

US Air Force Ranks and Air Force Rank Insignia

Air Force Ranks are more than just who salutes whom.

Air Force rank is a badge of leadership.

Responsibility for personnel, equipment, and mission grows with each increase in rank.

Do not confuse rank with pay grades, such as E-1 and O-5.

Pay grades are administrative classifications used primarily to standardize compensation across the services.

The "E" in E-1 stands for "enlisted" while the "1" indicates the pay grade for that position.

The other pay category are "O" for commissioned officers.

Some enlisted pay grades have two (or more) ranks.

US Air Force Enlisted Ranks, Enlisted Rank Insignia

Service members in pay grades E-1 through E-3 are usually either in some kind of training status or on their initial assignment.

The training includes the basic training phase where recruits are immersed in military culture and values and are taught the core skills required by their service component. Basic training is followed by a specialized or advanced training phase that provides recruits with a specific area of expertise or concentration.

In the Air Force, this area is called an Air Force Specialty.

A specialty mark in the center of a rating badge indicates the wearer's particular rating.

Pay Grade: E2



**Airman
(Amn)**

Pay Grade: E3



**Airman First Class
(A1C)**

Pay Grade: E4



**Senior Airman
(SrA)**

Pay Grade: E5



**Staff Sergeant
(SSgt)**

Pay Grade: E6



**Technical Sergeant
(TSgt)**

E7



**Master Sergeant
(MSgt)**

E7



First Sergeant

At the E-8 level, the Air Force have two positions at the same pay grade. Whether one is, for example, a senior master sergeant or a first sergeant in the Air Force depends on the person's job. The same is true for the positions at the E-9 level.

E-8s and E-9s. have 15 to 30 years on the job, and are commanders' senior advisers for enlisted matters.

A fourth E-9 element is the senior enlisted person of the Air Force.

The Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force is the spokespersons of the enlisted force at the highest levels of their services

E8



**Senior
Master Sergeant
(SMSgt)**

E8



First Sergeant

Pay Grade: E9



**Chief Master Sergeant
(CMSgt)**

Pay Grade: E9



First Sergeant

Pay Grade: E9



**Command Chief Master Sergeant
(CCM)**

Pay Grade: E9



**Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force
(CMSAF)**

US Air Force Officer Ranks

The commissioned ranks are the highest in the military. These officers hold presidential commissions and are confirmed at their ranks by the Senate. US Air Force officers are called company grade officers in the pay grades of O-1 to O-3, field grade officers in pay grades O-4 to O-6 and general officers in pay grades O-7 and higher.

Pay Grade: O1



**Second Lieutenant
(2nd. Lt)**

Pay Grade: O2



**First Lieutenant
(1st. Lt.)**

Pay Grade: O3



**Captain
(Capt.)**

Pay Grade: O4



**Major
(Maj.)**

Pay Grade: O5



**Lieutenant Colonel
(Lt. Col.)**

Pay Grade: O6



**Colonel
(Col.)**

Pay Grade: O7



**Brigadier General
(Brig. Gen.)**

Pay Grade: O8



**Major General
(Maj. Gen.)**

Pay Grade: O9



**Lieutenant General
(Lt. Gen.)**

Pay Grade: O10



**General
(Gen.)**



**General of the Air Force
(Wartime only)**