

The 2010 Parent and spouse's Guide to Surviving



Air Force Basic Military Training

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Preparing for it all.....	4
OH, MY GOSH! My baby wants to sign up!	4
Look at all this paperwork	4
My Baby is leaving me for Boot Camp!.....	5
LEAVING FOR MEPS	5
Reviewing the paperwork.....	5
Swearing in.....	5
THINGS TO SEND WITH YOUR AIRMAN-QUICK REFERENCE	6
Headed for Lackland!	7
MADE IT TO LACKLAND! OH MY GOSH!.....	7
Contacting the Trainee in case of emergency.....	7
Weeks of training.....	7
Mail Call!.....	9
Field Training (Formerly Warrior Week).....	9
KEEP YOUR EMOTIONS IN CHECK!	11
RING RING! My Phone isn't ringing ☹.....	11
Hello? Mom...I've been recycled	12
Planning for Graduation	122
Partaking the graduation events.....	12
Bibliography and Kudos.....	14

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This edition is dedicated to the parents and spouses of every brave Man and Woman who serves their country in the Armed Forces, whether within, or outside the boundaries of our republic.

May the good Lord bless each and every one of them and their Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors and Marines, and watch over them all, day and night.

Air Force Basic Military Training could not be possible if the Airmen who come through did not have a great start on discipline and bearing. You, the Family member are that start, and every Military Training Instructor thanks you!

I also offer Special thanks to the Membership of the Air Force Moms and Dads Yahoo! group. I promise to continue to help keep “BASIC MOM TORTURE” out of BMT for you. 😊

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Preparing for it all.....

Many changes are happening in your son or daughter's life right now. Pending graduation from High School, and it's time to make some LIFE CHANGING DECISIONS. Your best bet is to let them make them. GUIDE but don't CONTROL their decisions. If you become discouraging, they will surely shut you out or go completely against your wishes.

It's time to buy a longer leash, cut the apron strings, release the papoose, or however you want to say it.

One of the biggest adjustments you need to get used to is that your son or daughter (Johnny or Jane) will be referred to in this manual as your Airman. The term Airman is used to cover all military ranks and genders in the Air Force.

OH, MY GOSH! My baby wants to sign up!

Parents play an important role in getting an Airman into the military. Many potential Airmen ask their parents to sign a consent form to join prior to their 18th birthday. This will assist in getting the ball rolling faster.



You are invited to sit down and speak with your son or daughter's recruiter. Don't try to rule over your Airman's decision. This is an important step in their life, and you will want to protect them, that is natural. But don't talk them into a job they don't want, and don't shoot them down with disparaging terms. Most Airmen will share information with mom and dad if you *just ask*.

Look at all this paperwork

Your Airman will be bombarded with paperwork. Not only the enlistment contract (8 pages in itself), but also Security Clearance documents, statements concerning drug use and any legal actions (from speeding tickets through incarceration). They will also need to have specifics on their prior medical care. You need to ensure that they tell the truth on all documents. Don't encourage them to lie or cover something up. It will be later discovered, and they will be subject to being charged with fraudulent enlistment.

I would also encourage you to ask your Airman if you can help them with the paperwork. If they want to do it all themselves, let them know you understand, but tell them you want to help. If you see something shocking on the documents, such as a statement of drug use, NOW is *not* the time to address it. It will only cause the Airman to close you off from the other paperwork.

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My Baby is leaving me for Boot Camp!

First, and foremost, IT IS NOT BOOT CAMP. It's Basic Military Training! There's a difference, and you will learn what it is over time. Basic Military Training is an emotional time for the Airman, and the loved ones. Don't let it be 'Basic Mom Torture'. Just think of it as Johnny or Jane away at summer camp. Kind of a long camp, but none the less there isn't much difference.

LEAVING FOR MEPS

On your Airman's date for departure to Basic Military Training, they will report to the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) for processing to enter Air Force active duty. Your Airman's recruiter will give them a complete briefing on transportation, lodging and MEPS processing.

Upon arrival at the MEPS, the Airman will undergo a physical exam and review all personal information provided during initial processing, including contracts and enlistment agreements. The Airmen also take the oath of enlistment prior to leaving MEPS.

Reviewing the paperwork

Once Airmen successfully complete the physical exam, the Air Force liaison NCO conducts a review of enlistment contract agreements. Any changes to the Airman's status will be discussed and properly documented on the application, contracts and/or enlistment agreements. Airmen are required to reveal everything that has occurred since initial processing. For example, any arrests, offenses, fines, violations or tickets, changes in marital status, dependents or other significant information.



Remember; only the guarantees SPECIFICALLY STATED on your Airman's contract will be honored by the Air Force. The recruiter and other Air Force personnel who participate in processing are expressly prohibited from making any promises or guarantees of any type that do not appear on the contract and agreement. *Airmen are made to sign a statement that nothing not listed has been promised.*

Once the Air Force liaison NCO completes the processing, Airmen will return to the MEPS processing section for final preparation to enter Air Force active duty.

Swearing in

An officer at the MEPS will swear the new Airmen into the regular Air Force. This is the moment at which Airmen are BOUND to the contract. Prior to swearing in, Airmen may back out. After swear-in, the Airmen are committed to 8 years of duty to the United States. Remember that all 8 years are not required to be served on active duty, Your Airman's contract may specify 6 years Active, and 2 inactive, or 4 Active and 4 inactive.

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THINGS TO SEND WITH YOUR AIRMAN-QUICK REFERENCE

To complete all of your military records, you will need to bring some items with you to basic training. Better to be safe than sorry so, bring any paperwork you think may be useful during your processing. Below is a list of the minimum items you should bring if you have them:

Civilian eyeglasses AND PRESCRIPTION	Medications
College transcripts (copy acceptable)	Driver's license
Social Security Card	Marriage license
Dependents' birth records and Social Security Cards. (Certified copy acceptable)	JROTC/ROTC certificates and any awards paperwork received in those programs.
Civil Air Patrol certificates	Naturalization papers
Alien Card	Enlistment contract
Any important paperwork relating to prescriptions	Banking Information (routing number, account number, bank name/address)

Required Items (All)

All trainees are required to have the following items. Don't worry if you don't bring them with you, as you will be allowed to purchase the items on arrival. You will receive a \$250 spending card your first day of Basic, and that amount will later be deducted from your pay.

Liquid soap	Ball-point pen (black or blue)
Shampoo	Deodorant (Non-Aerosol)
Toothbrush and Toothbrush case	Toothpaste
Notebook paper	Shower Shoes (Plain, flipflop type)
Cell Phone (DO NOT CANCEL THE CONTRACT)	Visitor Information sheet provided by the recruiting office- FILLED OUT!

Required Items for Males:

Razor (Blade Razor, not electric)	Shaving Cream
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Required Items for Females:

Sanitary Napkins or Tampons	Bras and sports bras
Hair Bands/Bobby pins (Same color as your hair)	Underwear
Brush/Combs	Nylons/Panty hose

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Headed for Lackland!

Most Airmen have never flown on an airplane prior to joining the Air Force. SURPRISE! They won't be flying on an Air Force Airplane, either. Many people complete 20 years in the Air Force without flying on an Air Force plane. Most military flights, including the one from MEPS to San Antonio, are on commercial Airlines. If you have experience flying, offer advice to them on flying, so they have one less fear.



Once an Airman arrives at the San Antonio Airport, they are in training. There is a lot to do, so don't expect them to call you. They have to get their baggage and report into the USO/Military Reception center, where they will meet their first Military Training Instructor, or MTI. They will then be placed in a group to get on a bus, for transportation to Lackland Air Force Base.

MADE IT TO LACKLAND! OH MY GOSH!

You will not be hearing from your Airman until 72 hours after your Airman arrives. There is no set time or day for these calls, but most are on Saturday or Sunday. As will be explained later, don't "WAIT AROUND" for a call- but be prepared.

Contacting the Trainee in case of emergency

You cannot call an Air Force Trainee. There is NO REASON to call Lackland Air Force Base whatsoever. If you have an emergency, such as death of an immediate family member, terminal illness, or accident then you need to contact the local American Red Cross. . It is important that family members have the trainee's Social Security number, Flight and Squadron (FLT and TRS Numbers) for any emergencies.

Weeks of training

Air Force Basic Military Training is divided into 9 distinct weeks.

Upon arrival, Trainees are in ZERO week. During this week, they will be in-processed to the base, and into the Air Force. This is the most stressful week of Basic Training, and it will wear on them, and you as a family member. Also during this week, all of their initial paperwork will be reviewed, and they

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will be issued uniforms, given hair cuts (male), and taught the basics of setting up and maintaining the dormitory. Basic Drill movements will be taught during this week.

It is important to note that Airmen will be tested on physical readiness during this week. If they fail to meet minimum standards, it is possible they will be held back in training until they meet those minimums.

Beginning on the first Monday after arrival is the First Week. This continues in-processing and begins setup of the dormitory areas, such as clothing drawers and wall lockers. In addition, Airmen will complete in-processing, and the Airman's military records will be established. They will receive their M-16 Trainer Weapon this week. The trainer weapon is basically the same as a live M-16 without a hammer to detonate a round. Everything else is in there, and nothing is welded down. They will learn proper use and carry of the weapon, as well as breakdown and cleaning.

The Second Week of Training, Airmen will have their first recorded living area inspection, the 'REDLINE'. After this week of training, Spouses can obtain ID cards at any local military installation. Also during this week, trainees are issued their eyeglasses and Military Identification cards. (Also known as the Common Access Card). Air Guardsmen and reservists will have a CAC issued at their base- They MUST take this with them to BMT. In addition, Airmen will begin to learn warrior skills, such as basic field first aid (Called Self Aid and Buddy Care) and tent building.

During the Third Week, Airmen learn much of the academic material needed to pass their End of Course test, which will be given in the Fifth Week of Training. They will learn more about warrior skills, such as tent building and base defense. Also of note is they will be going out one of the weekdays to perform base details, they might be working in a Dining Facility (KP) or might go to the reception center to help families.

The fourth week is an important time, as they should have all of their warrior skills down to where they can practice them, and they will be concentrating on academics and getting their blue uniforms issued. They will spend a day in the field firing the M-16 weapon (First LIVE FIRE) and will go to the obstacle course to prove they have the emotional stamina to make it through the rest of training.

The Fifth Week of Training is full of classes and final preparation for field training. They will spend their 2nd day performing base details, also. There will be one day dedicated to being in the dorms fixing up all the blue garmets they got last week. As well, there is a second Living area examination, known as "BLUE LINES".

On Monday, the first day of the 6th week, trainees will be bussed off Lackland AFB to the Medina Annex and "THE BEAST", Basic Expeditionary Airman Skills Training. Not much training occurs here, it is mainly geared towards testing their warrior skills. Trainees will live in field conditions, eating MRE's (Meal, Ready to Eat) and sleeping in temper tents. Not much fun, but still exciting as they practice what they have learned over the last several weeks. They return to the dorm on Friday.

The Seventh week brings about preparation for graduation. Airmen are testing for everything this week. Academics testing, Fitness Testing and final inspections for Warrior Flight (formerly Honor Flight). This is a rough week emotionally- don't expect a phone call!

Finally, eighth Week of Training activities are geared around out-processing and preparing for technical school as well as graduation from BMT. Airmen will be given The Airman's Coin, and the This is not a U.S. Air Force publication. This is only an informational publication and in no way reflects the official opinion or position of the U.S. Air Force. The U.S. Air Force does not exercise any editorial control over the information you may find in this publication.

Superintendent of Basic Training, the senior Military Training Instructor for the Air Force, will declare them an “AIRMAN”. During the retreat ceremony, each Airman is presented with a coin signifying their hard work and transition into the world’s premier air and space force. BMT is the only place Airmen can get this coin, and it is a very emotional time for the newly-dubbed “Airmen”.



Mail Call!

Your Airman’s specific military mailing address will be determined immediately after arrival at Lackland. Airmen will be permitted to make a phone call home the first weekend at Lackland to share the address. Airmen are encouraged to write to family and friends after arrival to further announce their address. Do not forward third class mail, such as newspapers and magazines, to Airmen during basic training. Relatives and friends should not send packages that contain food to BMT because food is prohibited in the dormitories. Rule of thumb: LETTER SIZED MAIL ONLY!



You should write many encouraging letters, and encourage other family members to do the same. Letters are important to Airmen. They don’t always have time to read them, but receiving them is important to the Airmen. Mail is received starting at the END of the first week of training.

Also, you shouldn’t expect to receive letters from them. In the 2nd or 3rd week of training, you will receive an envelope from the Airman with information regarding graduation. Visit www.bmtgrad.com for copies of the information in the packet.

THE BEAST (Formerly Warrior Week)

Trainees learn basics of survival, and combat skills in the Third Week of Training. THE BEAST is a weeklong exercise during the sixth week of Basic Military Training that gives basic trainees a taste of Air Force deployments. THE BEAST was added to BMT to instill a warrior mentality, give recruits the necessary skills to operate in a field environment and provide them with a better concept of Air Force operations.

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This training is a mock Air Force deployment where recruits are able to apply the basics of antiterrorism techniques; self aid and buddy care; nuclear, biological and chemical preparedness; weapons training; and teamwork they have learned in the First through Third weeks of training. Trainees then “deploy” to a mock air base, set up housing in tents and start their field training. Because of the increased threat of terrorism, trainees also take antiterrorism level one training during the early weeks and practice many antiterrorism techniques at THE BEAST.



Next, trainees are reaffirmed in self-aid and buddy care techniques. These skills include how to properly provide first aid in the field, how to treat and recognize conditions such as shock, and care for wounds or illness that may occur during a deployment.

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The threat of nuclear, biological and chemical warfare is very real. To prepare for these threats, trainees are taught to properly don chemical masks and protective over garments. They are also taught to recognize and properly mark unexploded ordinance.

KEEP YOUR EMOTIONS IN CHECK!

Easier said than done, you say? Not really. You should establish a means of keeping your mind off of your loved one. Don't worry about them. They are receiving food (although they will say they are starving), medical care (although they may not want to go), and plenty of sleep. (Well, time to sleep anyhow). Injuries in Basic Training are rare. If the Airmen have an injury that will delay training, they will be able to let you know.



RING RING! My Phone isn't ringing ☹

Don't expect many phone calls during BMT. Airmen are not permitted many phone calls. Rest assured if you have been mailing to the proper address, (take the TRS, FLT and Dorm number to <Http://address.f-16.org>) Airmen will receive your letters. But don't wait for their call. It is suggested that you have Call Forwarding service installed on your home phone, and forward your home phone to a cell phone or work phone when you are away. That way, if a call comes in, you don't miss it. Sitting around waiting for a call will end up in disappointment.

You have to trust the old adage "no news is good news". Airmen are guaranteed a call in 3 cases only:

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1. Upon arrival at Lackland (Usually the first weekend).
2. If they are recycled or held back in training due to disciplinary or academic reasons.
3. If they are removed from training due to a medical condition.

Don't expect any other calls. Live your life, and it will help you adjust emotionally. Go to the movies, go to dinner, go dancing. GO ANYWHERE, but don't sit around the house waiting for a phone call from your Airman!

Hello? Mom....I've been recycled

All trainees have the exact same fear. Recycling is something that happens to 7% of trainees, and can happen for a variety of reasons. The most frequent culprit is Physical fitness, followed by inspections, then disciplinary actions. One thing is for certain, Trainees are probably not recycled for the reason they tell mom. They can't be recycled because the instructor hates them, or because they have a mole on their left ear. Trainees either have gotten themselves in big trouble, or have received an unsatisfactory grade for 2 weeks of training. It's not easy for an instructor to recycle an Airman, so don't let your Airman fool you.



Planning for Graduation

As mentioned above, you will receive graduation information in the 2nd or 3rd week of training. READ IT CAREFULLY. If you have questions, you can visit www.bmtgrad.com for answers, or even [Http://www.basictraining.af.mil/](http://www.basictraining.af.mil/), and as a LAST RESORT, you can contact the BMT reception center at 210-671-3024.

When purchasing tickets for graduation, be sure to inquire about exchanges. You will pay more for the tickets, but you will be relieved if your Airman's graduation is delayed. If you take your chances and buy non-refundable tickets, or tickets that cost \$100 or \$200 to change, there is NOTHING anyone can do to help you. Nobody at Lackland can write you a letter, or fax the Airlines to help. YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN.

You are advised to purchase tickets from CTO travel, the Contract BMT travel agency. www.afttravelonline.com (Click on friends/family).

Partaking the graduation events

Upon arrival at San Antonio Airport, feel free to visit the USO, where your Airman first met a Military Training Instructor. If you arrive on Tuesday or Wednesday, you will probably get to see some new-found Trainees. Their mom would appreciate a call. Don't interfere with the instructions of the MTI, but feel free to take in a glimpse of your Airman's first night.

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As for transportation while in San Antonio, RENT A CAR! There is a lot of walking to be done if you chose that method, miles and miles to put it in exact terms. Putting in a reservation early will ensure that you don't pay the higher rates on-base or get stuck without one. There IS an Enterprise rental car location at the Reception center, and they will rent to those under 23 years old, but the cost is higher.



The Air Force no longer uses vehicle passes. You need to include the names of anyone who is attending graduation activities on the information form provided prior to your Airman's departure for Lackland.

Once you enter the gate, go straight to the BMT reception Center. (Ask the gate guard for directions.) There are 4 parking lots you can use: The Reception Center lot, the swimming pool lots, the Tops in Blues auditorium lot, and the Multimedia lab lot, behind the Reception Center. (Down Barnes Avenue, behind the reception center).

You are **HIGHLY ENCOURAGED** to attend a briefing. (Read: **YOU MUST GO**). Your attendance at the events briefing will ensure that you and your Airman don't miss any required events, and the briefing will cover the rules of visitation; keeping you and your Airman out of trouble.

The Airman's run on Thursday is a special event. It's the last time your Airman will be performing Physical training in BMT. They will run by twice and see you. They will not acknowledge you (if they want to stay out of trouble), but they know you are there. If you have a sign or banner, that helps!

Then, on Thursday after lunch, Airmen will be lining up at the Reception Center for the moment they have worked their fingers off for- Receiving their **AIRMAN'S COIN**. In addition, the event is also celebrated with **RETREAT**, a solemn ceremony in which we lay to rest their life as a **TRAINEE**. The flag is folded, and kept under watch throughout the night, as a tribute to the men and women of the Air Force who have gone to their final rest.

Friday morning, at 0900, Parade will begin. Graduation is here. Not only do you get to watch, but afterwards, you get to visit their dormitory. See how your Airman has lived for the last 6.5 weeks.

After Sunday, you get to say goodbye to your Airman...As they move on to Technical School. Phase 2 of their Air Force Career.

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Bibliography and Kudos

The information for this publication was obtained from several sources including:

The US Air Force Web:

[Http://www.af.mil](http://www.af.mil) or [Http://www.AirForce.Com](http://www.AirForce.Com)

The 737th Training Group Web:

[Http://www.basictraining.af.mil](http://www.basictraining.af.mil)

And the US Air Force Delayed Enlistment Program guide.

Support and encouragement for Air Force Airmen, Parents, Spouses, and friends can be found at:

<http://www.bmtgrad.com>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/airforcemomsanddads2/>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/Airforceparentsandspouses/>

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