



# RCS FAQ LIST



## Explorers

**1. *What is the difference between joining as an Explorer through scouting and joining directly as a Cadet?***

As an explorer, you are only at the squadron for a limited period of time, typically 9-13 weeks. Explorers cannot ride in the corporate aircraft. You do not get the benefits of being a cadet, i.e., bivouacs, training, encampments, etc.

**2. *As an explorer in the Civil Air Patrol what training and activities may I participate in?***

Explorers can participate in all of the activities of the squadron except orientation flights and some classes that are restricted to cadets only.

**3. *Are Explorer uniform requirements the same as a cadet member and if so, what are they expected to purchase?***

We usually plan on having the uniform be some type of civilian wear that is the same for all explorers.

## Cadets

**1. *What age group does the CAP program span?***

The age group for the cadet program is 12 to 21.

**2. *How do I visit a squadron if I am interested in joining?***

Squadron meetings are open to anyone having an interest in the CAP. The cadet and/or parents can come for a whole night or parts of a meeting night.

**3. *If I want to join CAP what do I do to become a member?***

To become a member, you fill out an application form in the Squadron office and hand it in to the Squadron Commander with the appropriate money.

**4. *Is it expensive to join the Civil Air Patrol and what do I get with my membership?***

The current cost for an initial year is \$42 to National and \$10 to the Squadron. Each year thereafter, the cost is \$25 per year. At the time of application, you will be sent a set of study books, and a Class A blue uniform depending on CAP budget expenditures. You also get the monthly CAP News which keeps you up to date concerning new items, encampments, awards and much more.

**5. *Will I have to wear a uniform?***

The Civil Air Patrol is an Auxiliary of the United States Air Force. Therefore, a uniform, either Blues or BDUs will be worn to all meetings.

**6. *What are the uniform requirements for a Cadet?***

The uniform requirements are a correct Blues uniform- shirt, pants, belt, flight cap, black shoes; and a correct Battle Dress Uniform – Blouse, pants, khaki undershirt and boots.

**7. *Where can I purchase uniforms and accessories?***

Most uniform parts and accessories may be purchased at the squadron bookstore. If we do not have something, it can be purchased at the National bookstore on-line or at individual vendors.

**8. *Who can help guide me when I have to sew on patches and name tapes?***

There is a CAP publication called CAPM 39-1 which can be found at [www.cap.gov](http://www.cap.gov) and tells all of the requirements of all uniforms worn by the CAP. Our bookstore Senior Member is also very knowledgeable in this department.

**9. *What is CAPID?***

CAPID is short for CAP IDentification card which is sent to all CAP members after the applications are sent to the National Headquarters.

**10. *How do I sign up for training outside of the Wednesday night meeting?***

Any outside training will be announced at the end of the regular meeting nights with the person that you should go to in order to sign up.

**11. *What is a bivouac?***

A bivouac is a weekend activity in an area of interest such as search and rescue. It typically starts on Friday night at 6 or 7 PM and goes till noon on Sunday.

**12. *What do we learn about in the Civil Air Patrol?***

Cadets in CAP learn about aerospace and aircraft facts, emergency services, leadership, physical training, moral leadership and communications just to name a few.

**13. *I want to join the Air Force when I get older. How can Civil Air Patrol help me prepare for this?***

Since we are the Air Force Auxiliary, all of the leadership, aerospace and drill training come directly from the Air Force. By achieving the Mitchell Award the cadet receives a Senior Airman grade on entering the Air Force. Being in the CAP is looked upon very highly by all of the services.

**14. *How do cadets advance in rank and what do they have to do to move up in rank?***

The more appropriate term is Grade. Cadets move up in grade by passing a series of tests for each grade and successfully passing a Board of Review. You must also show that you have the responsibility and integrity to be advanced in grade.

**15. *Do I have to participate in any physical training activities like in the military?***

The CAP has a physical training manual and test that all cadets must pass in order to advance in grade. There is a timed mile run, sit and reach, push ups and sit-ups.

**16. Do I have to take tests?**

There are specific tests for each of the achievements and awards in the cadet program that allow the cadet to advance in grade.

**17. I've heard cadets talk about GSAR and Blue Beret encampments. What are these and how do I get to go on them?**

GSAR is General Search and Rescue. Blue Beret is a three week long encampment at Oshkosh, WI for the EAA Air Show. These are just two of the many encampments the National Headquarters puts on throughout the country in the summertime. Requirements are posted on line at the CAP Website or in the CAP NEWS.

**18. When can a cadet go on a search and rescue mission?**

Cadets can join in on a search and rescue mission after having completed the requirements for an ES 101 SAR card.

**19. When do uniforms and cadet notebooks arrive from National?**

Notebooks and CAP ID cards typically come within two to three weeks. The uniforms are sent from Lackland AFB and usually take 6 weeks.

**20. Where can a cadet get information to study the Curry achievement and Aerospace modules prior to their books arriving?**

We have copies of the Curry Leadership Chapter in the squadron. That is the only test that the cadet needs to fulfill the Curry Achievement.

**21. Does RCS CAP have any special Internet sites to share that will help me get information about the Squadron, program and activities?**

We have our own website at [www.caprps.org](http://www.caprps.org) so that any interested parties can see what we are and do.

**22. Is there a person who can help me through the National Website find information I need?**

The Deputy Commander for Cadets should be able to guide you in cadet matters and the Squadron Commander should be able to help you with other searches.

**23. Are parents allowed to come to the program on Wednesday nights with their cadets?**

Absolutely. Parents can stay as long as they wish every night.

## **Orientation Flights**

**1. What are "O" Flights?**

"O" or Orientation flights are those flights in the corporate aircraft that cadets are allowed to take. These flights have a syllabus from which the cadet learns the rudiments of flight, instruments, navigation and weather. Each of the 5 flights is approximately 2 hours in duration with the PIC (Pilot In Charge) and 2 other cadets.

**2. Do all cadets participate in “O” flights?**

Only those cadets who wish to take advantage of the orientation flights may do so. It is open to the entire cadet cadre.

**3. How much do cadets have to pay for the flights?**

The flights are reimbursed by the National Headquarters and are therefore free to the cadet.

**4. Does a cadet have to have any special insurance?**

The insurance for all of the flights is handled by the National Headquarters.

**5. Who are the pilots and do they follow a syllabus?**

The pilots are CAP members who take a test to fly the aircraft. See “1” above for the syllabus.

**6. Where do I sign up for the flights and who contacts me when it is my turn?**

We will have a special meeting and a sign up list for those cadets interested in flying. The pilots or a senior member will usually call the cadets they will be flying with.

**7. What should the cadet wear and is there any special ID?**

The ID is the cadet CAPID card and the uniform is BDUs.

## **Parents**

**1. Are purchases made for the CAP cadet tax deductible?**

The CAP is a 501.c.3 nonprofit corporation and all purchases for members are tax deductible.

**2. If my cadet runs into problems or questions, who does he contact?**

The CAP squadron is like any other military organization. Questions and problems go through the chain of command. Cadets go to their Flight Sergeants and Flight Commanders.

**3. Who can parents talk to for help in uniforms, procedures and materials the cadet brings home?**

The initial contact should be with the cadet’s Flight Commander. They will bring the question to the Deputy Commander for Cadets if they do not know the answer.

**4. What internet site is available for uniforms, the CAP, activities and the program?**

[www.cap.gov](http://www.cap.gov) is the official CAP website. Most information can be gotten from the senior members of the squadron.

**5. What is a flight?**

The flight is the basic unit within a squadron and is a group of cadets with a flight commander and a flight sergeant.

**6. How do cadets get to activities that are out of town?**

We belong to the Finger Lakes Group which has a corporate 12 passenger van that can be used. If the activity is in the area, we usually suggest that the parents bring the cadet.

**7. *How is information concerning upcoming events disseminated to the parents and cadets?***

At the close of each Wednesday meeting, announcements are given for future activities. Parents are encouraged to attend the nightly closing to hear what activities are available to the cadet.

**8. *My child wants to join CAP but we cannot afford all of the requirements. Is there a way to participate inexpensively?***

Outside of the initial and yearly fees for being a member, and the cost of a set of BDUs (which may be free of charge if our bookstore has them), the costs for bivouacs and other activities except National Encampments is relatively inexpensive.

## **Drill Team**

**1. *What is involved if the cadet wants to join the drill team?***

It is a high honor to be on the drill team. Cadets should possess good reading and testing skills, physical fitness, responsibility and a willingness to put in many hours of practice. Since its inception, the drill team has never failed to go all the way to the national competition- "The Best of the Best". We typically hold practices from 1 to 6 PM on Sunday afternoons from September to the end of the competition season in July. Cadets can be excused from practices for school or family activities. We also have a Friday to Sunday Bivouac just prior to the Regional and National competitions. There are some monetary costs involved such as a good competition Blues uniform, and a team uniform but the money can be raised through bottles and cans or anything else the cadet wishes to do.

**2. *I heard I have to have a separate uniform just for the team?***

We require each cadet to have a competition uniform that is separate from their everyday Blues uniform. This uniform is tailored by the team to the exact requirements of the uniform manual, along with all of the patches, ribbons and name plates. This is done because one of the competition parts is a uniform inspection and we want all of the team members as perfect as possible.

**3. *What do we learn on drill team that is different than at class meetings?***

Drill team competition involves standard drill, innovative drill, a 100 question test, a mile run, a quiz bowl, volleyball and uniform inspection. The test covers all of the leadership chapters and aerospace modules in the cadet notebook as well as current events, CAP history and national CAP important names and dates.

**4. *How much travel is involved with competitions?***

There are two or three times that we travel for competition. The first is a day trip for the Wing Competition. A weekend for the Regional Competition at the Naval Preparatory College in Newport, Rhode Island, and a 5 day (includes driving days) National Competition in Dayton Ohio at Wright State University and the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

**5. *Who runs the drill team?***

The drill team is run by a male and female advisor from the senior members and a cadet drill team commander.

**6. *Can anyone join or do I have to try out?***

Try outs are done after the cadet has been working with the team for a few weeks. This helps us gauge whether the cadet has the potential to be a team member and if they are still interested after the trail period.

**7. *How many people are on the drill team?***

The team consists of the two senior advisors 15 cadets and a cadet commander for a total of 16 cadets. Out of these, 12 cadets are hand picked to do the innovative and standard drills with three “alternates” who compete in all of the other areas of competition.

## **Color Guard**

**1. *What is a Color Guard?***

A Color Guard is made up of two Airmen, two NCOs (Sergeants) a senior advisor and a color guard commander.

**2. *What does a color guard do?***

The color guard is tasked with the posting and retrieval of the American flag and the Squadron Flag on the first Wednesday of every month and the posting and retrieval of the colors at certain events, i.e., the group ball or squadron ball.

**3. *What is the uniform for the Color Guard?***

The color guard uniform is the Dress Blue uniform that the cadets wear.

**4. *What is involved if a cadet wants to join the color guard?***

Cadets interested in the color guard should speak to the Senior Member advisor and join the color guard when they practice on Sundays from 1 to 4 PM.