

Name: _____

U.S. Armed Forces



The United States military is made up of five branches. These armed services protect and defend the U.S. in times of war and assist in many projects during peacetime. The following chart lists some important information about the major branches of the U.S. military. Study this information, then answer the questions below.

	MISSION	ACTIVE PERSONNEL	EQUIPMENT	HISTORY
AIR FORCE	To protect and defend the nation through military operations in the air and in space.	about 330,000	Bombers, fighter jets, transport and supply planes, reconnaissance aircraft, and helicopters.	The Air Force began in 1907 as a division of the Army. In 1947, Congress made the Air Force a separate military branch.
ARMY	To protect and defend the nation through military operations on land.	about 490,000	Tanks, trucks, jeeps, helicopters, and planes. Soldiers use a variety of rifles, pistols, and other weapons.	The Army is the oldest branch of the U.S. military. The Continental Congress created it in June 1775 to fight in the Revolutionary War.
COAST GUARD	To protect the public, the environment, and U.S. economic interests on the high seas and other bodies of water.	about 35,000	Lifeboats, speedboats, helicopters, icebreaker ships.	The U.S. Coast Guard was created in 1790. Congress established it to stamp out smuggling and piracy along the coasts of the U.S.
MARINE CORPS	An elite combat organization responsible for military exercises on land and in the seas.	about 185,000	Tanks, helicopters, and other vehicles. The Navy often provides ships and aircraft for transport and support for the Marines.	The Marine Corps was established in November 1775 to fight in the Revolutionary War. After the war, it was disbanded. The U.S. Congress re-created it in 1798.
NAVY	To protect and defend the nation and to ensure the freedom of the seas.	about 375,000	Aircraft carriers, battleships, cruisers, destroyers, frigates, submarines, and communication ships.	The Navy was established in October 1775 to fight in the Revolutionary War. After the war, it was disbanded. The Navy was officially relaunched in 1797.

- Which military branch has the largest number of active personnel?

- Based on the information in the chart, explain the relationship between the Navy and the Marine Corps.

- What event led to the establishment in the same year of three of the five military branches?

- Compare and contrast the composition and missions of the Coast Guard and the Navy.
