Green Beret (Army Special Forces)

Join the Army's Special Forces, small teams that work alongside other countries' forces. You pass a 24 day selection course, then a year-long qualification course that includes learning a new language.

TYPICAL PAY	PAY RANGE	COST TO QUALIFY	TIME TO QUALIFY
$47,362	**$29k to $67k**	**Nothing**	**2 to 3 years**
a year, full time	lower end to upper end	tuition, fees, exams, kit	paid while you train

DEMAND	LICENSE NEEDED	WHERE YOU WORK
Good	**No**	**Army bases, training areas, small teams deployed overseas**
job outlook	no license to hold	

How you get there

1. **Meet the basic rules** — Before you sign
   Be a US citizen, 18 to 34, meet the Army's waist-to-height standard, score 110 or more on the technical (TECH) score of the ASVAB (Armed...
2. **Enlist with the 18X option** — Varies
   On active duty or in the Army National Guard. 18X is the Army's code for a Special Forces candidate.
3. **Basic and job training** — Several months
   10 weeks of Basic Combat Training, then job training, then Airborne School for parachuting.
4. **Preparation Course** — 6 weeks
   Fitness and land navigation.
5. **Assessment and Selection** — 24 days
   A test of physical and mental stamina. Not everyone is selected.
6. **Qualification Course** — 53 weeks
   Includes a new language, survival training and a final exercise in a made-up country.

Pros and cons

+ No degree needed, and paid from the first day
+ A new language, taught by the Army
+ Small teams with real responsibility

– Well over a year and a half of training before you graduate
– Selection is not guaranteed, and the contract still stands if you fail
– Long deployments far from family

Good to know

A country that does not exist

The Qualification Course ends with a staged campaign in Pineland, a made-up country the Army uses for training.

A path to citizenship

Permanent residents who have held a green card for at least six months can begin Special Forces training and apply for fast-tracked citizenship.

Optional boosts

Weapons sergeant · Engineer sergeant · Medical sergeant · Communications sergeant

Where these numbers come from

GoArmy: Special Forces (Green Berets)
GoArmy: 18X Special Forces Candidate
GoArmy: Army bonuses
GoArmy: money and pay charts

Numbers checked October 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: https://career.help/us/careers/green-beret

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