



## ARMY Fact Sheet

As of May 15, 2025

### The Army Birthday

June 14, 2025, will mark the 250th Army birthday. **This We'll Defend**, the central theme for all birthday-related events, highlights the Army's purpose of fighting and winning our nation's wars. It also underscores the commitment of the Army to defending the values, security and people of our nation.

- One year older than the nation it defends, the U.S. Army has dedicated itself to fighting and winning the nation's wars for 250 years.
- As we celebrate the 250th birthday of the United States Army, we reflect on the rich history and legacy of service, sacrifice and dedication.
- From the Revolutionary War to present-day missions, our Soldiers have consistently demonstrated their resolve to defend freedom at home and abroad.
- Since its establishment in 1775, U.S. Army Soldiers, Civilians and their families have supported our nation, bearing true faith and allegiance to our country, the U.S. Constitution and the Army.

### Army 101

Mission: The U.S. Army's mission is to deploy, fight and win our nation's wars by securing ready, prompt, and sustained land dominance by Army forces across the full spectrum of conflict as part of the joint force.

- The Army is the largest of the armed services. America's Army consists of more than 1.2 million people across the globe who defend our country.
- Army careers span the spectrum: attorneys, astronauts, mechanics, doctors, engineers and musicians all serve in the armed forces.
- The Army stands ready to assist in times of need, such as disaster relief and recovery. We are focused on ensuring that the U.S. military remains the world's most combat-credible fighting force capable of maintaining peace through strength.

### The Army story

The U.S. Army was officially established on June 14, 1775 – more than a year before the Declaration of Independence – and has played a vital role in the growth and development of our nation ever since.

Today, America's Army is the most powerful and effective land force in the world. It is a ready-to-fight force that is experienced, lethal and trained to conduct any mission, anywhere, in support of our nation's security.

The Army's greatest asset is our people – the finest men and women our great nation has to offer, with a myriad of talents that make us stronger together.

## **The Army's allies and partners**

- The U.S. Army defends the nation 24/7, competes globally and fights to win the nation's wars as a part of the Joint Force.
- The United States does not face the challenging international environment alone. Our network of allies and partners is an advantage that our adversaries can never hope to match.
- We maintain the capability to deter, defend, and, if necessary, defeat aggression against the United States, our allies, our partners and our interests.
- The Army provides more than 50% of all force protection for our nation globally as part of the Joint Force.
- The Army is the nation's principal response force to protect the homeland, deter strategic attacks, respond to natural disasters and provide defense support to civil authorities.

## **The Army is continuously transforming**

- The American Soldier is the cornerstone for everything we do.
- We must transform now to ensure the U.S. Army remains the most capable and lethal land force in the world.
- The Army is continuously transforming how we deter aggression to ensure our adversaries cannot outrange or outpace us.
- The American Soldier embodies the spirit of service, resilience and dedication, standing at the forefront of innovation to ensure the Army remains prepared for the challenges ahead.
- Investments in cutting-edge systems, drone technology, and AI-powered capabilities strengthen the force, equipping Soldiers with the tools they need to protect the country and defend democracy.
- This transformation is not just about adapting—it is about maintaining dominance, ensuring that America's Army remains unmatched in its speed, flexibility and ability to support the nation's strategic priorities.

## **The Army in our communities**

- The Army has employed civilians since the founding of our country. Today, civilians serve in careers such as finance, engineering, and health care to support our Army Soldiers. About half of Army civilians are veterans.
- The Army has provided humanitarian relief since the mid-1800s to communities suffering from natural disasters. From the 2025 Los Angeles wildfires to the 1906 San Francisco earthquake to flood relief in the southern states after the Civil War, the Army supplies food, water and shelter to those experiencing life-changing emergency events.
- All over the world, Army personnel work with local communities to make them stronger and more resilient. They provide supplies for those experiencing homelessness, help fill local food pantries, honor veterans, support and recognize local public school students

through the Adopt-a-School program and work with local advocacy and prevention programs.

- The Army has 75 power plants, which provide more than 72 billion kilowatt hours of energy a year. This is approximately 25% of the nation's power and enough to power eight cities the size of Seattle, Wash. The Army collaborates with federal, regional and state agencies as well as private companies to improve the nation's power supply, and is one of the largest electric suppliers in the U.S.

### Army legacy

- The Army pioneered many products now commonly used in everyday life, like freeze-dried food (and plasma), high-pressure food processing, bug spray and aviator glasses. Cheetos, Pringles, Chef Boyardee, Kotex, Schick razors and Jeeps all started with the Army, as did the first electric, digital, general-purpose computer, ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer). Kleenex and Walkie-Talkies use processes that originated with the Army, and were adapted to civilian life.
- The Army has been instrumental in medical advances. During a smallpox epidemic in the Revolutionary War, most of the British soldiers had been previously exposed and were immune to smallpox, unlike the Colonists. George Washington mandated his troops receive the smallpox vaccine. In addition to saving lives, it was one of the main reasons the Americans won the war. Techniques we use in our local hospitals, like isolation wards, triaging patients, extended shelf-life blood products, were adapted for use in civilian healthcare.
- The Army built the Bonneville Dam near Portland, Ore., in 1934. It was the first multipurpose facility with hydroelectric power. It provides electricity for about 900,000 homes a year.

### Army heroes and personalities

- The highest award in the military is the Medal of Honor, which recognizes those who have exhibited extraordinary bravery and courage. As of March 2025, there have been 3,528 Medals of Honor awarded across all services. It is the highest award for valor, "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity" in the face of battle. Teddy Roosevelt is the only president to have been awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions in the Spanish-American War and Dr. Mary Edwards Walker is the only woman to have been awarded for her service in the Civil War.
- The highest award for civilians is the Congressional Gold Medal. George Washington was the first to be awarded, and since then, 158 others have received the medal. Among them are:
  - **The Ghost Army** was a top-secret WWII unit made up of 1,100 service members who were carefully selected because of their civilian careers in engineering, art, costuming, film and radio expertise. Using techniques learned in the theater and motion picture industry, they used visual and audial special effects to deceive the enemy. Fashion designer Bill Blass, painter Ellsworth Kelly and photographer Art Kane were part of the Ghost Army, as were many West Point graduates and Army

Specialized Training Program participants. Working quickly at night, they played the sounds of tanks over loud-speakers mounted in trucks, so it sounded like a battalion was nearby; they used inflatable tanks and vehicles that, viewed from the air by German bombers, looked like the real thing; and they outfitted would-be actors as generals, deceiving both locals and enemies.

- **Code talkers**, native Americans who used their mother tongue as an unbreakable code when transmitting essential information from the battlefield to Army headquarters. Originally working for the Army in World War I, they expanded into the other services and developed code based on at least seven native languages. Essential in World War II, the code was never broken by the Axis powers – all of whom were only familiar with European languages, which were completely different than native languages.
- **Merrill's Marauders**, an all-volunteer, 3,000-member force, fought in the China-Burma-India theater in WWII. They captured north Burma's only all-weather airstrip by defeating the elite 18<sup>th</sup> Japanese Imperial Guards Division in five major battles and 30 minor engagements. When they were disbanded, only 100 of the original Marauders remained. Their mission, one of the most difficult in the war, included a 1,000-mile march through enemy-held Himalayan foothills into the jungles of Burma. They had only what they could carry or pack on mules and were the first American ground troops to fight the Japanese in Asia.
- **Borinqueneers**, the nickname of the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry, served in World War I, II and Korea. They participated in some of the fiercest battles from 1950-1952. They participated in Operation Thunderbolt and Operation Exploitation. They were ordered to seize three Chinese-held hills. During the three-day assault, two battalions fixed bayonets and charged the enemy, forcing the communist soldiers to flee. It was the last U.S. Army battalion-sized bayonet charge in history.
- **Monuments Men**, an Allied team of museum curators, historians and artists, recovered art stolen by the Nazis during WWII. Assigned to the U.S. Army, the men and women who worked for the program were able to track down and return almost four million stolen objects and cultural resources.
- **The First Special Service Force** was activated in 1942 to train in rough terrain. Nicknamed the Devil's Brigade, they fought in Italy in WWII, fighting at Anzio for 99 continuous days, then seizing key bridges south of Rome. The Devil's Brigade was awarded five Army campaign streamers and 10 by Canada.
- **Nisei Soldiers of WWII** had the motto of "go for broke," fighting so fiercely that the units earned more than 4,000 Purple Hearts, 4,000 Bronze Star Medals, seven Presidential Unit Citations and 21 Medals of Honor. They are the most decorated unit in U.S. military history, all told earning more than 18,000 individual decorations.