Senior Airman (SrA)	Staff Sergeant (SSgt)	Technical Sergeant (TSgt)	Master Sergeant (MSGt)	First Sergeant (E-7)	Senior Master Sergeant (SMSgt)	First Sergeant (E-8)	Chief Master Sergeant (CMSgt)	First Sergeant (E-9)	Command Master Sergeant (CCM)	Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force (CMSAF)

## COAST GUARD

Seaman Recruit (SR)	Seaman Apprentice (SA)	Seaman (SN)	Petty Officer Third Class (PO3)	Petty Officer Second Class (PO2)	Petty Officer First Class (PO1)	Chief Petty Officer (CPO)	Senior Chief Petty Officer (SCPO)	Master Chief Petty Officer (MCPO)	Command Master Chief (CMC)	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard (MCPG-CG)

## Warrant

### ARMY

W-1	W-2	W-3	W-4	W-5
Warrant Officer (WO1)	Chief Warrant Officer (CW2)	Chief Warrant Officer (CW3)	Chief Warrant Officer (CW4)	Chief Warrant Officer (CW5)

### MARINES

W-1	W-2	W-3	W-4	W-5
Warrant Officer (WO)	Chief Warrant Officer (CW02)	Chief Warrant Officer (CW03)	Chief Warrant Officer (CW04)	Chief Warrant Officer (CW05)

### NAVY

W-2	W-3	W-4
Chief Warrant Officer (CW02)	Chief Warrant Officer (CW03)	Chief Warrant Officer (CW04)

### COAST GUARD

W-2	W-3	W-4
Chief Warrant Officer (CW02)	Chief Warrant Officer (CW03)	Chief Warrant Officer (CW04)

# Uniforms

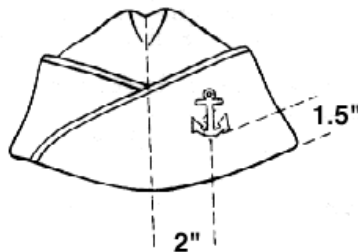
As midshipmen preparing to be officers, your uniform should be worn with pride and professionalism. Uniforms are expected to look outstanding at all times. They should be clean, neat, and pressed, with insignia properly aligned, shoes shined, and the cover worn properly. Additionally, Midshipmen must have a proper shave and haircut, whether in military uniform or civilian attire. Uniforms are to be worn throughout the semester during regular weekday hours, which are 0700 to 1700. Additionally, uniforms will be worn to all classes, including those after 1700. Camouflage utilities are authorized for certain classes, such as chemistry or biology labs, where the wearing of a service uniform would be impractical, but this must be approved through a VTCC special request. Appropriate civilian attire will be worn in public outside of regular weekday hours and on weekends as authorized by the VTCC. Any midshipmen coming to the NROTC Staff offices during working hours must be in the uniform of the day. After working hours, appropriate civilian attire is acceptable. Unit PT gear is only authorized in the NROTC Staff offices if you are conducting business immediately before, or after, organized physical training. Remember, as a midshipman, you should at all times present a neat, professional appearance. Even when out of uniform, you represent more than just yourself, but the country you serve and all the men and women before you who have served this nation in uniform.

## Regulations for Wear of Midshipmen Uniforms

### Midshipman Khaki Uniform

#### Cover:

- Garrison cover will be centered on the head
- The Fouled Anchor will be positioned:
  - Pin it to the left side of the cap in an upright position with the center 2" from the front seam and 1 1/2" above the bottom edge
  - Anchor will have the bitter end facing aft

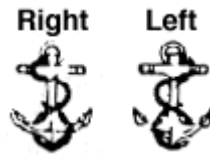


#### Shirt:

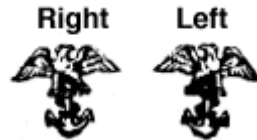
- A plain white crew neck undershirt will be worn underneath
- No wrinkles or incorrect creases
- Proper Military creases:
  - Two down front for males (females have seams), centered on front two chest pocket buttons
  - Three down back, one centered on body, two others equidistant from center crease on left and right
  - Sleeves have creases down the sleeve centered from shoulder line
  - All other areas are pressed flat and are clean of stains
  - Shirt stays are not required
  - Proper military tuck takes all excess material to the outer creases in the rear (not to the sides like in the corps uniform)
- Collar Devices:
  - MIDN 4/C wear no collar devices
  - MIDN 3/C wear the right fouled anchors (bitter ends facing aft)



- MIDN 2/C wear both left and right fouled anchors (bitter ends facing aft)



- MIDN 1/C wear the Eagle-Anchors on both collars



- The anchor and shank of the anchor is parallel to and positioned on the imaginary line bisecting the angle of the collar point. The bottom most point of the anchor shall be one inch from the front and lower edges.



- Marine Option MIDN will follow the same protocol as Navy Option MIDN, but will wear the Eagle Globe and Anchor (EGA) collar devices



- The EGA device shall be positioned so that the center of the globe is 1" from the front and lower edges of the collar. The eagle shall be facing inboard with its wings parallel to the deck.



- Name tag:
  - Worn centered 1/4" (Navy Option) or 1/8" (Marine Option) and centered above the top of the right pocket.

### Trousers:

- Belt:
  - The brass on the belt will be shinned and mark free
  - The belt will be fitted so that the buckle and the brass fitting on the other end of the belt will perfectly line up when worn
  - Female midshipmen wear the belt in such a manner that the belt tip points to the midshipman's right; male midshipmen wear the belt so that the belt tip points to the midshipman's left.
  - The end without the belt tip will be in line with the shirt edge and trouser fly edge to make a straight gig-line

- Trousers:
  - There will be one defined crease down the middle of the front and back of the trousers
  - There will be no wrinkles or incorrect creases
  - All other areas are pressed flat and are clean of stains
  - The trousers should fall to mid-heel in the back and should have a slight break in the front crease.
  - Rear trouser pockets should be kept buttoned and all pockets should be free of bulky items

#### Shoes and Socks:

- Socks:
  - Must be black and at least at lower calf height
- Low Quarters:
  - Must wear black leather low quarters
  - Shoes will be maintained in a highly polished condition at all times.
  - The sole edges of all shoes should be cleaned and polished

## **Midshipmen Summer Whites Uniform**

#### Cover:

Combination cover will be centered on the head with bottom edge parallel to and 1-1/2 inch above the eyebrows.

- The cover device should be centered on the cover.
- Golden Eagle cap screws must be screwed in tightly and aligned.

#### Shirt:

- A plain white crew neck undershirt will be worn underneath
- No wrinkles or incorrect creases
- Proper military creases:
  - Two down front for males (females have seams), centered on front two chest pocket buttons
  - Three down back, one centered on body, two others equidistant from center crease on left and right
  - Sleeves have creases down the sleeve centered from shoulder line
  - All other areas are pressed flat and are clean of stains
  - Shirt stays are not required
  - Proper military tuck takes all excess material to the outer creases in the rear (not to the sides like in the corps uniform)
- Shoulder boards:
  - MIDN 4/C have no stripes and a fouled anchor.
  - MIDN 3/C have one diagonal stripe and a fouled anchor
  - MIDN 2/C have two diagonal stripes and a fouled anchor
  - MIDN 1/C have one horizontal stripe and a fouled anchor
  - The bitter end of the fouled anchor on each board must point aft.
- Name tag:
  - Worn centered 1/4" (Navy Option) or 1/8" (Marine Option) and centered above the top of the right pocket.

#### Trousers:

- Belt:
  - The brass on the belt will be shinned and mark free
  - The belt will be fitted so that the buckle and the brass fitting on the other end of the belt will perfectly line up when worn
  - Female midshipmen wear the belt in such a manner that the belts tip points to the midshipman's right; male midshipmen wear the belt so that the belts tip points to the midshipman's left.
  - The end without the belt tip will be in line with the shirt edge and trouser fly edge to make a straight gig-line

- Trousers:
  - White trousers
  - There will be one defined crease down the middle of the front and back of the trousers
  - There will be no wrinkles or incorrect creases
  - All other areas are pressed flat and are clean of stains
  - The trousers should fall to mid-heel in the back and should have a slight break in the front crease.
  - Rear trouser pockets should be kept buttoned and all pockets should be free of bulky items

#### Shoes and Socks:

- Socks:
  - Must be white and at least at lower calf height. Made of undecorated, plain or ribbed knitted material.
- Low Quarters:
  - Must wear white leather low quarters
  - Shoes will be maintained in a highly polished condition at all times.
  - The sole edges of all shoes should be cleaned and polished

## **Appropriate Civilian Attire**

When in public (i.e., outside of the dorm) and not in uniform or PT gear, midshipmen are expected to be in appropriate civilian attire. When in civilian attire, hats (of note, a gentleman never wears a hat indoors) and sunglasses will be removed while indoors. PT gear is not considered appropriate civilian attire but shall be worn when authorized. Appropriate civilian attire consists of the following:

- **Clean shave**
- **Regulation haircut**
- **Collared shirt**
  - Free of wrinkles
  - Shirts do not have to be tucked in if collared and designed to be worn outside trousers.
  - Shirts will not contain visible print that is offensive, racist, sexist, or otherwise unprofessional in nature.
- **Trousers, jeans, or shorts**
  - Free of wrinkles
  - Not frayed or excessively worn. Intentional fraying by a clothing item's manufacturer is not acceptable for appropriate civilian attire.
  - Shorts with dangling drawstrings are not appropriate.
- **Belt**
  - Threaded through all belt loops and not hanging loose at the end.
- **Socks**
  - Socks are not required if boat shoes or sandals are worn..
- **Shoes**
  - Sandals with a heel strap are authorized.
  - Flip-flop style footwear is not appropriate civilian attire.

More detailed regulations are available at <http://www.usnavy.vt.edu/reference/reference.htm> under "Policy Letter Appropriate Civilian Attire." *Remember, use common sense and always look professional!*

## Physical Training (PT) Uniform

The NROTC PT uniform will be worn for authorized PT sessions and for any ProLab or NROTC event in which PT gear is specified as the uniform. PT gear is not authorized to be worn in the NROTC Staff offices unless conducting business before or after authorized PT sessions. PT gear is not authorized for wear in any campus dining facility.

The NROTC Virginia Tech PT uniform consists of the following:

### Navy Companies:

- **Warm Weather:**
  - Gold Navy shirt (or company shirt, if prescribed by Company Advisor)
  - Blue Navy shorts
  - White socks (ankle socks, crew, or calf socks are acceptable)
  - Proper running shoes (Minimalist Shoes are acceptable)
  - Compression Shorts (optional): Acceptable as long as they are black or navy blue and do not extend past the shorts when standing.
- **Cold Weather:**
  - Warm weather uniform items, plus:
    - Blue Navy sweatshirt
    - Blue Navy sweatpants
    - VTCC-issue watch cap
    - VTCC-issue black gloves

### Raider Company:

- **Warm Weather:**
  - Battalion PT Gear
    - PT shirt
    - Shorts
    - White socks (ankle length)
    - Proper running shoes
  - Company PT Gear
    - Green Shirt
    - Green Shorts
    - White socks (ankle length)
    - Proper running shoes
- **Cold Weather:**
  - Warm weather uniform items, plus:
    - Sweats
    - Fleece watch cap
    - VTCC-issue black knit gloves

## Civilian PT Gear

If conducting physical training on their own time, midshipmen are allowed to wear gym shorts, a t-shirt, and appropriate athletic shoes. For colder temperatures, pants and a jacket/sweatshirt that is appropriate for physical training should be worn as well. PT gear will not be worn in a dining hall at any time. Wearing PT gear to a dining hall before or after PT is not authorized.



# NROTC Unit Awards

The NROTC Unit recognizes midshipmen for outstanding performance, meritorious achievement, and active participation. Criteria for NROTC Unit awards are established, authorized, and awarded by the Commanding Officer for individual achievements and participation in unit activities. The Commanding Officer will present midshipmen who earn an NROTC award with a ribbon and certificate during a special recognition ceremony held during the academic year.

NROTC and local awards ribbons are only authorized for wear on NROTC Program uniforms (Service Khaki, Summer White, and Service Dress Blue uniforms) at NROTC Unit Virginia Tech events at the Commanding Officer's discretion. Ribbons may also be worn on VTCC uniforms by permission of the Commandant of the VTCC. NROTC awards cannot be worn with official Navy awards and only one or the other can be worn (not both together). NROTC and local awards, Unit insignia, and VTCC insignia are not authorized for wear during summer training. Ribbons shall be centered above the left breast pocket 1/4" (Navy Option) or 1/8" (Marine Option).

The following ribbons, listed in order of precedence, are the standardized NROTC Program ribbons that may be awarded by the Virginia Tech NROTC Unit:



All Around Performance Ribbon. Awarded to the midshipman ranked first in their academic class for the most outstanding performance in the field of academics, physical fitness, community service and military criteria. See Chapter 5 of the Midshipman Handbook for more information on the midshipmen evaluation system and class ranking.



Academic Achievement Ribbon. Awarded to midshipmen after earning a semester GPA of 3.50 to 3.69.



Academic Excellence Ribbon. Awarded to midshipmen after earning a semester GPA of 3.70 or higher.



Commendation Award Ribbon. Awarded for recognition of meritorious achievements. Midshipmen shall be nominated through their chain of command.



Leadership Award Ribbon. Awarded to midshipmen who have shown exemplary conduct and leadership. Midshipmen shall be nominated through their chain of command.



Community Service Ribbon. Awarded to those midshipmen recognized for meritorious services to the community. At least fifteen recorded hours are required per semester. Midshipmen shall be nominated through their chain of command.



Physical Fitness Ribbon. Awarded to midshipmen who achieve 90 points or better on the PRT (Navy Option) or 285 or higher on the PFT (Marine Option).



Cruise Ribbon. Awarded to those midshipmen who successfully completed either a Second Class or First Class Summer Training Cruise. Wear with one gold star for completing both cruises.

The following individual NROTC awards are awarded by the NROTC Unit and presented at the annual spring VTCC Awards Ceremony. These organization award ribbons, listed in order of precedence, are ranked less than the Leadership Award and higher than the Community Service ribbon.

Association of the United States Navy Patriotism Award  
Naval Submarine League Award  
Society of American Military Engineers  
Daughters of the American Revolution Award  
American Legion Academic Award  
American Legion Military Excellence Award  
National Defense Industrial Association Award  
Armed Forces Communication and Electronics Association  
Honor Certificate  
Reserve Officer Association Award

Military Officers Association of America Award  
Veterans of Foreign Wars Award  
Society of the War of 1812 Award  
National Sojourners' Award for Americanism  
Daughters of Founders and Patriots of America  
Military Order of Purple Heart  
Sons of the American Revolution Award  
Military Order of the World Wars Award  
American Veterans of World War II Award  
Virginia Society of Founders and Patriots Award

#### Ribbon Devices

- Stars. Center a single star on the ribbon with two rays pointing down. Place multiple stars in a horizontal line centered on the ribbon.
  - Gold Stars. Wear 5/16" gold stars for second and subsequent awards and ribbons.



- Silver Stars. Wear 5/16" silver stars in lieu of five gold stars.



## Special Request, Leave, and Medical Chit Instructions

Special requests made during the year, such as a request for missing any Navy function, missing a class, or going home on leave needs to be approved by the NROTC Chain of Command.

*Note: If you are going to miss both a VTCC and a NROTC event, you must submit a special request to both Chains of Command.* Download the appropriate request chit from the VT NROTC website and submit through your Midshipmen Chain of Command to your Company Advisor. The links to the request chit forms are found on the VT NROTC website under the “Forms” page. Examples and instructions to properly complete most of these forms are also found on the “Forms” page of the NROTC Unit website. *Note: Failure to fill out the form correctly and in a timely manner may result in a delay in responding to the request or outright disapproval.*

### Leave Request:

Leave requests shall be submitted at least two weeks in advance to the requested leave dates. The only exceptions are if the information about the request is not known until late, or if the request is emergency leave. In either case the chit must be passed up the Chain of Command as soon as possible. Any travel or absence that involved missing a NROTC event or class requires a leave chit. Remember to request leave through the VTCC (may be done concurrent).

[http://www.usnavy.vt.edu/documents/NROTCUVPI\\_LEAVE\\_CHIT.pdf](http://www.usnavy.vt.edu/documents/NROTCUVPI_LEAVE_CHIT.pdf)

### Medical Temporary Light Duty (TLD):

Use this form to document sickness/injury requiring light duty as prescribed by your doctor or other medical professional. Attach your doctor's note and complete the required fields to indicate the reason, limitations, and duration of TLD.

[http://www.usnavy.vt.edu/documents/NROTCUVPI\\_MEDICAL\\_TLD\\_CHIT.pdf](http://www.usnavy.vt.edu/documents/NROTCUVPI_MEDICAL_TLD_CHIT.pdf)

### Special Request:

Special requests of a routine nature that do not require a more formal letter/memorandum routed through your Company Advisor may be requested through this form. Examples include requests to join VTCC, NROTC, or university organizations such as AFSOPT or NAVSOC.

<http://www.usnavy.vt.edu/documents/RequestChit.pdf>

**IMPORTANT:** Consult your Company Advisor before submitting any course drop, change of major request, ProLab waiver, joining Greek Life, or other non-routine special requests not covered by any of the above forms! Your Company Advisor will instruct you on how to fill out a formal written request.

## **Anchors Aweigh**

LT Charles A. Zimmermann, USN (1907)

Stand, Navy, out to sea,  
Fight our battle cry.  
We'll never change our course,  
So vicious foe steer shy-y-y-y.  
Roll out the TNT, Anchors Aweigh.  
And sink their bones to Davy Jones, hooray!

Anchors Aweigh my boys, Anchors Aweigh.  
Farewell to college joys,  
We sail at break of day-ay-ay-ay.  
Through our last night on shore,  
Drink to the foam.  
Until we meet once more,  
Here's wishing you a happy voyage home.

## **Marines' Hymn**

Unknown Author – Adopted in 1919

From the Halls of Montezuma To the shores of Tripoli,  
We fight our country's battles  
In the air, on land, and sea.  
First to fight for right and freedom,  
And to keep our honor clean,  
We are proud to claim the title  
Of United States Marine.

Our flag's unfurl'd to every breeze  
From dawn to setting sun;  
We have fought in every clime and place  
Where we could take a gun.  
In the snow of far-off northern lands  
And in sunny tropic scenes,  
You will find us always on the job  
The United States Marines.

Here's health to you and to our Corps  
Which we are proud to serve;  
In many a strife we've fought for life  
And never lost our nerve.  
If the Army and the Navy  
Ever look on Heaven's scenes,  
They will find the streets are guarded  
By United States Marines.

## Important dates in Naval History

- 1775** During the American Revolution, the thirteen colonies were completely devoid of a combat-ready naval force. On October 13, Congress placed Ezek Hopkins in command of the Continental Navy, a squadron of converted merchantmen.
- 1775** A resolution from the Continental Congress forms the Continental Marines on November 10<sup>th</sup>, and the first Marines to enter the service of our nation enlisted at Tun Tavern in Philadelphia on this date. This date is therefore considered the Birthday of the Marine Corps.
- 1779** In August, Captain John Paul Jones, in command of the **USS BONHOMME RICHARD**, outfought **HMS SERAPIS**, a new and more powerful vessel. When asked if he would strike his colors, which had been shot away, Jones responded, "I have not yet begun to fight."
- 1794** Congress authorizes the building of six new frigates, (**USS CONSTITUTION**, **USS PRESIDENT**, **USS UNITED STATES**, **USS CHESAPEAKE**, **USS CONSTELLATION**, **USS CONGRESS**) to protect merchant shipping in the Atlantic from the French and in the Mediterranean from the Barbary Coast.
- 1799** The **USS CONSTELLATION** defeats the **INSURGENTE** during the Quasi War with France.
- 1803** Commodore William Bainbridge runs **USS PHILADELPHIA** aground in Tripoli Harbor. The ship is consequently captured by the Tripolitans. Lieutenant Stephen Decatur leads a crew of volunteers in the ketch **INTREPID** into the enemy's harbor and burns the **PHILADELPHIA**.
- 1805** Lieutenant Presley O'Bannon becomes the first man to raise the American flag over foreign soil during the First Barbary Wars. His successful attack in the Battle of Derna, Tripoli, gave the Marines' Hymn its immortal, "to the shores of Tripoli." Due to his bravery during the battle, he was presented with the first Mameluke sword that Marine Officers carry to this day.
- 1812** During the War of 1812 against Britain, U.S. frigates out fight British ships in single ship actions.
- 1813** On Lake Erie, Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry defeats a British fleet. After the battle he replied, "We have met the enemy and they are ours." This action gave the United States command of Lake Erie.
- 1844** The **USS PRINCETON**, the first screw warship, is launched.
- 1846** During the Mexican War, a fleet under Commodore Matthew C. Perry blockades Mexico.
- 1861** At the outset of the Civil War, the Union had 90 commissioned warships, but only 42 were able to get underway. By the end of the war, it had more than 650.
- 1862** **CSS VIRGINIA** fights **USS MONITOR** in the Battle of Hampton Roads, the first battle between ironclads.
- 1883** Congress appropriates money for the first all steel hulled U.S. warships.
- 1890** Alfred Thayer Mahan published *The Influence of Seapower on History*.
- 1898** In February, **USS MAINE** explodes in Havana harbor. The United States declares war on Spain. Admiral George Dewey defeats the Spanish in Manila Bay. Admiral William T. Sampson defeats the Spanish at Santiago, Chile.
- 1900** The first submarine commissioned into the U.S. Navy. The **USS HOLLAND IV (SS-1)** is launched, marking the beginning of submarines in the U.S. Navy.
- 1907** President Theodore Roosevelt sends the "Great White Fleet" around the world on a two year voyage.

- 1910** November 14, Eugene Ely took off from a wooden platform installed on the scout cruiser **USS BIRMINGHAM (CL-2)** in Hampton Roads and landed safely on shore. This flight is considered to be the birth of Naval Aviation.
- 1917** In April, a United States battle squadron sails to England to join the British Grand Fleet.
- 1939** United States ships begin patrolling the Atlantic Ocean for German submarines.
- 1941** The United States begins escorting convoys to Europe. Congress authorizes a large program of military aid to the Allies called the "lend-lease" program.
- 1942** During the Battle of Midway United States carrier-based planes inflict heavy damage on Japanese carriers. The battle is considered the turning point of the War in the Pacific. Marines land on Guadalcanal.
- 1944** Marianas Islands captured from Japan. Battle of Leyte Gulf. The United States defeat a weak Japanese fleet.
- 1945** By mid-year United States submarines were responsible for two-thirds of the sinking of merchantmen. A peace treaty is signed aboard **USS MISSOURI** in Tokyo Bay in September.
- 1947** The National Security Act is signed by Harry Truman on July 26, reorganizing the military and forming the United States Air Force, National Security Council, and the Central Intelligence Agency.
- 1950** On June 25, North Korea invades South Korea. United Nation forces are driven back to Pusan, South Korea., General MacArthur's forces make an amphibious landing at Inchon, South Korea, in September.
- 1955** **USS NAUTILUS** is "Underway on nuclear power."
- 1958** United States Sixth Fleet intervenes in Lebanon at request of President Cha Moun. In August Seventh Fleet makes a show of force off the Chinese coast to stop the Communist bombardment of Nationalist Islands. The Chinese cease shelling.
- 1961** Carrier patrols are established and the Marines are readied for emergency operations in response to Cuban threats. Cuba backs down.
- 1962** On October 22, President Kennedy declares a quarantine of Cuba to stop the Soviets from installing ballistic missiles there. This is known as the Cuban Missile Crisis.
- 1966** In the Vietnam War the "Brown Water Navy" patrols the Mekong Delta until 1969.
- 1967** The Navy reactivates the battleship **USS NEW JERSEY** for bombardment of North Vietnam.
- 1975** **USS MAYAGUEZ** is seized by Cambodians. Navy and Marine Corps forces quickly respond and rescue ship and crew.
- 1983** In response to a Marxist coup, the United States invades the small island of Grenada during Operation Urgent Fury.
- 1983** Virginia Tech Naval ROTC unit is founded.
- 1983** On October 23, at the Beirut International Airport, a truck full of explosives was driven into the lobby of the Marines headquarters and the explosives detonated, leveling the building and killing 241 American servicemen.
- 1986** After recovering evidence that Libyan leader Colonel Moammar Qaddafi had backed terrorist attacks, the United States Navy takes part in an aerial attack on Libya.
- 1987** **USS STARK** is accidentally attacked by an Iraqi jet firing an Exocet missile; forty-seven United States Sailors die. The United states re-flags seven Kuwaiti tankers and begins escorts operations through the Gulf.

- 1988** In April, the United States Naval forces in the Persian Gulf launch a strike against Iranian forces in response to the **USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS** striking an Iranian mine.
- 1990** U.S. Naval and Marine forces go to Persian Gulf in response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.
- 1991** Operation Desert Storm begins January 17, 1991.
- 1996** U.S. Navy launches 31 Tomahawk missiles into Iraq after Iraqi forces breach safe haven in northern Iraq.
- 2000** Terrorists bomb the **USS COLE (DDG 67)** while harbored in the Yemeni port of Aden on October 12. Seventeen Sailors were killed in the attack.
- 2001** On September 11, terrorists from Al-Qaeda flew two planes into the World Trade Towers in New York City, felling the towers. Another plane is flown into the Pentagon and another crash-landed in Pennsylvania that was believed to be headed towards another target in Washington D.C. In total, 2,976 people were killed, making it the deadliest terrorist attack on American soil.
- 2001** United States forces invade Afghanistan in October, marking the beginning of the War on Terror.
- 2003** Operation Iraqi Freedom begins on March 20.
- 2011** United States Special Forces infiltrate a compound near Abbottabad, Pakistan and kill Osama Bin Laden, the founder of Al-Qaeda and the FBI's most wanted individual.
- 2011** Operation Iraqi Freedom ends on December 31
- 2012** The **USS ENTERPRISE**, the first Nuclear powered aircraft carrier, is decommissioned from active service on 01 December, 2012. She was in active service for 50 years.

## History of Virginia Tech NROTC Unit

The Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps was created in 1926 as an avenue to offer college students commissions in the Naval Reserve. The program was established at six universities, offering students the naval science courses required to supplement their education and qualify them for commissioning. The initial program was very successful, especially during the years of World War II when the need for well-trained naval officers was great.

By the end of World War II, the United States was firmly established as the world's major sea power, and the requirement for a larger corps of regular career officers was readily apparent. To meet this need, Congress enacted the Holloway Plan in 1946. This plan provided for expansion of the NROTC program to produce regular career officers to supplement those trained at the U.S. Naval Academy. Both programs were expanded to include women in 1972.

NROTC at Virginia Tech was established in 1983 as Unit Number 60 in the program. There were initially 105 students enrolled. Instruction is conducted and supervised by the Commanding Officer in his capacity as Head of the Department of Naval Science and Professor of Naval Science (PNS).

# Naval Terminology

**Above:** Upward, higher, as to go above; above the flight deck

**Aft:** Toward the stern

**Ahoy:** Once a dreaded war cry of the Vikings is now a distinct nautical hail.

**Athwartship:** At a right angle to the centerline, as a passageway which runs from port to starboard as opposed to fore and aft.

**Aye Aye:** Aye is old English for "yes," probably taken from Latin verb "aio," *to affirm*.

**Below:** Downward, beneath, as to lay below; below the flight deck.

**Bitter End:** The end of anchor chain secured aboard.

**Blue Jacket:** The first uniform that was ever officially sanctioned for sailors in the Royal Navy was a short blue jacket open at the front. There were no definite uniform regulations for U.S. enlisted men in the War of 1812, but many wore short blue jackets.

**Boatswain:** Warrant officer or petty officer who is foreman of a ship's crew and is sometimes also third or fourth mate.

**Bow:** The forward end of a ship or boat.

**Bridge:** Area in the superstructure from which the ship is operated.

**Bulkhead:** A vertical partition, never called a wall.

**Chow:** Food

**Chit:** (Hindu word Chitti) Letter, note, bill, voucher, or receipt. It came from the old East India Company.

**Dead Reckoning:** A reckoning kept so as to give the theoretical position of a ship without the aid of objects on land, of sights, etc. It consists of plotting on a chart the distance believed to have been covered along each course which has been steered.

**Deck:** 1. Shipboard floor, horizontal plating which divides a ship into layers.  
2. Shipboard floors from main deck and below numbered 1, 2, 3.

**Fantail:** The after end of the main deck.

**Fathom:** From Anglo-Saxon *faehom*; Dutch *vadem*; latin *patene*, act of stretching two arms wide as rough measurement of six feet.

**Flag Officer:** An officer of the Navy above the grade of Captain.

**Fo'c'sle:** Forward section of the deck on which the anchor handling equipment is located.

**Frame:** An athwartship beam which provides structural strength to a ship.

**Galley:** Space where food is prepared. Never called a kitchen.

**Gangway:** From Anglo-Saxon *gang*, to go; make a passage in, or cut out, or through.

**Hatch:** A square or rectangular access in a deck or bulkhead.

**Island:** Superstructure on the starboard side of the flight deck on an aircraft carrier.

**Ladder:** A shipboard flight of steps. Never called stairs.

**Level:** Shipboard floors above the main deck. Numbered 01, 02, and 03.

**Main Deck:** Highest watertight (complete) deck aboard ship. On aircraft carriers, the hangar deck is the main deck.

**Mess:** 1. Place where meals are eaten, such as Mess Decks, Captain's Mess, etc.

2. A group who takes meals together, such as officer's mess or chief's mess.

**Midwatch:** ("The Mid") The watch which begins at 0000 and ends at 0400.

**Mid Rats:** (Midnight Rations) Meal served around midnight for those crewmembers going on or off watch.

**Midshipman:** Men or boys originally stationed amidships to carry messages, to bring up ammunition, and to relay message from aft to the gun decks. It was in 1815 that midshipmen became a naval rank in the British service. It is now used as a term for those training to be officers.

**OOD:** Officer of the Deck

**Overhead:** The underside of the deck above. Never called a ceiling.



**Passageway:** A corridor used for interior horizontal movement aboard ship.

**Port:** To the left of the centerline when facing forward.

**Scuttle:** Round, watertight opening in a hatch.

**Scuttlebutt:** 1. Drinking fountain.

2. A rumor.

**Second Deck:** First deck below the main deck.

**Secure:** 1. To make fast, as to secure a line to a cleat.

2. To cease, as to secure from a fire drill.

**Sickbay:** Shipboard space used as a hospital or medical center.

**Square away:** To put in proper place, to make things shipshape.

**Starboard:** Right of centerline when facing forward.

**Stateroom:** A living compartment for an officer.

**Stern:** The aftermost part of a vessel.

**Topside:** General term referring to a weather deck.

**Wake:** Trail left by a vessel moving through the water.

**Wardroom:** Officer's messing compartment.

**Weather Deck:** Any deck exposed to the elements; a deck outside the skin of the ship.

## Naval Terminology Origins

**ADMIRAL:** An Admiral is the senior ranking flag officer in the U.S. Navy, but his title comes from the name given the senior ranking officer in the Moorish army of many years ago. A Moorish chief was an “emir,” and the chief of all chiefs was an “emir-al.” Our English word is derived directly from the Moorish.

**BAMBOOZLE:** In today's Navy when you intentionally deceive someone, usually as a joke, you are said to have bamboozled them. The word was used in the days of sail, also, but the intent was not hilarity. Bamboozle meant to deceive a passing vessel as to your ship's origin or nationality by flying an ensign other than your own—a common practice of pirates.

**BINNACLE LIST:** Many novice sailors, confusing the words ‘binnacle’ and barnacle, have wondered what their illnesses had to do with crusty growths found on the hull of a ship. Their confusion is understandable.

Binnacle is defined as the stand or housing for the ship's compass located on the bridge. The term binnacle list, in lieu of sick list, originated years ago when ship' corpsmen used to place a list of the sick on the binnacle each morning to inform the captain about the crew's health. After long practice, it came to be called binnacle list.

**BITTER END:** As any able-bodied seaman can tell you, a turn of a line around a bitt, those wooden or iron posts sticking through a ship's deck, is called a bitter. Thus, the last of the line secured to the bitts is known as the bitter end. Nautical usage has somewhat expanded the original definition in that today the end of any line, secured to bitts or not, is called a bitter end.

The landlubbing phrase “stick to the bitter end” and “faithful to the bitter end” are derivations of the nautical term and refer to anyone who insists on adhering to a course of action without regard to consequences.

**BOATSWAIN, COXSWAIN, SKIFFSWAIN:** As required by 17<sup>th</sup> century lay, British ships-of-war carried three smaller boats—the boat, the cock boat and the skiff. The boat—or gig—was

usually used by the captain to go ashore and was the largest of the three. The cock boat was a very small rowboat used as a ship's tender. The skiff was a lightweight all-purpose vessel. The suffix "Swain" means keeper, thus the keepers of the boat, cock and skiff were called boatswain, coxswain and skiffswain respectively. Until 1949, a boatswain's mate 3<sup>rd</sup> class in the Navy was called a coxswain.

**BOATSWAIN'S PIPE:** No self-respecting boatswain's mate would dare admit he couldn't blow his pipe in a manner above reproach. This pipe, which is the emblem of the boatswain and his mates has an ancient history.

On the ancient row-galleys, the boatswain used his pipe to "call the stroke." Later because its shrill tune could be heard above most of the activity on board, it was used to signal various happenings such as knock-off and the boarding of officials. So essential was this signaling device to the well-being of the ship that it became a badge of office and honor in the British and American Navy of the sailing ships.

**BOKOO:** Often an old salt will boast that he has had bokoo this or has done something bokoo times during his seafaring years. The picturesque sound of the work "bokoo" may cause one to wonder how it came to mean "many" or "a lot."

Actually, bokoo is a legitimate French word, "beaucoup," meaning "very many." Americanization changed the spelling and pronunciation but the meaning remains the same.

**BULLY BOYS:** Bully boys, a term prominent in Navy chanties and poems, means in its strictest sense, "beef eating sailors." Sailors of the Colonial Navy had a daily menu of an amazingly elastic substance called bully beef, actually beef jerky. The item appeared so frequently on the messdeck that it naturally lent its name to the sailors who had to eat it.

As an indication of the beef's texture and chewability, it was also called "salt junk" alluding to the rope yarn used for caulking the ship's seams.

**BUMBOATS:** Bumboats, in spite of their name, were not waterborne geedunks piloted by bums or hobos. They are small boats used by native hucksters and gizmo salesmen to transport their wares to ships anchored in the storm. The name is a hand-me-down from "boomboats" as the craft were once permitted to tie up to the boat boom of a ship. An early Low German spelling was "bumboat" and in that form it was taken up by American sailors.

**CAPTAIN'S MAST:** The term "mast" refers to the ceremony that takes place when the captain awards non-judicial punishment for regulation infractions or official recognition for "jobs well done." In the days of sail, ceremonies were held under the mainmast on a regular basis and usually on a Sunday morning just before divine services. Consequently, the ceremony came to be known as "mast" in recognition of the locality of the presentation.

**CARRY ON:** In the days of sail, the officer of the deck kept a weather eye constantly on the slightest change in wind so a sail could be reefed or added as necessary to ensure the fastest headway. Whenever a good breeze came along, the order to "carry on" would be given. It meant to hoist every bit of canvas the yards could carry. Pity the poor sailor whose weather eye failed him and the ship was caught partially reefed when a good breeze arrived.

Through the centuries the term's connotation has changed somewhat. Today, the Bluejackets Manual defines "Carry on" as an order to resume work; work not as grueling as two centuries ago.

**CHAPLAINS:** Chaplains, the military men of the cloth, are rightly named according to French legend. It seems that Saint Martin of Tours shared his cloak—by splitting it in half—with a

beggar on a wintry day at the gates of Amiens, France. The cloak was preserved since it was believed to have been shared with Christ and became the sacred banner of French Kings. The officer tasked with the care of the cloak and carrying it into battle was called the chaplain or cloak bearer. Chaplain comes from the French word “chapele” meaning a short cloak. Later, priests or chaplains, rather than field officers, were charged with the care of the sacred cloak.

**CHARLEY NOBLE:** Charley Noble is the enlisted man’s name for the galley smoke stack or funnel. The funnel is said to have been named after a stern old merchant captain who discovered that the galley’s smoke stack was made of copper and therefore should receive a daily polishing. In today’s Navy, it is the custom to send green recruits to find Charley Noble, a hunt which causes endless amusement for the ship’s veterans.

**CHEWING THE FAT:** “God made the vittles, but the devil made the cook,” was a popular saying used by seafaring men in the last century when salted beef was staple diet aboard ship.

This tough cured beef, suitable only for long voyages when nothing else was as cheap or would keep as well, required prolonged chewing to make it edible. Men often chewed on chunk for hours, just as if it were chewing gum and referred to this practice as “chewing the fat.”

**CHIT:** One tradition carried on in the Navy is the use of the “chit.” It is a carry over from the days when Hindu traders used slips of paper called “citthi” for money, so they wouldn’t have to carry heavy bags of gold and silver.

British sailors shortened the word to chit and applied it to their mess vouchers. Its most outstanding use in the Navy today is for drawing pay and requesting leave and liberty. But the term is currently applied to almost any piece of paper from a pass to an official letter requesting some privilege.

**CROW’S NEST:** The crow (the bird, not the rating badge) was an essential part of the early sailors’ navigation equipment. These land-lubbing fowl were carried on board to help the navigator determine where the closest land lay when the weather prevented sighting the shore visually. In cases of poor visibility, a crow was released and the navigator plotted a course that corresponded with the bird’s because it invariably headed toward land.

The crow’s nest was situated high in the main mast where the look-out stood to watch. Often, he shared this lofty perch with a crow or two since the crows’ cages were kept there: hence the “crow’s nest.”

**DEAD HORSE:** British seamen, apt to be ashore and unemployed for considerable periods between voyages, generally preferred to live in boarding houses near the piers while waiting for sailing ships to take on crews. During these periods of unrestricted liberty, many ran out of money so the innkeepers carried them on credit until hired for another voyage.

When a seaman was booked on a ship, he was customarily advanced a month’s wages, if needed, to pay off his boarding house debt. Then, while paying back the ship’s master, he worked for nothing but “salt horse” the first several weeks aboard. Salt horse was the staple diet of early sailors and it wasn’t exactly tasty cuisine. Consisting of a low quality beef that had been heavily salted, the salt horse was tough to chew and even harder to digest.

When the debt had been repaid, the salt horse was said to be dead and it was a time for great celebration among the crew. Usually, an effigy of a horse was constructed from odds and ends, set afire and then cast afloat to the cheers and hilarity of the ex-debtors.

Today, just as in the days of sail, “dead horse” refers to a debt to the government for advanced pay. Sailors today don’t burn effigies when the debt is paid but they are no less jubilant than their counterparts of old.

**DEVIL TO PAY:** Today the expression “devil to pay” is used primarily as a means of conveying an unpleasant and impending happening. Originally, the expression denoted a specific task aboard ship as caulking the ship’s longest seam.

The “devil” was the longest seam on the wooden ship and caulking was done with “pay” or pitch. This grueling task of paying the devil was despised by every seaman and the expression came to denote any unpleasant task.

**DITTY BAGS:** Ditty bag (or box) was originally called “ditto bag” because it contained at least two of everything: two needles, two spools of thread, two buttons, etc. With the passing of years, the ‘ditto’ was dropped in favor of ‘ditty’ and remains so today.

Before World War I, the navy issued ditty boxes made of wood and styled after foot lockers. These carried the personal gear and some clothes of the sailor.

Today the ditty bag is still issued to recruits and contains a sewing kit, toiletry articles and personal items such as writing paper and pens.

**DOG WATCH:** Dog watch is the name given to the 1600-1800 and the 1800-2000 watches aboard the ship. The 1600-2000 four-hour watch was originally split to prevent men from always having to stand the same watches daily. As a result, sailors dodge the same daily routine; hence they are dodging the watch or standing the dodge watch.

In its corrupted form, dodge became dog and the procedure is referred to as “dogging the watch” or standing the “dog watch.”

**DUNGAREES:** Webster defines dungaree as “a coarse kind of fabric worn by the poorer class of people and also used for *tents and sail*.” We find it hard to picture our favorite pair of dungarees flying from the mast of a sailing ship, but in those days sailors often made both their working clothes and hammocks out of discarded sail cloth.

The cloth used then wasn’t as well woven nor was it dyed blue, but it served the purpose. Dungarees worn by sailors of the Continental Navy were cut directly from old sails and remained tan in color just as they had been when filled with wind.

After battles, it was the practice of both the American and British Navies for captains to report more sail lost in battle than actually was the case so the crew would have cloth to mend their hammocks and make new clothes. Since the cloth was called dungaree, clothes made from the fabric borrowed the name.

**ENSIGN:** The name given the Navy’s junior most officers dates back to medieval times. Lords honored their squires by allowing them to carry the ensign (banner) into battle. Later these squires became known by the name of the banner itself.

In the U.S. Army the lowest ranking officer was originally called “ensign” because he, like the squire of old, would one day lead troops into battle and was training to that end. It is still the lowest commissioned rank in the British army today.

When the U.S. Navy was established, the Americans carried on the tradition and adapted the rank of ensign as the title for its junior commissioned officers.

**FATHOM:** Fathom was originally a land measuring term derived from the Anglo Saxon word *faetm* meaning literally the embracing arms or to embrace. In those days, most measurements were based on average sizes of parts of the body such as the hand or foot, or were derived

from average lengths between to points on the body. A fathom is the average distance from fingertip to fingertip of the outstretched arms of a man, about six feet.

Even today in our nuclear Navy sailors can be seen “guesstimating” the length of lines by using the Anglo Saxon fingertip to fingertip method; crude but still reliable. And every housewife measuring cloth today knows that from the tip of her nose to the tips of her fingers of one outstretch arm equals one yard.

**GEEDUNK:** To most sailors the word geedunk means ice cream, candy, potato chips and other assorted snacks, or even the place where they can be purchased. No one, however, knows for certain where the term originated; there are several plausible theories:

In the 1920's a comic strip character named Harold Teen and his friends spent a great amount of time at Pop's candy store. The store's name was the Sugar Bowl but Harold and company always called it the geedunk for reasons never explained.

The Chinese word meaning a place of idleness sounds something like “gee dung.” “Geedunk” is the sound made by a vending machine when it dispenses a soft drink in a cup. It may be derived from the German word “tunk” meaning to dip or sop either in gravy or coffee. Dunking was a common practice in days when bread, not always obtained fresh, needed a bit of “tunking” to soften it. The “ge” is a German unaccented prefix denoting repetition. In time it may have changed getunk to geedunk.

Whatever theory we use to explain geedunk's origin, it doesn't alter the fact that Navy people are glad it all got started!

**GUNDECKING:** In the modern Navy falsifying reports, records and the like is often referred to as “gundecking.” The origin of the term is somewhat obscure, but at the risk of gundecking, here are two plausible explanations for its modern usage

The deck below the upper deck on British sailing ships-of-war was called the gundeck although it carried no guns. This false deck may have been constructed to deceive enemies as to the amount of armament carried, thus the gundeck was a falsification.

A more plausible explanation may stem from shortcuts taken by early midshipmen when doing their navigation lessons. Each mid was supposed to take sun lines at noon and star sights at night and then go below to the gundeck, work out the calculations and show them to the navigator.

Certain of these young men, however, had a special formula for getting correct answers. They would note the noon or last position on the quarterdeck traverse board and determine the approximate current position by dead reckoning plotting. Armed with this information they proceeded to the gundeck to “gundeck” their navigation homework by simply working backwards from the dead reckoning position.

**HE KNOWS THE ROPES:** When we say someone knows the ropes we infer that he knows his way around at sea and is capable of handling most nautical problems. Through the years the phrase's meaning has changed somewhat. Originally, the statement was printed on a seaman's discharge to indicate that he knew the names and primary uses of the main ropes on board ship. In other words, “This man is a novice seaman and knows only the basics of seamanship.”

**HORSE LATITUDES:** The words of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, “Idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean” well describe a sailing ship's situation when it entered the horse latitudes. Located near the West Indies between 30 and 40 degrees north latitude, these waters were noted for unfavorable winds that becalmed cattle ships heading from Europe to America.

Often ships carrying horses would have to cast several overboard to conserve drinking water for the rest as the ship rode out the unfavorable winds. Because so many horses and other cattle were tossed to the sea, the area came to be known as the “horse latitudes.”

**IN THROUGH THE HAWSEPIPE:** Sometimes we hear an old chief petty officer claim he came into the Navy through the hawsepipe and it makes one wonder if he is referring to some early enlistment program. Actually, it was an enlistment program of sorts; it means a person is salty and savvies the ways of the sea because he began his nautical career on the lowest ladder of the deck force. A hawsepipe or hawsehole, incidentally, is a hole in the bow of the ship through which the anchor chain runs.

**JACOB’S LADDER:** A Jacob’s ladder is a portable ladder made of rope or metal and used primarily as an aid in boarding ship. Originally, the Jacob’s ladder was a network of line leading to the skysail on wooden ships. The name alludes to the biblical Jacob reputed to have dreamed that he climbed a ladder to the sky.

Anyone who has ever tried climbing Jacob’s ladder while carrying a seabag can appreciate the allusion. It does seem that the climb is long enough to take one into the next world.

**KEELHAUL:** To be keelhailed today is merely to be given a severe reprimand for some infraction of the rules. As late as the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, it meant the extreme. It was a dire and often fatal torture employed to punish offenders of certain naval laws.

An offender was securely bound both hand and foot and had heavy weights attached to his body. He was then lowered over the ship’s side and slowly dragged along under the ship’s hull. If he didn’t drown—which was rare—barnacles usually ripped him, causing him to bleed to death.

All navies stopped this cruel and unusual punishment many years ago and today any such punishment is forbidden.

**KNOT:** The term knot, or nautical mile, is used world-wide to denote one’s speed through water. Today, we measure knots with electronic devices, but 200 years ago such devices were unknown. Ingenious mariners devised a speed measuring device both easy to use and reliable: the “log line.” From this method we get the term “knot.”

The log line was a length of twine marked at 47.33-foot intervals by colored knots. At one end was fastened a log chip; it was shaped like the sector of a circle and weighted at the rounded end with lead.

When thrown over the stern, it would float pointing upward and would remain relatively stationary. The log line was allowed to run free over the side for 28 seconds and then hauled on board. Knots which had passed over the side were counted. In this way the ship’s speed was measured.

**LOG BOOK:** Today any bound record kept on a daily basis aboard ship is called a “log.” Originally, records were kept on the sailing ships by inscribing information onto shingles cut from logs and hinged so they opened like books. When paper became more readily available, “log books” were manufactured from paper and bound. Shingles were relegated to naval museums—but the slang term stuck.

**MASTER-AT-ARMS:** The master-at-arms is by no means a modern innovation. Naval records show that these “sheriffs of the sea” were keeping order as early as the reign of Charles I of England. At that time they were charged with keeping the swords, pistols, carbines and

muskets in good working order as well as ensuring that the bandoliers were filled with fresh powder before combat.

Besides being chiefs of police at sea, the sea corporals, as they were called in the British Navy, had to be qualified in close order fighting under arms and able to train seamen in hand-to-hand combat. In the days of sail, the masters-at-arms were truly “masters at arms.” The master-at-arms in the U.S. Navy can trace the beginning of his rate to the Union Navy of the Civil War.

**MIDSHIPMEN:** “Midshipmen” originally referred to the youngsters aboard British Navy vessels who were in training to become naval officers. Their primary duties included carrying orders from the officers, quartered in the stern, to the crew, quartered in the fo’c’sle. The repeated scampering through the middle part of the ship earned them the name “midshipmen” and the nickname “middle.” Although modern mids are college students at the Naval academy or ROTC units, midshipmen of old could begin their career at the ripe old age of eight.

**MIND YOUR P’s AND Q’s:** There are few of us who have not at one time or another been admonished to “mind our P’s and Q’s,” or in other words, to behave our best. Oddly enough, the phrase had nautical beginnings as a method of keeping books on the waterfront.

In the days of sail when sailors were paid a pittance, seamen drank their ale in taverns whose keepers were willing to extend credit until payday. Since many salts were illiterate, keepers kept a tally of pints and quarts consumed by each sailor on a chalkboard behind the bar. Next to each person’s name a mark was made under “P” for pint or “Q” for quart whenever a seaman ordered another draught.

On payday, each seaman was liable for each mark next to his name, so he was forced to “mind his P’s and Q’s” or get into financial trouble. To ensure an accurate count by unscrupulous keepers, sailors had to keep their wits and remain somewhat sober. Sobriety usually ensured good behavior, hence the meaning of “mind your P’s and Q’s.”

**NAVY BLUE:** Blue has not always been “navy blue.” In fact it wasn’t until 1745 that the expression navy blue meant anything at all.

In that year several British officers petitioned the Admiralty for adoption of new uniforms for its officers. The first lord requested several officers to model various uniforms under consideration so he could select the best. He then selected several uniforms of various styles and colors to present to George II for the final decision.

King George, unable to decide on either style or color, finally choose a blue and white uniform because they were the favorite color combinations of the first lord’s wife, the Duchess of Bedford.

**PEA COAT:** Sailors who have to endure pea-soup weather often don their pea coats but the name isn’t derived from the weather.

The heavy topcoat worn in cold, miserable weather by seafaring men was once tailored from pilot cloth—a heavy, coarse, stout kind of twilled blue cloth with the nap on one side. The cloth was sometimes called P-cloth for the initial letter of the word and the garment made from it was called a p-jacket—later a pea coat. The term has been used since 1723 to denote coats made from that cloth.

**PORTHOLES:** The word “porthole” originated during the reign of Henry VI of England (1485). It seems the good king insisted on mounting guns too large for his ships and therefore the conventional methods of securing the weapons on the forecastle and aftcastle could not be used.

A French shipbuilder named James Baker was commissioned to solve the problem. And solve it he did by piercing the ship's sides so the cannon could be mounted inside the fore and after castles. Covers, gun ports, were fitted for heavy weather and when the cannon were not in use.

The French word *porte* meaning door, was used to designate the revolutionary invention. *Porte* was anglicized to "Port" and later corrupted to porthole. Eventually, it came to mean any opening in a ship's side whether for cannon or not.

**ROPE YARN SUNDAY:** On the day the tailor boarded a sailing ship in port, the crew knocked off early, broke out rope yarn and mended clothes and hammocks. One afternoon per week at sea, usually a Wednesday, was reserved for mending. Since it was an afternoon for rest from usual chores, much like Sunday, it was dubbed "rope yarn Sunday."

The Navy adhered to the custom up to the years immediately after World War II; men used Wednesday afternoons for personal errands like picking up their laundry and getting haircuts. Of course they paid back the time by working a half-day on Saturdays.

Today, uniforms require less attention so rope yarn Sunday has been turned to other purposes; mainly early liberty or a time for catching up on sleep. Some, however, still adhere to tradition and break out the ditty bag for an afternoon of uniform PMS.

**SALLY SHIP:** "Sally ship" was not a ship but a method of loosing a vessel run aground from the mud holding her fast. In the days before sophisticated navigation equipment, ships ran aground much more often than today. A grounded ship could be freed with little or no hull damage if she could be rocked out of her muddy predicament.

To greet her, the order was given to "sally ship." The crew gathered in a line along one side and then ran athwartships from port to starboard and back and forth until the vessel began to roll. Often the rolling broke the mud's suction and she could be pulled free and gotten underway.

**SCUTTLEBUTT:** The origin of the word "scuttlebutt," which is nautical parlance for a rumor, comes from a combination of "scuttle," to make a hole in the ship's side causing her to sink, and "butt," a cask or hogshead used in the days of wooden ships to hold drinking water; thus the term scuttlebutt means a cask with a hole in it. "Scuttle" describes what most rumors accomplish if not to the ship, at least to morale. "Butt" describes the water cask where men naturally congregated, and that's where most rumors get started. The terms "galley yarn" and "messdeck intelligence" also mean the spreading of rumors and many, of course, start on the messdeck.

**SEA CHANTIES:** Sea chanties were songs sung in the olden days by crews as they worked at heaving the lines or turning the capstan. The songs' rhythms caused everyone to push or pull simultaneously, hence causing a concerted effort and better results.

Chanties were divided into three distinct classes: short-drag chanties, used when a few strong pulls were needed; long-drag chanties, longer songs to speed the work of long-haul jobs; and heaving chanties, used for jobs requiring continuous action such as turning the capstan.

One man, the chanty-man, stood high above the rest of the working crew and sang the main lines while the rest of the crew added their voices strongly on the second line. On the last word, a combine pull made the ropes "come home."

A good chanty-man was highly prized by officers and crew alike. Although he had no official title or rate, he was usually relieved of all duties to compose new verses for sea chanties.



**SHIP'S HUSBAND:** Sometimes when a ship is heading for the yards, an old salt says that she is going to her husband now and it causes novices to wonder what he's talking about. A ship's husband was once a widely used term which described the man in charge of the shipyard responsible for the repair of a particular ship. It was not uncommon to hear the sailors of creaky ships lament, "Ah, she's been a good ship, lads, but she's needing her husband now."

In the course of a ship's life, she may have had more than one husband but this had little bearing upon her true affections. Tradition has it her love was saved solely for her sailors.

**SHOW A LEG:** Many of our Navy's colorful expressions originated as practical means of communicating vital information. One such expression is "show a leg."

In the British Navy of King George III and earlier, many sailor's wives accompanied them on long voyages. This practice caused a multitude of problems but some ingenious bosun solved one that tended to make reveille a hazardous event: that of distinguishing which bunks held males and which held females.

To avoid dragging the wrong "mates" out of the rack, the bosun asked all to "show a leg." If the leg shown was adorned with silk, the owner was allowed to continue sleeping. If the leg was hairy and tattooed, the owner was forced to "turn-to."

In today's Navy, showing a leg is a signal to the reveille petty officer that you have heard his call and are awake.

**SICKBAY:** In the modern Navy, sickbay is the place a sailor can receive medical attention. In the days of sail there were few such places on shore designated specifically for ill seamen, but onboard most ships there were sick berths located in the rounded stern. The contour of the stern suggested the shape of a bay and consequently the sailors began calling the ancient dispensaries sickbays.

**SIDEBOYS:** The use of sideboys is a custom inherited from the British Navy. In the days of sail, gangways weren't frequently used so sailors boarded ship by climbing the rope ladders. Important persons were granted the privilege of wrestling with the Jacob's ladder. Very important persons, many of whom were rather hefty or aged, were hoisted aboard in a bos'un's chair.

The officer of the deck instructed the bos'uns to rig a chair hoist from a yardarm and, with much heaving and hoeing, the VIPs were hoisted aboard much like casks of salt horse. The men who did the hoisting were called sideboys.

Today, sailors lined up in clean uniforms on the quarterdeck when visiting dignitaries embark are still called sideboys, preserving another naval tradition.

**SKYLARKING:** Originally, skylarking described the antics of young Navymen who climbed and slid down the backstays for fun. Since the ancient word *lac* means "to play" and the games started high in the masts, the term was *skylacing*. Later, corruption of the word changed it to "skylarking."

Skylarking is a familiar term to most sailors and popular pastime for others. Today, it is generally looked upon with disfavor while on board ship because "goofing off" can cause accidents and wastes time. However, skylarking wasn't always viewed unfavorably. Back in the days of wooden ships, it was thought to be a better "occupation" of sailors with free time on their hands—skylarking on the weatherdeck—rather than engaging in mutinous talk in a ship's dark corners.

**SMOKING LAMP:** Sea dogs who sailed the wooden ships endured hard-ships that sailors today never suffer. Cramped quarters, poor unpalatable food, bad lighting and boredom were

hard facts of sea life. But perhaps a more frustrating problem was getting fire to kindle a cigar or pipe tobacco after a hard day's work.

Matches were scarce and unreliable, yet smoking contributed positively to the morale of the crew so oil lamps were hung in the foc'sle and used as matches. Smoking was restricted to certain times of the day by the bos'uns. When it was allowed, the "smoking lamps" were "lighted" and the men relaxed with their tobacco.

Fire was, and still is the great enemy of ships at sea. The smoking lamp was centrally located for the convenience of all and was the only authorized light aboard. It was a practical way of keeping open flames away from the magazines and other storage areas.

In today's Navy the smoking lamps have disappeared but the words "smoking lamp is lighted in all authorized spaces" remains, a carryover from our past.

**SPINNING A YARN:** Salts and landlubbers alike delight in hearing a tall tale told with all the trimmings by someone with a talent for "spinning a yarn." While today "spinning a yarn" refers to any exaggerated story, originally it was exclusively a nautical term understood by sailors only.

Officers and mates in the old Navy were stern disciplinarians who believed if sailors were allowed to congregate and tell sea stories, no work would be done. However, there was one job that required congregating on a weekly basis—unraveling the strands of old line.

On this day, the salts could talk to their heart's content and the period came to be known as the time for "spinning yarns." Later anyone telling a tale was said to be "spinning a yarn," a cherished naval tradition.

**TONNAGE:** Today tonnage refers to a ship's displacement in the water or the gross pounds of cargo it is capable of carrying. In the days of sail this was not so. Tonnage was spelled "tunnage" and referred to the number of "tuns" a ship could carry. A "tun" was a barrel normally used for transporting wine and tunnage specified the number of barrels that would fit into the ship's hold.

**TOOK THE WINDS OUT OF HIS SAILS:** Often we use "took the wind out of his sails" to describe besting an opponent in an argument. It simple means that one noble adversary presented such a sound argument that his worthy opponent was unable to continue the verbal pugilistics.

Originally the term described a battle maneuver of sailing vessels. One ship would pass close to windward usually ahead of another, and thereby blanket or rob the breeze from the enemy's canvas causing him to lose headway.

**WARDROOM:** Aboard 18<sup>th</sup> century British ships there was a compartment called the wardrobe and used for storing booty taken at sea. The officers' mess and staterooms were situated nearby, so when the wardrobe was empty they congregated there to take their meals and pass the time.

When the days of swashbuckling and pirating had ended, the wardrobe was used exclusively as the officers' mess and lounge. Having been elevated from a closet to a room, it was called the wardroom.

**YANKEE:** Americans are known by their nicknames from Hong Kong to Timbukto; one of the most widely used is "Yankee." Its origin is uncertain but it is believed to have been given us by the early Dutch. Early American sea captains were known, but not revered, for their ability to drive a hard bargain. Dutchmen, also regarded as extremely frugal, jokingly referred to the hard to please Americans as "Yankers" or wranglers and the nom de plume persists to this day.