EDUCATION

Army Service Uniform Set Up Guide

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Introduction: Mastering Your Army Service Uniform Set Up Guide

The Army Service Uniform (ASU) is more than just clothing; it is a symbol of pride, discipline, and professionalism. Whether you are a new soldier preparing for your first formal inspection or a seasoned non-commissioned officer refreshing your knowledge, a precise **Army Service Uniform Set Up Guide** is essential. Getting every detail right—from the placement of badges to the alignment of the ribbon rack—demonstrates attention to detail and respect for the uniform. This comprehensive guide walks you through each component, step by step, ensuring your ASU meets Army Regulation 670-1 standards. By the end, you will have the confidence to set up your uniform correctly and maintain the highest standards of military appearance.

Understanding the Army Service Uniform

The Army Service Uniform is the standard formal uniform worn by soldiers in the United States Army. It is used for ceremonies, formal events, daily duty in some assignments, and official functions. The ASU replaced the earlier Army Green Service Uniform and is designed to project a sharp, professional image. There are two primary variants: the male ASU and female ASU, each with specific fit and component differences. This **Army Service Uniform Set Up Guide** covers both, highlighting variations where necessary.

The uniform consists of several key pieces: the coat, trousers, shirt (white or light green), tie, headgear, footwear, and a wide array of insignia and accoutrements. Proper setup requires attention to each piece's placement and alignment, as outlined in AR 670-1 and DA Pam 670-1. Understanding the purpose of each component helps soldiers wear the uniform with pride and avoid common errors.

Key Components of the ASU

- Coat (jacket): The four-pocket jacket with shoulder loops, belt loops, and a stand-up collar.
- Trousers (or slacks): Matching fabric with belt loops and a crease.
- Shirt: Long-sleeved or short-sleeved white or light green, depending on the occasion.
- Neckwear: A four-in-hand necktie (male) or tab (female).
- Headgear: Service cap or garrison cap with appropriate insignia.
- Footwear: Oxblood-colored Corfam or leather shoes (male) or pumps (female).
- Accessories: Belt (black or oxblood), nameplate, ribbons, badges, shoulder sleeve insignia, rank insignia, and unit awards.

Each component must be correctly placed and secured. The following sections provide a detailed, step-by-step **Army Service Uniform Set Up Guide** to ensure you never miss a requirement.

Step-by-Step ASU Set Up Guide

1. Laying Out the Uniform Base

Start by laying your clean, pressed coat and trousers on a flat surface. Ensure all buttons are present, seams

are straight, and the fabric is free of wrinkles or stains. For male soldiers, the trousers should have a sharp crease down the center of each leg. Female soldiers may have tailored slacks or a skirt option; Army Service Uniform Set Up Guide is a pre-shrunk and well-maintained uniform

Attach the trouser belt through the belt loops. The belt buckle should be brass (for dress occasions) or black plastic (for service occasions). Make sure the buckle is polished and free of scratches. The belt should be threaded correctly, with the buckle centered over the trousers' center seam.

2. Fitting and Adjusting the Shirt and Tie

Put on the white shirt (for formal) or light green shirt (for service) and ensure it is tucked neatly into the trousers. The shirt collar must be clean and not curled. For male soldiers, tie the four-in-hand necktie so that the tip rests at the top of the belt buckle—no longer, no shorter. The tie knot should be snug against the collar. Female soldiers wear a neck tab that fastens at the collar points. Adjust the tie or tab so it lies flat and centered.

Button the coat and check the fit. The coat should not pull across the chest or shoulders. The sleeves should end at the wrist bone, and the collar should sit flat against the neck. Proper fit ensures that insignia and badges are positioned correctly later in the setup.

3. Attaching the Name Tape and U.S. Army Tape

Above the right breast pocket, attach the name tape. It should be centered horizontally and placed 1/8 inch above the top of the pocket. The name must match your authorized surname (or "U.S. Army" for temporary wear). Above the left breast pocket, attach the U.S. Army tape, also centered 1/8 inch above the pocket. Both tapes should be securely sewn with a stitch pattern that matches the surrounding threads. For the female ASU, tapes are placed similarly but the pocket positions may differ slightly; always refer to ALARACT messages for current guidance. This simple step in your **Army Service Uniform Set Up Guide**is often overlooked but critical for uniformity.

4. Positioning Rank Insignia

Rank insignia is worn on the shoulder loops (epaulets) of the coat. For enlisted soldiers (E-4 and below), the insignia is centered on the loop with the base toward the seam of the sleeve. For non-commissioned officers (E-5 and above), the insignia is positioned similarly but must not extend beyond the edge of the shoulder loop. Officers wear rank insignia on both shoulder loops, centered and aligned with the seam. The insignia pins must be secured with backings. Avoid crooked placements—use a ruler to check alignment against the collar seam.

Female soldiers attach rank insignia identically. If wearing the female coat with a slightly different shoulder construction, ensure the insignia sits parallel to the floor and does not tilt back or forward.

5. Attaching Shoulder Sleeve Insignia (Unit Patch)

The combat patch (or shoulder sleeve insignia-former wartime service, SSI-FWTS) is worn on the right shoulder (upper sleeve) of the coat. The unit patch (SSI) is worn on the left shoulder. Both patches should be positioned 1/2 inch below the shoulder seam. The center of the patch should align vertically with the center of the sleeve. Ensure the patch is oriented correctly (the point of the shield, for Army patches, should point upward). For a crisp **Army Service Uniform Set Up Guide**, use a sewing gauge to measure distances precisely.

Note: Soldiers who have not deployed do not wear a combat patch on the right shoulder. In that case, only the left shoulder unit patch is worn. Some units also authorize a command identification patch on the left sleeve; refer to your unit's uniform policy.

6. Attaching Award and Badge Devices

Badges and awards are grouped into three categories on the ASU coat: above the left pocket (for individual

awards like the Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, etc.), above the right pocket (for foreign badges, marksmanship badges, and special skill badges), and below the name tapes (for unit awards). The **Army Service Uniform Set Up Guide** requires precise spacing and ordering.

- Place medals suspended from multiple pin-on devices or full-size medals worn on a bar at the left chest. The bottom of the medal bar should rest 1/8 inch above the left pocket seam.
- For badges such as the Combat Infantryman Badge (CIB) or Combat Medical Badge (CMB), center them horizontally 1/4 inch above any ribbon rack or above the pocket if no ribbons are worn.
- Foreign badges (e.g., Canadian Airborne) are worn 1/2 inch above the right name tape, centered.
- Expert marksmanship badges (e.g., Expert Infantryman Badge) are worn 1/8 inch above the right pocket seam, centered.
- Unit award ribbons (e.g., Presidential Unit Citation) are worn centered directly below the U.S. Army tape on the right side, typically in a stack of up to four ribbons. Each ribbon should be 1/8 inch apart.

Always refer to the order of precedence (AR 600-8-22) when arranging badges. Use a ribbon rack holder or a sewing tool to ensure each ribbon is evenly spaced.

7. Setting Up the Ribbon Rack

The ribbon rack is worn on the left chest, centered exactly 1/8 inch above the left pocket (or above any medal bar). Ribbons should be arranged in rows of three (or four, if space allows), starting from the bottom row. The highest precedence ribbon is at the top left of the wearer's perspective (bottom row, far left). Use a ribbon rack backing to keep ribbons aligned. The **Army Service Uniform Set Up Guide** mandates that all ribbons be free of fraying and properly aligned. For female soldiers with a pocket flap that may interfere, ensure the rack is placed so it does not obstruct the pocket button—slight adjustments may be necessary but stay within regulation.

Double-check that no unauthorized ribbons are worn, and that all ribbons correspond to your official documentation in iPERMS. Mistaking a ribbon for one you have not earned is a serious violation. Use a ruler to measure spacing: 1/8 inch above the pocket, and 1/8 inch between rows.

8. Attaching the Nameplate (Name Tag)

The nameplate is a black plastic or metal plate with your last name in white block letters. It is worn on the right side of the coat, centered horizontally between the right pocket and the edge of the coat (approximately 1/2 inch to 1 inch above the pocket). The top of the nameplate should be parallel to the pocket seam. For female soldiers, the nameplate is placed similarly but may be slightly higher due to coat tailoring. Many checklists in an **Army Service Uniform Set Up Guide** note that the nameplate must be perfectly horizontal—use a level if needed.

9. Headgear

Two primary headgear options exist: the garrison cap (overseas cap) and the service cap (wheel cap). The garrison cap is worn with the ASU in service or office settings. The cap is positioned so that the straight edge is 1.5 inches above the eyes and centered on the head. The cap's golden yellow or dark blue piping and branch insignia must be properly affixed. The service cap is optional but common for formal events. Its visor should be polished, and the hat cord (for officers) or chinstrap properly adjusted. Female soldiers may wear the service cap with a different brim shape. Ensure the cap band matches the ASU jacket material.

10. Footwear and Accessories

Oxblood Corfam or leather shoes must be highly polished and free of scuffs. Laces should be straight-laced (parallel) for male soldiers, and female soldiers should ensure pumps fit properly without squeaking. Socks: black dress socks (not athletic) for males, and neutral or black hose for females. A black belt with a brass buckle

(or black plastic for service) completes the look. The belt should be threaded through the trousers loops with the buckle centered. The tip of the tie must not extend below the belt buckle.

Inspection Checklist for a Flawless ASU

Use this quick **Army Service Uniform Set Up Guide** checklist before any formation:

1. All buttons are sewn tight and aligned? Yes/No
2. Name tape and U.S. Army tape are centered 1/8 inch above pockets? Yes/No
3. Rank insignia on shoulder loops is level and centered? Yes/No
4. Ribbon rack is spaced correctly and order of precedence confirmed? Yes/No
5. Badges are positioned according to regulation (not crooked)? Yes/No
6. Shoulder sleeve insignia (patches) are 1/2 inch from seam? Yes/No

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