

# **Anchors Aweigh**

## **Navy Organization, Traditions and History**

This section introduces you to how the Navy is organized, and how to best learn about history and traditions that might matter to you. You will learn more about the Navy the longer your Sailor continues to serve. You don't have to learn everything all at once, or understand everything about your Sailor's part of the Navy. The more curious you are, the more you will learn, and the better you will understand how your Sailor fits into it all.

### **Navy Mission**

The mission of the Navy is to maintain, train, and equip combat ready naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression, and maintaining freedom of the seas.

— Did you know that the Navy ensures that commercial shipping lanes are kept open? More than 90% of US commerce travels by sea, so this is especially important.

— The Navy also deters pirates at sea—the movie Captain Phillips is based on the true story of Somali Pirates taking an American commercial ship hostage and the rescue operation mounted by the Navy.

— The Navy is comprised of many components that all work together towards this mission. Every element is crucial to success.

### **Core Values**

All sailors are taught to learn and live the Navy's Core Values: Honor, Courage, and Commitment. Many Navy couples and families have found that these values permeate their relationships and make them stronger. Consider embracing them as part of your own family values.

### **Navy Structure**

There is ONE U.S. Navy. It is comprised of four core components — Active Duty, Reserve, Civilian, and families. Each provides unique contributions to the Navy Mission and all are important. At the end of 2018, the size of these components were:

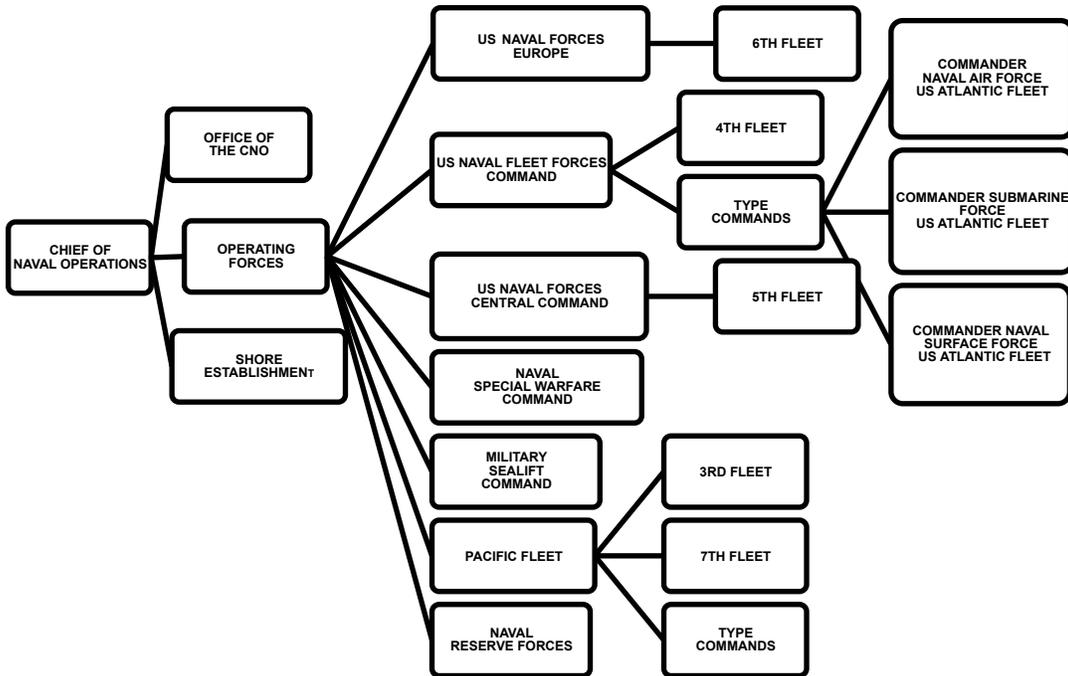
Active Duty:	330,000
Ready Reserve:	100,495
Civilian:	274,300

However, each component operates in its own unique way. They have their own processes, administrations, and benefits and privileges. Civilian component spouses, for example, are not eligible for Navy ID cards and therefore cannot access military bases unaccompanied and cannot access Commissaries or Exchanges alone. (This is an issue being addressed across the Navy). Reserve component sailors pay their own way to their reserve duty stations each month if traveling to a Reserve center. As you interact with Sailors and their spouses, remember that every service member matters and every family experiences joys and challenges associated with their service.

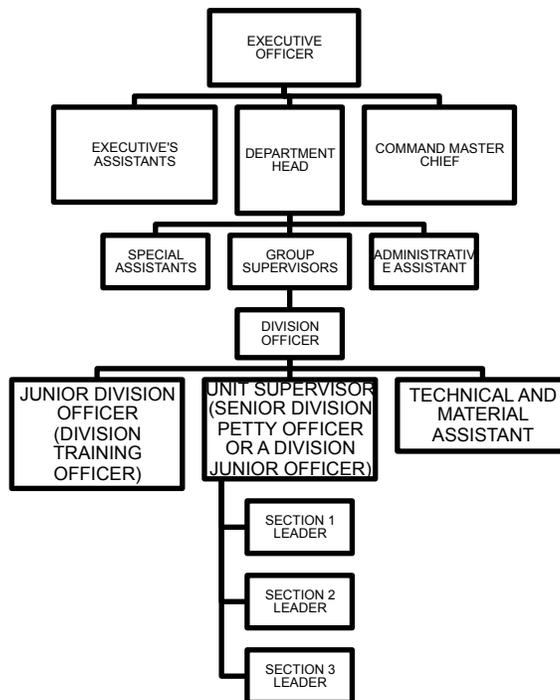
### **Navy Communities**

You may be more familiar with the idea of Navy Communities, such as Aviation, Submarines, and Surface (ships.) You might think of these communities in terms of their relationship to the sea (above, on, or under the sea...). Another way you may think about the Navy is in terms of location (Atlantic, Pacific, Europe.) There are many more communities, such as special forces, engineers, medical, chaplains, and others. The Navy Organization Chart is a top-level look at how the Navy is structured, and the Command Structure Chart is a next-level look at how a specific Command or unit is organized.

## NAVY ORGANIZATION



## TYPICAL COMMAND STRUCTURE



## **Navy Traditions**

The Navy is an organization rich with tradition and customs. From the way we gather, celebrate, socialize, and support each other, there are ceremonial and traditional approaches that date back hundreds of years. Some people find traditions and ceremonies intimidating at first, because it feels foreign. When we learn the history of the custom, it becomes meaningful and fun.

## **Understanding Dress Codes**

Frequently, you will receive invitations to various social events, military and civilian. Accept, if at all possible, as this will give you an opportunity to meet new and interesting people. The attire for these invitations is usually specified and can range from informal to formal depending upon the time of day and geographic location. One of the first things new spouses ask about these events is “What should I wear?” Use the following definitions for typical dress code instructions for Navy events as a start. Ask other spouses for advice if you aren’t sure.

### Very Formal Occasions

This is very seldom worn except by flag officers or those in the diplomatic corps. When required, white tie is worn to evening dances, weddings, dinners, receptions, and on state occasions.

Military: Formal dress uniform.

Civilian: Gentlemen wear a tailcoat with matching trousers, a white waistcoat, wing collared shirt and white bow tie. Ladies wear very formal evening gowns.

### Daytime Formal Occasions

For a formal daytime function such as a wedding, the following applies:

Military: Seasonally appropriate Service Dress Uniform.

Civilian: Gentlemen wear cutaways. Ladies wear dresses or suits appropriate to the occasion as styles dictate.

### Evening Formal Occasions

The attire specified for a formal evening function is “Black Tie.” This may be worn to formal events after 6:00 p.m. such as dinners, receptions, dances, or weddings.

Military: Seasonally appropriate Dinner Dress Jacket Uniform.

Civilian: Gentlemen wear dinner jackets or tuxedos. Ladies wear formal evening gowns.

### Ceremonial Occasions

For occasions of state, ceremonies, and solemnities, parades and reviews, military personnel participating wear the specified ceremonial uniform.

Military guests: Seasonally appropriate Service Dress Uniform.

Civilian: Gentlemen generally wear dark business suits. Ladies wear dresses or business suits appropriate to the occasion, as styles dictate.

### Informal Occasions

Business and informal occasions in the afternoon such as luncheons, receptions, or dinners will call for “Informal Attire” or “Civilian Informal.”

Military: Seasonally appropriate Service Uniform.

Civilian: Gentlemen wear dark business suits. Ladies wear afternoon dresses or business suits; or for evening events, dressy dresses, business suits, or long skirts appropriate to the occasion, as current styles dictate.

### Casual Occasions

Nowadays, casual functions may include dinner parties, picnics, barbecues, sporting events, etc. For gentlemen, “casual attire” may range from an open collar shirt or sweater to a sports coat. For ladies, attire may range from slacks or dressy walking shorts to casual skirts. (Shorts and jeans are inappropriate unless specifically indicated by the host/hostess.)

Note: In many areas of the country, dress requirements can vary for the “casual” social occasions. For example, in one part of the country, “casual” may mean shorts and sandals, and in another area it may mean dressy slacks or skirts. When in doubt, inquire as to the local custom or ask your host/hostess.

### Aloha Attire

When you live on an island, you may receive an invitation that calls for “aloha attire.” There are several types of aloha attire, including aloha casual, aloha formal, and aloha crisp.

Casual: Shorts & nice T-Shirt or golf shirt

Aloha Wear: Nice clothes, Aloha Shirt/Sundress

Casual Dress: Simple dress, nice slacks, nice shorts and sandals

Semi Formal: Short Dress, Dinner jacket for men

Aloha Crisp: Women: Sundress, skirt or pants w/dressy sandals Men: Aloha shirt or open collard shirt with dress pants. (can be a nice Aloha shirt)

Formal Ball Gown or Tuxedo for men

When in doubt, call your host or someone who has been to a similar function to ask what is appropriate to wear.

### **A Guide to Social Customs, Etiquette, and Ceremonies**

The Social Customs Guidelines created by NSFL, by spouse-for spouse, includes information on the following topics, including when to put your hand over your heart, what to wear on a ship (pants and flat shoes), and what all of the various events that you will see are all about. Some of the topics reviewed in this invaluable resource include:

Sea Service Etiquette

Shipboard Etiquette

Flag Etiquette

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

National Anthem Etiquette

Service Song Etiquette

Anchors Aweigh - song

Eternal Father, Strong to Save—The Navy Hymn

Flags, Pennants and Customs Chart

## A Guide to Ceremonies

Keel-Laying, Christening or Launching, Commissioning, Decommissioning, Change of Command, Change of Office, Chief Petty Officer Pinning, LDO and CWO Commissioning, Retirement, Social Functions and Traditions, Receptions, Wetting-Down Parties, All Hands Events, Dining-In and Dining-Out, Navy Birthday Ball, Hail and Farewell.

### **Spouse Tips for Success**

- Remember that you will learn as you go. No one expects you to understand the entire Navy.
- Don't be shy about asking questions about things you want to know.
- While rules of etiquette are important to follow, always keep in mind that no rules will replace a warm heart, a friendly smile, and the sincere desire to share in the fellowship and camaraderie of the sea services.
- Remember that other spouses are your best resource. Want advice? Ask a spouse!

### **Best Resources:**

The most comprehensive guide to Navy History and Traditions is *Social Customs and Traditions of the Sea Services*, from the NSFL Guidelines series. It is available free online.

<http://www.nsfamilyline.org/publications/FamilyLineSocialCustomsTraditions2016.pdf>

NSFL's *Sea Legs* also includes useful information about customs and traditions.

<http://www.nsfamilyline.org/site/publications/sea-legs-the-family-members-guide-to-the-us-coast-guard>