Navy SEAL

Join the Navy's SEAL (Sea, Air and Land) teams, small special operations units. In the Navy's own words, few attempt the training and fewer make it through.

TYPICAL PAY	PAY RANGE	COST TO QUALIFY	TIME TO QUALIFY
$47,362	**$29k to $67k**	**Nothing**	**1 to 2 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**	**Navy bases, ships and submarines, training ranges, deployments overseas**
job outlook	no license to hold	

How you get there

1. **Meet the basic rules** — Before you apply
   US citizen, under 29, eligible for a security clearance, able to pass a diver's medical exam, and eyesight of at least 20/40 in the better eye...
2. **Enlist for the job** — Varies
   Reach the required ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) scores and sign for the Special Warfare Operator job, the Navy's...
3. **Pass the shipping fitness test** — 2 weeks before boot camp
   A swim, push-ups, sit-ups, pull-ups and a run, taken 14 days before you leave for boot camp.
4. **Boot camp** — 9 weeks
   Basic training for every new sailor.
5. **Initial SEAL (Sea, Air and Land) training** — 56 weeks
   Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL training (BUD/S), parachute jump school and SEAL Qualification Training (SQT).
6. **Pre-deployment training** — 18 months
   Specialized training with your team before you deploy.

Pros and cons

+ No degree needed, and paid from the first day of boot camp
+ A signing bonus of up to $50,000 for those who qualify
+ Some of the most demanding training in the military, at no cost
- Most of the hardest training happens before you know if you will pass
- Real physical danger, in training and on deployment
- Long periods away from family

Good to know

Fitness is worth $20,000
Hit 75 push-ups, 75 sit-ups, 15 pull-ups, a 9:30 swim and a 9:30 run on your shipping test, and the Navy adds $20,000 to the $30,000 job bonus.

A president started them
President John F. Kennedy established the SEAL (Sea, Air and Land) teams in 1962.

Optional boosts

Specialist skills · College credit · Degrees while serving · Graduate school for officers

Where these numbers come from

Navy.com: Navy SEAL career details and requirements
Navy.com: Navy special operations careers
Navy.com: enlistment bonuses by position
Navy.com: 2026 active duty basic pay table

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/navy-seal

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