

# A Secure Future Skills & Training

Being in the army gives you security, because once you sign up you have to serve a minimum term, until you are 22 years old, or have served at least four years. But if you join at 16 years old, then you have to serve six years. In most jobs you can change your mind and leave, but not in the Army.

If you take a training course (anything except basic military training) you sign a form saying that in return for this educational opportunity, you give up your right to give 12 months notice to get out the army. This means that if the Army wants to keep you, you have to stay in until you are 40 years old, or have served 22 years - whichever is later. The only way to guarantee being able to leave when you are 22 or after four years is to refuse training.

Up until 1991 you could buy your way out the army if you changed your mind, but this has now been stopped.

The basic military skills as an infantryman may give you the training you need to work as a night-watchman, or other unskilled jobs.

But the army does also provide training opportunities to a high standard, for example to become a mechanic, or electrician. The pay for skilled trades in the army is less than you would earn in civilian life, and by taking training you give up your right to leave the Army after the minimum term.

Many employers also feel that the Army environment does not provide the people skills and business awareness necessary for civilian life.

## THINKING OF JOINING THE ARMY?

Anyone who leaves the Army at 22 years old must serve another six years in the Reserves, during which time they are liable for recall at any time.



**THE ARMY.  
REGULAR & TERRITORIAL  
ITS ALL THE SAME  
THE REAL GUIDE.**





## ACCOMMODATION

The barracks shown here is for eight men to one room, it smells and the toilets are disgusting. Former army head, General Sir Mike Jackson, described armed forces accommodation as "frankly shaming."

The MOD's own survey of initial training found accommodation for new recruits to be "squalid and depressing, with persistently unserviceable facilities and decaying fabric".



## WILL WE BE LOOKED AFTER ONCE WE LEAVE THE ARMY?

Ex-service personnel make up a quarter of homeless people in Britain according to Shelter and the Government's Social Exclusion Unit.

"Unemployment among ex-service personnel aged between 25-49 years is twice the national average" The Royal British Legion.

This leaflet was produced by Swindon Stop the War Coalition to provide information for young men and women thinking of joining the Army. Our young service men and women deserve better.

## WHAT IF I'M WOUNDED?

In the Second World War for every person killed there were three wounded. In Iraq today it is eight wounded to every one killed

The government is very cagey about releasing numbers of wounded, but already by January 2005, over 800 had been flown out of Iraq seriously wounded, the number now must be at least 1200. One in five of American wounded have suffered severe brain injuries, while 70% had wounds "with the potential for resulting in brain injury". The head and torso are well protected by Kevlar body armour, so two out of three wounded have injured legs or feet, and often multiple limb loss.

The British Legion says "the system is failing many permanently injured or ill soldiers." And on veterans from the first gulf war: "Many veterans continue to have difficulty in coming to terms with their illnesses and feel let down by the country that they served. Closure for veterans continues to be elusive and meanwhile their health continues to deteriorate."

Field Marshal Lord Bramall, a former chief of the defence staff, who commanded the Army during the Falklands conflict, said the outpatient service for soldiers is now "appalling".

Specialists at Kings College London estimate that one in four soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, suffer mental health problems. "The number of mental health disorders cited by 16-44 year olds is three times the national average."

Col Tim Collins, who commanded an infantry battalion during the Iraq invasion, said "the public did not care about troops who had been wounded in an unpopular war and that they were not vote winners for the Government. The public perception is that these men are volunteers and if you get wounded then bad luck; you should have joined the fire service instead."

More servicemen and women have committed suicide over the past two decades than have died in military action, according to new government figures.