

**Women's Leadership Fact Sheet**      A Project of *WomenLeadersCount*

## Women in the U.S. Military Services

The Institute for Women's Leadership is committed to increasing the numbers of women in decision-making and leadership positions across all sectors and professions. Our series of Women's Leadership Fact Sheets is designed to expand awareness of women's current underrepresentation and progress. As of September 30, 2009, the total number of active duty military women in the U.S. was 203,375, and women made up 14.3 percent of the U.S. armed forces. Across all four branches of the military only one woman, out of 41, was at the very highest rank of General-Admiral. Averaging all four military branches, women officers represent 7 percent at the rank of Admiral, and 15.5 percent of officers overall. At the rank of Officer W-1 or above, women are most highly represented in the Air Force (18.5%) and least represented in the Marine Corps (5.8%). This pattern appears the same at the rank of E9 or below. The Air Force has the largest proportion of women at the rank of E9 or below (19.7%) and the Marine Corps has the smallest proportion of women enlisted personnel (6.4%). The positive finding is that women's percentage in officer ranks in the U.S. military services roughly equals their percentage in enlisted ranks.

### Women Officers in the U.S. Military (2009)

Ranking/Grade <sup>1</sup>	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total Services	
	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women
General-Admiral	11	1	11	0	4	0	14	0	40	1
LT General-vice Admiral	52	1	42	1	17	0	39	1	150	3
MAJ General-Rear Admiral	95	4	68	7	23	1	106	10	292	22
BRIG General-Rear Admiral	163	13	115	10	41	1	156	17	475	41
Colonel-Captain	4,280	494	3,319	398	686	19	3,676	401	11,961	1,312
Lieutenant Col-Commander	9,578	1,255	6,868	851	1,868	40	10,082	1,330	28,396	3,476
Major-LT Commander	15,775	2,246	10,316	1,353	3,757	144	14,045	2,409	43,893	6,152
Captain-Lieutenant	26,980	5,346	16,282	2,713	5,913	405	23,364	4,801	72,539	13,265
1 <sup>st</sup> Lieutenant-Lieutenant	8,203	1,657	6,396	1,203	3,088	229	7,208	1,618	24,895	4,707
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant-Ensign	10,200	1,957	6,579	1,277	3,278	257	6,806	1,510	26,863	5,001
Chief Warrant Officer W-5	548	21	65	1	96	5			709	27

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Ranking Grade	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total Services	
	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women
Chief Warrant Officer W-3	3,536	270	595	31	532	37			4,663	338
Chief Warrant Officer W-2	5,684	559	533	24	813	39			7,050	622
Warrant Officer W-1	2,960	328			255	13			3,215	341
Enlisted-E9 or below	457,980	59,401	273,177	42,225	182,147	11,749	263,351	51,965	1,176,655	165,340
Grand Total	553,044	74,411	329,304	51,029	202,786	12,951	333,408	64,984	1,418,542	203,375
Percent of Women Officers at the rank of Admiral	5.9%		7.6%		2.4%		8.9%		7.0%	
Percent of Women Officers at the rank of W-1 or above	15.8%		15.3%		5.8%		18.5%		15.5%	
Percent of Women Enlisted at the rank of E9 or below	13.0%		15.5%		6.5%		19.7%		14.1%	
Total Percent of Women	13.5%		15.4%		6.4%		19.5%		14.3%	

\*Grand Total includes Cadets-Midshipmen.

Source: Department of Defense, *DoD Personnel and Procurement Stats*, [www.defense.gov](http://www.defense.gov) --Retrieved in 05/2010

There was no published numerical data for the analysis of gender and race/ethnicity in the U.S. military in 2009. However, according to the U.S. Department of Defense's report, *FY 2007 Population Representation in the Military Services*, non-whites accounted for 31 percent of enlisted personnel, including men and women. Forty-six percent of enlisted women and 32 percent of women officers identified themselves as non-white (18). For details, visit: <http://prhome.defense.gov/MPP/mppReports.aspx>

Women's representation in the U.S. military has greatly progressed since 1960. Over the last fifty years, the proportion of women in the military increased from 1.3 percent to 14.1 percent. In 1960, women made up only 3 percent of military officers. In 1970 they remained at 3 percent; this rose to 7.7 percent in 1980, 11 percent in 1990, 14.4 percent in 2000, and 15.3 percent in 2008, representing a significant, positive trend. In 1960 and 1970, women made up only 1 percent of enlisted members of the U.S. military services. By 1980 this had risen to 8.5 percent, 11.1 percent in 1990, 14.9 percent in 2000, and then a slight decline to 14 percent in 2008.

### Women in the U.S. Military (1960-2008)<sup>2</sup>

Year	Army		Navy <sup>3</sup>		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total Services	
	Officers	Enlisted	Officers	Enlisted	Officers	Enlisted	Officers	Enlisted	Officers	Enlisted
1960	4.2%	1.1%	3.9%	1%	0.6%	1%	2.9%	0.8%	3.4%	1%
	1.4%		1.3%		0.9%		1.2%		1.3%	
1970	3.1%	1%	3.5%	1%	1.9%	0.9%	3.4%	1.4%	3.2%	1.1%
	1.2%		1.3%		0.9%		1.5%		1.4%	

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Year	Army		Navy		Marine Corps		Air Force		Total Services	
	Officers	Enlisted	Officers	Enlisted	Officers	Enlisted	Officers	Enlisted	Officers	Enlisted
1980	7.7%	9.2%	7.8%	6.5%	2.7%	3.6%	6.5%	11.4%	7.7%	8.5%
	8.9%		6.7%		5.6%		10.9%		8.4%	
1990	11.9%	11.4%	10.9%	10.4%	4.6%	4.9%	13.3%	14.1%	11.5%	11.1%
	11.4%		10.4%		4.8%		17.2%		11.1%	
2000	14%	15.7%	14.5%	13.9%	5%	6.1%	17.2%	19.5%	14.4%	14.9%
	15.3%		14%		6%		19.6%		14.6%	
2008	15.4%	13.2%	14.9%	15%	5.9%	6.2%	18.3%	19.9%	15.3%	14%
	13.5%		15%		6.3%		19.6%		14.1%	

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) and Department of Defense: Selected Manpower Statistics: [www.defense.gov](http://www.defense.gov) –retrieved in 05/20

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<sup>1</sup> Ranking/Grade is from highest to lowest in status.

<sup>2</sup> Definition of the branches in the U.S. military: 1) The United States Army is the branch of the United States forces responsible for land-based military operations. It is the largest and oldest established branch of the U.S. military; 2) The United States Navy is the sea branch of the U.S. Armed Forces; 3) The United States Marine Corps is a branch of the United States armed forces responsible for providing force protection from the sea, using the mobility of the United States Navy to rapidly deliver combined-arms task forces.; 4) The United States Air Force is the aerial warfare, space warfare, and cyberwarfare branch of the U.S. armed forces; 5) Cadet is a trainee to become an officer in the military; 6) Midshipman is an officer cadet or a commissioned officer in the lowest rank in the United States Navy. For details, see [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

<sup>3</sup> Beginning in 1980, excludes Navy Reserve personnel on active duty for Training and Administration of Reserves (TARS).