Naval Services FamilyLine
Guideline Series Resources

RATE, RANKS &
INSIGNIAS

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Rate Insignia of Navy Enlisted Personnel

The use of the word “rank” for Navy enlisted personnel is incorrect. The term is “rate.” The rating badge – a combination of rate (pay grade) and rating (specialty) is worn on the left upper sleeve of all uniforms in grades E-4 through E-6. E-1 through E-3 have color-coded group rate marks based upon their occupational field. Group rate marks for E-2 and E-3 are worn on dress uniforms only. Personnel in pay grade E-1 do not wear group rate marks. Chief petty officers (E-7 through E-9) wear collar devices on their white and khaki uniforms, and rate badges on their service dress blues.

Rank Insignia of Navy Commissioned Officers

Navy officers wear their rank devices in different places on their uniforms, depending upon the uniform. The three basic uniforms and the type of rank devices are: khakis (a working uniform) – pins on the collar; whites – stripes on shoulder boards; and blues – stripes sewn on the lower sleeve. Shoulder boards are also worn on bridge coats and reefers. The collar devices are also worn on the right side of the garrison cap (a miniature officer’s crest is worn on the left) and slightly larger devices are worn on the epaulets of the raincoat and working jacket.

Additionally, line officers wear a star above the stripes of the shoulder boards or sleeves, but staff and warrant officers wear specialty insignia.

Rank Insignia of Restricted Line Officers

Restricted Line(RL) Officers in the United States Navy and Navy Reserve are commissioned line officers who are not eligible for Command at Sea. These officers are further divided into Staff Corps Officers, Limited Duty Officers (LDO), or Warrant Officers (WO/CWO). These officers wear their rank devices in different places on their uniforms in the same manner as the Unrestricted Line Officers (URL) above.