SOFTWARE & TECH

Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule

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Introduction: Understanding the Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule

For soldiers, families, and support personnel assigned to Fort Carson, Colorado, staying aligned with the installation's operational tempo is essential for mission readiness and personal planning. One of the most vital resources for managing time effectively is the **Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule**. This schedule outlines periods when routine training activities are reduced or paused, allowing service members to recharge, spend time with loved ones, and attend to administrative or personal matters. However, it is not merely a list of days off; it is a strategic tool designed to balance operational requirements with the well-being of the force.

Understanding the nuances of this schedule can help everyone from junior enlisted personnel to senior leaders anticipate changes in unit routines, plan travel, and maintain compliance with Army regulations. In this article, we will explore what training holidays mean at Fort Carson, how they differ from federal holidays, how the schedule is determined, and practical ways to make the most of these periods. Whether you are new to the Mountain Post or a seasoned veteran, mastering the Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule is key to thriving in a high-readiness environment.

What Are Training Holidays at Fort Carson?

Training holidays are designated non-training days authorized by the garrison or higher headquarters. Unlike federal holidays—such as Independence Day or Thanksgiving—training holidays are often added around those dates to create longer weekends or to provide recovery time after major exercises. The **Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule** typically includes a mix of:

- Training holidays linked to federal holidays (e.g., the Friday after Thanksgiving)
- Extended breaks during the winter holiday season (e.g., Christmas through New Year's)
- Occasional four-day weekends tied to unit-specific events or garrison-wide stand-downs

These holidays are not automatic days off; they must be authorized by the commanding general or equivalent authority. Once approved, units are expected to cease all mandatory training activities unless a valid exception exists (such as mission-essential operations or vital security tasks). For soldiers, this means no physical training formations, no field exercises, and no classroom instruction—unless specifically directed otherwise.

Difference Between Federal Holidays and Training Holidays

It is important to distinguish between a federal holiday and a training holiday. Federal holidays are mandated by law and apply to all government employees, including most military personnel. Examples include Memorial Day, Labor Day, and Veterans Day. On these days, the installation typically operates with minimal staffing, and most soldiers receive a pass unless on duty.

Training holidays, on the other hand, are a garrison or unit-level decision. They often fall on a Monday or Friday adjacent to a federal holiday to create a four-day weekend. However, they can also be scheduled independently.

For instance, Fort Carson may declare a training holiday on a Tuesday or Thursday to break up a long

Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule

Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule is usually published quarterly or annually by the garrison command and disseminated through unit leadership, official websites, and the Fort Carson mobile app.

How the Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule Is Created

The process of developing the training holiday calendar involves multiple stakeholders. It is not simply a matter of picking random dates. Key factors include:

1. Army Training and Leader Development (ATLD) requirements – The Army mandates a specific number of training days per year. Training holidays must be balanced against those requirements.
2. Installation mission support – Fort Carson hosts multiple brigade combat teams, medical units, and sustainment brigades. The schedule must account for deployment cycles, major exercises (like the Mountain Warrior or Warfighter exercises), and pre-deployment training timelines.
3. Community and family considerations – The garrison works with Family Readiness Groups (FRGs) and Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) to ensure holidays align with school calendars and community events.
4. Safety and accident prevention – Historically, the Army uses training holidays to reduce risk during high-travel periods (e.g., Thanksgiving and summer months). The schedule often reflects a desire to mitigate holiday-related accidents and fatalities.

Once the draft schedule is created, it is staffed through command channels and eventually approved by the Fort Carson commanding general. The finalized **Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule** is then published in the garrison policy memorandum, on the Fort Carson official website, and in unit newsletters. Soldiers are encouraged to verify their unit's specific implementation, as some commanders may adjust the schedule slightly for operational needs.

Typical Dates and Patterns in the Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule

While exact dates change each year, certain patterns are common at Fort Carson. Based on historical schedules and typical Army-wide guidance, soldiers can generally expect the following holiday periods:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day (January) – Usually a three-day weekend with a training holiday on Friday or Monday.
- President's Day (February) – Often observed as a four-day weekend, with a training holiday on the preceding Friday or following Monday.
- Memorial Day (May) – Typically a four-day weekend, with Friday as a training holiday.
- Independence Day (July) – Depending on the day of the week, Fort Carson may add a training holiday on the adjacent weekday.
- Labor Day (September) – Almost always a four-day weekend with a training holiday on Friday.
- Columbus Day / Indigenous Peoples' Day (October) – Occasionally a training holiday, though not universal.
- Veterans Day (November) – May be a training holiday depending on the year and unit mission.
- Thanksgiving (November) – The Wednesday before Thanksgiving or the Friday after is often a training holiday, creating a four- or five-day break.
- Winter Holiday Block Leave (December – January) – The most significant period. Most units observe a block leave or training holiday period from around 23 December through 1 January, sometimes extending into the first week of January.

Additionally, Fort Carson sometimes schedules a training holiday on the Monday after the army's annual "Green Weenie" or after major field training exercises. These are less predictable and published closer to the event.

Impact of Training Holidays on Unit Operations and Soldier Readiness

Training holidays are not just about time off—they are a readiness tool. Research and experience show that

regular rest periods improve cognitive function, reduce burnout, and lower the risk of mishaps. For units at Fort Carson, training holidays:

- Allow junior leaders time to conduct administrative tasks (e.g., counseling statements, awards, evaluations) that often fall by the wayside during high-tempo periods.
- Give equipment and vehicles a break from intensive use, enabling maintenance teams to catch up on repairs.
- Provide soldiers with opportunity for check rides, medical appointments, and legal assistance that are harder to schedule during training weeks.

However, training holidays also require careful planning. Soldiers are still subject to recall if mission requirements change. Furthermore, many units require personnel to complete "holiday briefings" before departing—covering safety, driving, alcohol consumption, and sexual harassment prevention. These briefings are a mandatory part of the **Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule** compliance.

Training Holidays and Family Life

For military families, the Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule is a lifeline. It provides predictable times when a soldier will be home for full days, not just evenings after duty. Family Readiness Groups often organize events during holiday weekends to strengthen community bonds. Additionally, MWR at Fort Carson runs special programs for children and families during winter block leave and spring break if aligned with training holidays.

It is also common for soldiers to use training holidays to relocate or take leave in connection with PCS (Permanent Change of Station) moves, although official policy requires coordination with the chain of command and personnel offices.

How to Stay Updated on the Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule

Given that schedules can change due to operational contingencies, staying informed is crucial. Recommended sources include:

- Fort Carson Official Website – The garrison homepage posts policy letters and training holiday announcements.
- Unit S-3 (Operations) Office – Each unit has a training calendar; check with your operations NCO or officer.
- Army Community Service (ACS) – Provides family-accessible information on holidays and resources.
- Fort Carson Mobile App – Push notifications for schedule changes are available.
- First Line Supervisor (NCO or Officer) – The most reliable source for unit-specific adjustments.

Soldiers should also monitor the Department of the Army civilian holiday schedule, as many training holidays align with federal closures of administrative buildings (e.g., DEERS offices, finance, and personnel centers). However, note that a training holiday does not mean the entire post is closed—dining facilities, medical clinics, and security operations maintain minimum staffing.

Common Misconceptions About Training Holidays

Despite the clear benefits, several misconceptions persist about the **Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule**. Clarifying these can prevent frustration:

- Misconception 1: "Training holidays are mandatory days off." Reality: They are no-scheduled-training days, but soldiers may still be required to perform duties like fire guard, CQ, or staff duty. Additionally, commanders can cancel a training holiday for mission needs (though this is rare and usually announced early).
- Misconception 2: "All units follow the same holiday schedule." Reality: The garrison publishes a recommended schedule, but brigade and battalion commanders have authority to adjust based on training cycles. Always confirm with your unit.

- Misconception 3: “Training holidays mean you can leave the area without permission.” Reality: Soldiers must still request leave or pass in accordance with AR 600-8-10. A training holiday is not automatically a “pass.” Some units require personnel to remain within the local area unless granted leave.
- Misconception 4: “Training holidays are the same as block leave.” Reality: Block leave is a period when units grant consecutive leave days, often during the winter or summer. Training holidays are single days or long weekends without training, but do not necessarily authorize leave. However, many units combine block leave with training holidays to maximize time off.

Tips for Soldiers and Families to Maximize Training Holidays

To truly benefit from the Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule, proactive planning is key. Consider the following:

- Plan travel early: Airfare and accommodation near Colorado Springs can spike around holiday weekends. Book as soon as the schedule is announced.
- Schedule medical appointments: Many soldiers use training holidays for dental, optical, or specialist visits. Appointment slots fill quickly.
- Attend safety briefings: Do not skip them. Even if you have heard the material before, attendance is mandatory and failure to attend can result in a recall from holiday.
- Use MWR services: Fort Carson’s MWR offers discounted skiing at nearby resorts, holiday dinners, and family activities during training holidays.
- Maintain communication: Ensure your chain of command has your updated contact information. Training holidays can be revoked at short notice due to emergencies (e.g., natural disasters or national security events).
- Check the weather: Colorado winters can be harsh. If you plan to drive through mountain passes, have an emergency kit and check road conditions.

Conclusion

The **Fort Carson Training Holiday Schedule** is far more than a list of days off—it is a deliberate element of the Army’s holistic approach to readiness, safety, and soldier welfare. By understanding its purpose, patterns, and practical implications, personnel assigned to the Mountain Post can better align personal and professional responsibilities. Whether you are a new private spending your first holiday season away from home or a seasoned first sergeant planning a unit’s training calendar, staying educated on the schedule will make your Fort Carson experience more manageable and rewarding. Always verify dates through official channels, plan ahead, and remember that the ultimate goal of any training holiday is to return to duty rested, focused, and ready to meet the nation’s call.

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