

FAQs

Royal Naval Reserve

How do I apply?

Step one: get in touch

- Call 08456 07 55 55
- Fill in a short form or find your local Royal Naval Reserve unit at royalnavy.mod.uk/rnr

Step two: meet us

Book a place at an informal presentation evening at your local Royal Naval Reserve Unit to ask questions and meet other Reservists.

Step three: find out more

Fill in a short application form – it doesn't commit you to joining. Whilst your application is being processed you can go to training nights at your local unit.

Step four: Show us what you've got

Take a recruit test covering basic English and maths, problem solving and understanding mechanics with the help of a practice test booklet.

Step five: fit to join

You'll need to take:

- a medical
- an eye test
- pre-joining fitness test with the help of a pre-joining fitness programme leaflet

You will also need to receive security clearance before moving to the next stage.

Step six: interview

You'll have a formal interview with a careers advisor. For some specialist roles, you'll sit a specialist selection board.

Step seven: welcome aboard

Once you're formally accepted into the Royal Naval Reserve, you will sign the Official Secrets Act and swear an oath before starting your training.

What skills will I gain from my training?

Through your military training you can gain:

- career related qualifications
- courses accredited up to Masters level
- leadership and other skills

Qualifications are available through:

- [Chartered Management Institute](#)
- [Institute of Leadership & Management](#)
- [City and Guilds](#)

See a list of all [qualifications](#) by service.

Will it affect my day job?

You will need to balance your training commitment with your day job. You'll be expected to train with your unit for a minimum number of days each year and will also need time off if you are [mobilised](#).

Although there's no legal requirement for your employer to allow you extra time off for training, many are happy to do so.

Am I eligible to join?

The criteria and age limit for joining the Royal Naval Reserve varies depending on the service and role you are applying for. Here is an overview but please check the full criteria for details.

- aged 16-40 or up to 45 for ex-Regulars although the upper age limit depends on the service and your specialisation. Use the [role finder](#) to find the age limit for the role you're interested in
- British, Irish, Commonwealth or British dual citizenship
- no qualifications required unless you're applying for an officer role
- be medically fit

See the full [eligibility criteria](#) for details.

Are there opportunities for progression?

How far you progress through the ranks depends on your performance, ambitions and circumstances.

If you have no previous military experience, you'll usually join as a rating. Many Reservists are happy to serve as ratings for their entire career, since this fits best with the demands of their civilian life.

For others, the Royal Naval Reserve offers a chance to pursue a structured management career.

If you've shown commitment and leadership, you may be recommended to apply for the Admiralty Board Interview and begin officer training. You can either be a General Reserve Officer or a Specialist Officer if you're a qualified civilian doctor, nurse or minister of religion.

Whatever your ambitions, you'll be given the training and support you need.

How fit do I need to be?

You'll take a medical, eye test and a pre-joining fitness test, which is a 2.4 km run. There will also be a swimming test. Your unit will give you advice on how to prepare. You'll need to keep your skills at a consistently high level.

Will I be mobilised?

As part of the Royal Navy's trained strength you could be called out (mobilised) to serve anywhere in the world in response to a military threat or a natural or humanitarian disaster. Operations generally last six months. You would not be mobilised until you have completed all your initial training and some branch training.

How long do I need to sign up for?

You usually complete five year blocks up to the age of 55.

Will I get paid?

When you've completed your minimum of 24 days training you'll qualify for a yearly tax-free bounty (bonus). You'll also be paid for each quarter day you train.

Is there a role for me?

There are 83 roles across surface fleet, submarine service, fleet air arm, Royal Marines, Royal Fleet Auxiliary, warfare, engineering, logistics, medical and chaplaincy.

Your role could include:

- protecting Royal Naval warships in foreign waters

- giving vital logistical support to crews of ships
- sending detailed signal information to submarines
- supplying safety information to merchant shipping

Some people choose a job based on their civilian skills whilst others train for a role that is completely different. Find a [role](#) that suits you online.

How much training will I do?

New-entry training

Part one – 20 weeks on training nights at your local unit or at weekends at other units across the UK. This basic phase covers naval knowledge, parade training and building your physical fitness.

Part two – Two weeks' training at HMS Raleigh in Cornwall covering weapon handling, sea survival, swimming and an overnight exercise on Dartmoor.

At the end you'll have your official passing out parade.

Ongoing training

Evenings and weekends - 12 days per year for which you'll be paid. As well as training nights you will need to complete at least three training weekends each year.

Continuous training – usually done in a 12-day block each year.

When you complete the minimum training you'll qualify for a tax free bonus on top of the pay you get for each quarter day you train.

Are there opportunities for travel?

There will be opportunities for travel and adventure during your career with the Royal Naval Reserves.

Links

[Royal Naval Reserve career guide](#)

[Royal Navy website](#)

Royal Marine Reserves

Royal Marine recruits train for a minimum of a year and, if successful, are awarded the coveted Commando Green Beret. They are then expected to specialise in one of these areas:

- parachutists
- swimmer-canoists
- small-boat or expert weapons instructors

Find out more about the [Royal Marine Reserves](#).