55 The armed forces

The US Military



tank

comprises five **branches** in its field of **operations**: the army, the navy, the air force, the marine corps and the coast **guard**, all under **civilian** authority. More than 1.35 million people **serve** in the professional full-time military, with a further 800,000 in **the reserve** army. (There is no longer **compulsory military service**, though men aged 18-25 must register for it if the need arises.) The US military **distinguishes between enlisted** personnel, who **make up** about 85% of the **armed** forces and carry out **fundamental** operations such as **combat** and administration; and officers, who manage and supervise operations. The range of jobs is **vast**, but **encompasses** such **diverse** activities as running a hospital, **commanding** a **tank**, flying military **aircraft**, programming computers, maintaining **weapon** systems, etc.



helicopter



parachute



missile

GLOSSARY

the military	a country's army, navy and air force SYN **the armed forces**; **military** *adj*
branch	a part of a large organization: ***a branch of a bank***
operation	an organized activity, often involving the military or police
guard	a person or group of people who protect sth/sb **guard** *v*
civilian	not belonging to the armed forces. A person is a **civilian**.
serve	do useful work: ***serve your country / in the army***, etc.
the reserve(s)	an extra force that performs part-time duties and is available if needed
compulsory	If sth is **compulsory**, you have to do it. SYN **obligatory**; OPP **optional**
military service	time spent serving in the military, especially as a compulsory period for young people
distinguish between A and B	recognize a difference between two people or things SYN **differentiate (between) A and B**, **make a distinction (between A and B)**
enlisted	(especially US English) relating to members of the permanent armed forces below officer rank. **Enlist** is to join the armed forces.
armed	carrying a gun or other weapon **arms** *n* (*pl*)
fundamental	central and forming the necessary basis of sth
combat	fighting between forces: ***armed/unarmed combat*** (= fighting with/without guns, bombs, etc.)
vast	extremely large: ***the vast majority***; ***vast numbers***; ***a vast amount***
encompass *formal*	include sth within an area or area of activity
diverse	different from each other and of various kinds **diversity** *n*
command	be in charge of sb. A person can also **be in command (of sth/sb)**.
aircraft	any vehicle that can fly and carry goods or passengers
weapon	an object such as a knife, gun or bomb that is used for fighting: ***nuclear/chemical weapons***; ***a deadly/lethal weapon*** (= that can kill sb)

SPOTLIGHT *comprise, consist of, make up*

These verbs describe the way in which something is formed.

- *The group **comprises / consists of / is made up of** 30 people.*

When you mention some of the parts first, use **make up** or **comprise**.

- *Men **make up / comprise** the majority of the group.*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1 Answer the questions. Use the APP to help you.

1 The pronunciation of the letter 'a' is the same as in ***park*** in five of the cases underlined. Which one is different?
armed branch command encompass guard vast .....

2 Which three underlined letters are pronounced the same as in ***bit***, and which three are pronounced the same as in ***bet***?
civilian deadly differentiate encompass enlisted weapon

....
....

3 The pronunciation of the letter 'i' is the same as in ***bit*** in nine of the cases underlined. Which three are different?
civilian comprise distinguish diverse enlisted military missile obligatory

....

2 Use word(s) from the box to form nine compound words or phrases.

unarmed	majority	the armed	lethal	service	your country
forces	combat	be in	a distinction	make	serve
military (x 2)	weapon	command	aircraft	the vast	

....
....

3 Replace the underlined word(s) with a single word that has a similar meaning.

1 To run an army requires a very large amount of money. .....
2 The decision will be taken by the armed forces. .....
3 A brigade is made up of approximately 5,500 men and women. .....
4 The right to self-defence is one of their central beliefs. .....
5 There was very little armed fighting. .....
6 The men are from very different backgrounds. .....
7 Six soldiers were on duty to protect the camp. .....
8 I wanted to serve my country, so I joined as a soldier. .....
9 This knife is a lethal weapon. .....
10 They don't recognize a difference between men and women. .....
11 The work includes many different tasks and responsibilities. .....
12 Is military service obligatory? .....
13 A brigadier is a high-ranking officer, and is in charge of a large group of soldiers. .....
14 Ensuring the safety of the ships will be a large organized military activity. .....

4 Complete the text with suitable words.

The British **(1)** ..... forces is **(2)** ..... of the army, the navy and the air force. As head of state, the Queen is theoretically in **(3)** ..... of the armed forces, but in practice that is the job of the British Prime Minister. Approximately 146,000 men and women **(4)** ..... in the professional armed forces (often referred to as the 'regulars'), with a further 36,500 in the **(5)** ..... . The armed forces are also supported by a number of **(6)** ..... agencies owned by the Ministry of Defence. The navy is the **(7)** ..... of the armed forces which is responsible for Britain's nuclear **(8)** ....., which **(9)** ..... four Trident nuclear missile submarines.

5 ABOUT YOU AND YOUR COUNTRY Write your answers, or ask another student.

1 Has your country got a professional military? .....
2 Do you have a reserve army? .....
3 Do you have military service? .....
4 Are the police usually armed in your country? .....
5 Have you ever:
stood next to a tank? ..... flown in a helicopter? .....
owned or used a deadly weapon? ..... dropped from a parachute? .....
been in a professional army? ..... done military service? .....

TEST YOURSELF

LIVEWORKSHEETS