



How to Apply - Application Steps

The Navy and Marine Corps team offers innovative, exciting and meaningful work linking military and civilian talents to achieve our mission and safeguard our freedoms. The Department of the Navy provides competitive salaries, comprehensive benefits, and extensive professional development and training. From pipefitters to accountants, scientists to engineers, doctors to nurses — in the Department of the Navy, the careers and opportunities to make a difference are endless.

The Department of the Navy uses a fully automated process to fill its positions. You can apply online through USAJOBS, which is available 24/7. Below are the key steps of the application and hiring process, by clicking each you will find information, resources, and tips to help.

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Step 1: Write a Resume

Department of the Navy employment opportunities require submitting a resume. A resume is a way to market an all-important product – YOU. After all the time, energy, effort, and hard work you have invested in your education, training and career marketing through a resume is your first step towards Federal employment.

Federal resumes differ from private sector resumes. Federal resumes require detailed information about your specific work experience and other job-related information. Because Federal human resources (HR) professionals operate under various Federal employment laws, rules and regulations, they cannot infer from your previous job titles or Navy Ratings your applicable experience. It is up to you to describe your past work experience how you qualify for jobs to which you apply.

Tips for Creating a Powerful Resume

Here are some hints to help your resume get noticed and help you get the interview:

Get organized: Gather your previous resumes, descriptions of jobs you have held, past performance evaluations, letters of commendation, and awards. Sort them and put them in chronological order. Read them carefully and take notes on important points or themes.



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Plan: Think before you begin to write. What are your career goals? Where do you prefer to work? What type of positions will you apply for?

Tailor your resume to the announcement: Your resume should focus on your knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies that relate to your overall career goals. Write your resume for a specific job opportunity (with a specific closing date): Announcements for particular job vacancies provide details on specific duties and requirements. Your resume should address the knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies that pertain to those unique duties and requirements.

Write a first draft: Then walk away from it. Take a second look and revise, reorganize, and improve as necessary. Make sure spelling, punctuation, and all grammar basics are perfect.

Save in Microsoft Word: Or other word processing software. That will make it easier to either upload your resume to USAJOBS or copy/paste your information into the USAJOBS resume builder.

Be descriptive: Descriptions of your experience should be simple. We want to know what you did on the job. Think about:

- The projects you have worked on What your specific duties were
- What you needed to know to do the job
- What tools, software, or equipment you used
- What you accomplished

If you are a veteran explore the Military Service to Federal Jobs Crosswalk and other tips on our Veterans Page for help with how your skills and experience correspond to similar federal civilian jobs.

Be clear: Use nouns and verbs that present an accurate, clear summary of your accomplishments. Use correct tense for past or current positions. For example:

- Write "Utilized Microsoft Project to develop timelines. Prepared budget requests, hired staff, selected vendors, negotiated contracts, and designed and implemented a new Unix client-server information system," rather than "Performed the full range of project management duties for a new information system."
- Rather than writing "Communicates orally and in writing," it is better to say "Writes complex technical documents and reports; prepares policy statements, and develops and presents PowerPoint briefings to large groups."
- It's better to write, "Directs work, interviews and hires employees, establishes and reviews performance standards, identifies training needs, effects disciplinary action, and performs other supervisory duties for 10 employees," rather than just saying "Supervising."



Use action words, modifiers, and phrases such as:

- Designed and implemented new organizational structure plan
- Negotiated contracts valued to \$90,000
- Delivered report on waste management

Eliminate unnecessary or flowery language: Avoid adjectives and adverbs. Instead of saying, "I was responsible for the processing of a wide variety of extremely complex financial transactions using two technically advanced automated accounting systems," you might say, "I was responsible for processing a variety of financial transactions using two automated accounting systems."

Don't repeat: Once a skill such as "management" or "budget" is pointed out, you need only cite the skill again if you are describing a different position.

Use plain English: Describe skills and experience in terms common to your occupation and profession that could be readily understood in both the public and private sectors. Minimize the use of acronyms. If you must use them, spell them out at least once and explain what they represent, what processes or systems they describe, and how you have used the knowledge, skills, or abilities associated with them.

Keep paragraphs short: To make your resume easier to read to the human and electronic eye, add a carriage return (blank line) after every 20 lines or so. It's OK to have more than one paragraph for each experience, just keep the paragraphs short.

Don't be fancy: Don't use graphics, italics, underline, shadows, reverses (white letters on black background), or symbols such as % # * = and don't type your information in all capital letters.

List only recent training and awards: List only training and awards received in the last 5 years. Don't attach copies of training certificates, transcripts, or awards unless specifically requested in the job opportunity announcement.

List certifications and licenses: If applying for a position that requires you to possess a license or certification, list all current licenses, certificates, and/or contracting warrants under the Professional Licenses and Certificates section of your resume. Identify the city and/or State of certification, name of certifying organization, and expiration date, if any. For example, "Certified Public Accountant, Illinois, 06-95."

Test your text: When you finish writing a section, ask yourself:

- Would a person who is not familiar with my occupational background understand the kind of work that I do?
- Is there nonessential information in what I have written?



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- Have I omitted any relevant special experience or skills I possess that might distinguish me from other candidates?
- Have I adequately described the major characteristics of my occupation, or background and skills that are most common to my occupation?
- Have I addressed how my experience supports the knowledges, skills, and competencies outlined in the vacancy announcement and occupational questionnaire for the job I am applying to?
- Have I clearly described my accomplishments?

The USAJOBS resume builder (available after you create a USAJOBS account), will prompt you to enter all the necessary information to create a Federal resume. Additionally, the USAJOBS Help Center provides detailed “How To” information in support of creating a resume. Check it out at <https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/how-to/>

Tip! For separating military service members, Fleet and Family Service Centers (FFSC) – FFSC staff can assist with Federal resume writing, resume review and tips.

Step 2: Register with USAJOBS

Now that you have created your resume, you are ready to establish an account. This is required in order to apply to Department of Navy and Marine Corp civilian vacancy announcements.

Steps to Create your Profile:

- Go to www.usajobs.gov
- Click "Create Profile " button
- Enter in your email address and a user name. Then follow the prompts sent via email to complete your profile (name, address, phone number, etc.)

Functionality of USAJOBS Account: Congratulations on creating your new USAJOBS account and profile. With USAJOBS you can:

- Build/upload resumes and other supporting documents under your “Documents”
- Search for and apply to Federal civilian job opportunity announcements using both a simple or advanced “Search”
- Create job search agents to alert you via email of newly opened announcements using "Saved Searches"
- Save and then view later, jobs you are interested in applying to under "Saved Job"
- View the status of your application packages on your Account Profile “Home” page

FAQs and Help with USAJOBS: USAJOBS has created a variety of tools, FAQs and step-by-step instructions for each step of the job search and application process. Check it out at <https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/how-to/>



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If you are a Department of the Navy employee, review our supplemental instructions on completing your USAJOB Profile, Eligibility question #4 pertaining to your current Federal Employment. This will ensure that your job searches default to announcements open to current federal employees.

Tip Sheet – DON Employee Application Information

Step 3: Find Job Openings

1. Using the keywords and/or location search function at the top of the www.usajobs.gov page or
2. Clicking the blue "Search" button at the top of your USAJOBS profile "Home" page.

USAJOBS also has an "Advanced Search". "Advanced Search" allows applicants to filter their search through a variety of parameters (e.g., hiring agency, occupational series, salary/grade, etc.).

The "Search Results" page provides various options such as refine search, view job announcement, save job, and save the search parameters used as a search agent.

For Department of the Navy job opportunity announcements, either go directly to our USAJOBS site at <https://donusajob.gov> or in the USAJOBS advanced search window, "", select "Department of Defense -Dept. of the Navy" under the Department and Agency field. You may further narrow your search to specific Major Command(s) within the Department of the Navy.

How Do You Know You Can Apply: Get to know your Federal hiring eligibilities (or as USAJOBS calls them Hiring Paths) by reviewing the below information

- Current Students
- Recent Graduates
- Experienced
- Veterans
- Military Spouse
- Individuals with Disabilities
- Senior Executive Service

USAJOBS help center offers step-by-step tutorials on how to use all the search functions. Check it out at <https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/how-to/>

Step 4: Apply

Review the Job Opportunities Announcement: Before applying to any Federal job opportunity announcement, carefully read and follow its instructions. Pay close attention to the Who May Apply, How to Apply, Qualifications and Required Documents sections of the announcement.



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These sections describe what type of applicant is eligible to apply, the education and experience required to be qualified for the position, and which documents you need to submit to support your application. We recommend you print the announcement (use the “Print” button in the announcement) and the assessment questionnaire (use the view assessment questions link) for reference.

[Tip Sheet – Read the Job Opportunity Announcement](#)

Don’t Let Our Job Opportunity Announcements Confuse You: We know that Federal positions may seem a bit bewildering, but they are surprisingly easy to understand if you know how to interpret the terminology. This should help:

- **Position Title** – This is the specific title of the job that is being announced.
- **Duty Location** – This is where the position is geographically located.
- **Opening Date** – This is the date when the vacancy announcement initially opened to begin receiving applications from candidates.
- **Closing Date** – This is the final date that applications may be submitted for consideration. Your application must be received by Midnight (Eastern Standard Time EST) on that date to be considered.
- **Salary Range**– This identifies the salary range for the position.
- **Series & Grade** – This identifies the pay plan, occupation series number and grade level.
- **Promotion Potential** – If a position has potential for promotion the full performance level for the position will be identified here.
- **Who May Apply** – A simple description of who is eligible to apply for the position is noted here, for example, "Federal Civil Service Employees" or "All US Citizens."
- **Job Announcement Number** – Each Federal job opening receives its own unique ID number.
- **Duties** – The duties and responsibilities of the position will be detailed here. We recommend that you address within your resume experience that might match the duties of the position.
- **Key Requirements** –Identifies conditions of employment that must be met or other requirements of the position that you must be willing to meet.
- **Qualifications** – The basic knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies you must have to qualify for the position, such as similar experience or a related educational background, are stated here. Ensure your resume addresses the experience, licenses, education and any other requirements listed.
- **How to Apply** – All of the materials you must submit with your application will be listed here.
- **How You Will Be Evaluated** – The details about how you will be evaluated for the position — whether you will be ranked on your knowledge, skills and abilities, or other characteristics — will appear here.
- **Required Documents** – Reiterates the required documents to submit with your application.



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Apply Online: To start the application process click the “Apply” button in the job opportunity announcement.

- Once “Apply” is selected, you will be asked to select a resume saved in “Your Resumes.” Select the appropriate resume and click the “Save & Continue” button.
- You will be prompted next to select documents from a “Select Documents” page. Select those documents that meet the required documents for the vacancy announcement. You can upload documents at this time as well if you don’t have them all saved in your USAJOBS Documents folder. Click the “Save & Continue” button.
- You will be prompted to review the resume and documents you have selected. Take the time to review and make certain they are the correct and appropriately address the duties and qualification requirements of the vacancy announcement. Click the acknowledgment box and select the “Save & Continue” button.
- Next, you will be asked to respond to a series of demographic questions and a question on how you found the position announcement. This is voluntary. Click “Save & Continue” to proceed.
- Read and certify that the information being submitted is accurate. Then select the “Continue to Agency Site.” At this time you are brought into a separation DON application system to complete your application.
- Complete the personal security information and select “Continue”.
- Review the Biographic Data to ensure its correct and select “Continue”.
- Complete the eligibility information then click “Continue”.
- Complete the vacancy specific questions (see Vacancy Specific Questions below) then click “Continue”.
- Assign or upload documents following the screen directions then click “Continue”.
- The last part of the application process is a “Review and Submit” page. It will identify if you have completed each of the application sections by displaying either a green check mark or red x. Ensure they all sections have a green check mark and then click the “Submit Application” button. Without pushing this button, your work so far has been saved but not submitted for the job opportunity announcement.
- You will then receive a confirmation message online and via email when your submission is complete. Newly submitted documents have to undergo a virus scan which takes approximately one hour. We recommend you check back after several hours to ensure documents successfully processed.

Vacancy Specific Questions: Once you have completed the eligibility questions, you will be taken directly to the vacancy application questions. During this stage applicants address statements related to possession of specialized experience and task based questions linked to the key knowledges, skills, abilities and competencies of the position. Answer all of the questions honestly and thoroughly.



Step 5: After You Apply

Once your complete application is received and the job opportunity announcement closes, the Human Resources professionals conduct an evaluation of your qualifications, determine your ranking, and refer the most highly qualified candidates to the hiring manager for further consideration, possible interview, and selection.

Although each agency is different, the Department of the Navy provides notification updates after the job opportunity announcement closes and your application is reviewed. Make sure you update your contact information in USAJOBS to ensure you can be contacted throughout the process.

Viewing Vacancy Status: To view vacancy status:

1. Select the “Home” Tab in your USAJOBS Account. Jobs you have applied to are identified in the “Application” Tab. The status will be identified to the right of the position information.
2. The vacancy announcement may be viewed by clicking the “Full Job Announcement” link.
3. Additional information regarding your application may be viewed using the “Additional Applicant Information” link.

Mandatory Applicant Notifications: In addition to viewing your status in your USAJOBS account, you will receive emailed applicant status throughout the recruitment process. The Office of Management and Budget has mandated that agencies are responsible for evaluating and providing status to applicants at four points. These points are:

- When the application is received
- When the applicant is assessed for qualifications or found ineligible
- When the applicant is referred to the selecting official or no longer under consideration
- When the applicant is selected or no longer under consideration

Additional Contact: Applicants may be contacted directly by the hiring manager once referred and will receive final notification through USAJOBS when the vacancy has been filled or cancelled.

Step 6: Interview

Navy and Marine Corps hiring managers use interviews to further narrow down the best-qualified candidates referred to them by learning as much about each as they can. An interview is a fact-finding mission for both the hiring manager and the applicant, and is a continuation of the evaluation and selection process. Occasionally, an applicant may be hired based solely on his/her application materials without an interview.

Congratulations if you have been selected for an interview. Be prepared to summarize your background, articulate those experiences which make you the best candidate for the position, and respond to fact-finding questions.



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There are many great free websites offering interview tips and resources available to you. For our military members, check out:

[Military.com Interviewing Tips](#) 

Step 7: Offer of Employment

After carefully evaluating candidates (by reviewing resumes, interviewing, and checking references) Navy and Marine Corps hiring managers coordinate the selection decision with their chain of command and then are ready to communicate their decision.

Congratulations if you were selected for the job! Hiring managers may contact you directly to make an initial contingent job offer and negotiate terms and conditions. This contact is however, contingent upon completing a variety of pre-employment screenings and completion of new employee forms.

If you aren't chosen – don't give up - keep trying! The Department of the Navy posts new job opportunity announcements regularly and are searching for talented people like you to consider for future vacancies.