

Uniforming Guidelines

1. What is a uniform? Why do organizations like the military, the police, and even McDonald's employees wear a uniform?
 - A uniform is the distinctive clothing that all members of an organization wear.
 - Uniforms are visible symbols of the group – they help individuals identify with the team, and therefore promote unity. Uniforms let the general public readily identify members of a group – to find a police officer, look for someone in a police uniform.
2. Specifically, why do CAP cadets wear the uniform?
 - Cadets wear the uniform as part of their leadership training; it promotes self-discipline teamwork, camaraderie, and is a visible sign of our affiliation with the Air Force.
3. Does an individual's appearance affect their organization's image? How? Why?
 - Yes. For good or bad, each individual represents their entire organization. If a cadet looks sharp in uniform, people will get the impression that all CAP cadets look sharp and that CAP is a good organization. Likewise, if one cadet is a total mess, people will think that cadet is the norm, and CAP's reputation will suffer.
4. How many ways are there to wear the uniform?
 - One: The right way. Wearing the uniform is a privilege, not a right. Wear it proudly or not at all.
5. Wear Policy - Wearing the uniform is a privilege, not a right. You are not permitted to wear the uniform whenever you want, only during CAP activities. For example, you wear the uniform to squadron meetings, weekend cadet activities, encampments, etc., but not to family cookouts, while working at a part-time job, while attending political rallies, etc. Permission may be granted by the DCC/CC to wear a uniform to school, church, or family functions. Requests should be submitted via e-mail.
6. Grooming Standards
 - The first requirement in wearing the uniform is that you meet the grooming standards for hair, jewelry, and personal care
 - CAP Grooming Standards are to be followed for cadets that do not have uniforms.
7. Where do I find detailed instructions on how wear my uniform?
 - CAPM 39-1, *CAP Uniform Manual*.
8. Why is proper wear important?
 - The uniform you wear while a CAP cadet is also the uniform of the United States Air Force. It is a symbol of the honor, integrity, and high achievements of the Air Force throughout its history. Respect the uniform and wear it with pride! You, CAP, and the Air Force are judged by the way you conduct yourself and wear your uniform. Your conduct in uniform should be beyond reproach.
 - New cadets will receive help in proper wear of their uniform from the Training NCO. Cadets are strongly urged to ask questions through their chain of command (ex. flight sergeant, flight commander, cadet commander) regarding the wear of the uniform and the positioning of patches, ribbons, etc. Cadets may also consult CAPM 39-1.
9. Ordering uniforms
 - Read Cadet Basic Uniforming Instructions.
 - Turn Uniforming Order Form into flight sergeant.
 - Have flight sergeant check Blues and BDU's before they are worn
10. Inspect before wear. Do not wear unless uniform is properly put together
 - Shirt/ Blouse - clean and pressed, no loose strings, pockets buttoned. Keep nothing in shirt pockets except Form 60 and Form 341.

- When wearing a long sleeve dress blue shirt a tie must be worn with a tie tack bar.
- Ties are not to be worn with short sleeve dress blue shirt, except when specifically authorized by Cadet Commander.
- Patches in correct places
 - ◇ Ribbons – be sure they are in proper order – Blues only. Use ribbon creator at the following website to see how to order your ribbons:
<http://dafab.no-ip.info/CAPCode/BuildRackGIF.htm>
 - ◇ Nameplate/Nametape always on right side.
 - ◇ Civil Air Patrol strip on left side – BDU's only
 - ◇ Wing Patch on left shoulder – BDU'S only.
 - ◇ Reversed American flag on right shoulder – BDU'S only.
- Slacks/ Pants - clean and pressed, no loose strings, pockets buttoned.
 - Limit what you place in pants pockets
 - BDU cap may be placed in pocket on left leg.
- Gig Line:
 - Males: Forms a continuous line from shirt fly, buckle, and trouser fly
 - Females: Same as males, except belt direction is reversed; some combinations do not have a belt.
- Flight/BDU Cap - Always worn with uniform.
- Belt - should always be worn and must have unscratched buckle.
 - A blue belt with silver buckle and silver tip is worn with dress blues.
 - A blue belt with open face black buckle and black tip is worn with BDU's.
- Shoes/Boots - Always clean and polished with black dress socks/ boot socks.
- T-shirt
 - Dress Blues – white V-neck
 - BDU's – Black U-neck t-shirt, no pocket, no logos except CAP event shirts.
- Service Coat – is worn with the Dress Blues uniform and is the most formal uniform a cadet may wear.
 - You must wear a tie with tie tack bar with service coat
 - When wearing a service coat the shirt must be ironed.
 - You should wear a nameplate on blues shirt in the event that you decide to remove service coat. Note: If you wear a dress blues without a nameplate you are out of uniform.
- Field Jacket – worn with BDU's.
 - All patches and name strips that are worn on BDU blouse must be on field jacket.

11. New Cadets Uniforms

- Cadets that have not received a dress blues uniform must wear the authorized alternative of dress pants with a solid color dress or polo shirt with dress black shoes and socks.
- In place of the BDU uniform new cadets must blue jeans or sweatpants with a plain t-shirt, polo shirt or sweatshirt, and sneakers
- Cadets must treat the alternative uniform as a uniform. You should look sharp. Clothing should be clean and pressed. Baggy and frayed clothes are not permitted.

- The alternative uniform is required after attending your 3rd meeting.
- Cadets are required to wear a BDU or Blues uniform no later than the end of their 2nd month in CAP. Cadets that do not have a uniform by this time will not be promoted.
- To promote to C/Airman a Blues uniform must have been ordered through e-services even though it may not have been received.
- You must have a Blues uniform to promote past C/Airman
- Cadets that are promotable to C/Am before the end of their 2nd month may be promoted provided they are wearing the appropriate alternative uniform (dress pants and shirt)
- New cadets are permitted to wear the BDU uniform in place of the Blues when Blues are the Uniform of the Day (UOD) until your Blues arrive. This should be no longer than 3 months.
- Partial uniforms may not be worn.

12. Care of Uniform - Laundering & Ironing

- BDU's
 - Washing: Your BDU uniform may be laundered at home with some special care. Turn your BDU's inside out before laundering. Use warm (never hot) water, and the permanent-press cycle. Use a detergent designed for warm or cool water washing. Never use chlorine bleach! You may launder your field jacket in this same manner. Although the washing instructions for your BDU cap say that you may launder your cap in the same manner, it is recommended that you do not put your BDU cap in the washing machine - it will ruin the bill. Instead, wash it by hand using a mild shampoo to remove the oil residue and buildup caused by your hair. Do not wring or twist the cap. Instead, shape your cap and let it air dry overnight.
 - Drying: Use permanent press cycle or low heat setting. The normal heat setting is too hot! Remove your uniforms immediately after drying. Removing your BDU's promptly and smoothing them flat before they cool down reduces wrinkles. (It is recommended that you never put your BDU cap in the dryer, as it will lose its shape.)
 - Ironing: Lay your uniform flat and iron using the "synthetic" or "low" setting. You may use starch on your uniforms, but remember to keep the iron set on low to prevent the starch from scorching or glossing your uniforms. The shirt should only be creased on the sleeves. This should be done by starting the crease off the center of the epaulet and continue it down the sleeve to the wrist being careful NOT to crease the wing patch. On the BDU's pants creases are not required. If there is a crease it should go down the front and back of the leg. All of the pockets should be flat. Avoid ironing over buttons and creating button marks on the fabric.
- Dress Blues
 - Long and short-sleeved shirts may be laundered at home using the same technique as your BDU's. Remember, the shirt should only be creased on the sleeves. This should be done by starting the crease off the center of the epaulet and continue it down the sleeve to the wrist. Follow laundering instructions on the blues pants. There should be a crease down the front and back of the leg, below the zipper line. All of the pockets should be flat. The service coat, and some trousers/ skirts, must be dry cleaned. Cadets are responsible for paying for dry cleaning.

13. How to Polish Shoes

- Shoes and boots are a part of the uniform and need to be clean and shined. For CAP uniforms, regular use of standard black shoe polish is required to maintain a good appearance. First, wipe the shoes clean making sure any dirt, dust etc are removed. Remove the laces and apply a coat of polish. Working in small circles helps to ensure polish covers thoroughly. After shoes have set for the recommended time on the shoe polish can, excess polish can be wiped off and shoes buffed. Multiple coats of polish help to provide a better shine and protect the shoes. Old socks work well for applying polish and wiping it off. As a word of warning, black shoe polish will stain uniforms, carpets, etc and is hard to remove. Avoid wearing your uniform shirt and working over your family's best rug while doing this.

14. Uniforms that no longer fit

- Cadets may exchange a uniform that is no longer the right size for one that fits from the squadron's supply. The squadron will then be able to use their old uniform for new cadets. If the squadron does not have another uniform for the cadet the cadet must purchase a fitting uniform through Vanguard or a store selling military uniforms.

15. Return of Uniforms

- All uniforms and items provided by CAP National or the squadron must be returned if a cadet does not renew his membership. However, please return items that are no longer needed so that we can outfit new cadets.
- Cadets should order the dress blues uniform even if they have been lent one by the squadron. Upon receipt of the dress blues uniform you must return one of the uniforms to the squadron.

16. Jewelry

- Males
 - No earrings
 - Conservative watch
 - Maximum of one conservative bracelet no wider than one inch
 - Maximum of three conservative rings
 - Chains or dog tags must not be visible
- Females
 - Conservative small, spherical diamond, gold, white pearl, or silver pierced or clip on earrings; earrings must fit tightly without extending below earlobe except for connecting band on clip earrings. Only 1 earring per lobe.
 - Conservative watch
 - Maximum of one conservative bracelet no wider than 1 inch
 - Necklace, chains or dog tags must not be visible

17. Hair Regulations

- Overall, hair should be clean, well groomed, and neat. Avoid using an excessive amount of grooming aids (thus, it's not permissible to grow your hair long and slick it back with styling gel while in uniform).
- Men
 - Men's hairstyles must have a tapered appearance on both sides and back, both with and without headgear. A tapered appearance outlines the individual's hair to conform to the shape of the head, curving inward to the termination point. The bulk, or thickness, of hair must not exceed 1 ¼ inches, regardless of length. No trendy styles.

- Mustaches: When worn, mustaches must not extend downward beyond the lip line of the upper lip or extend sideways beyond a vertical line drawn upward from the corner of the mouth.
- Sideburns: When worn, sideburns must be neatly trimmed and tapered in the same manner as the haircut. They must be straight and of even width (i.e., not flared).
- Women: Women's hairstyles must present a professional appearance. The hair must not extend in length on all sides below an invisible line drawn parallel to the ground at the bottom edge of the shirt collar at the back of the neck. Hair must not exceed 3 inches in bulk or be styled in a way that prevents proper wear of headgear. It must not be worn in an extreme or faddish style or in such a way that it violates safety requirements. May use conservative style; plain-colored barrettes, etc.

18. Rolling Sleeves – BDU's

- Sleeves may be rolled in warm weather at the discretion of the squadron commander
- Sleeves will be the same for all members – rolled or unrolled, follow example of cadet commander.
- Sleeves are most easily rolled with the jacket removed.
 - Step 1. Pull sleeve up to just below wing patch
 - Step 2. Fold up from seam 2 ½ inches
 - Step 3. Fold up from bottom seam another 2 ½ inches. If you do not reach bottom of cuff continue doing this until you reach the cuff.
 - Step 4. Fold down cuff over folded sleeve.