

Air Assault Success Guide

1. Introduction: The Army National Guard Air Assault Course provides students the skills and knowledge required to be competent in the conduct of combat air assault. The Air Assault Course consists of an admin day a Zero day and 10 days of instruction broken down into three phases.
 - a. Zero Day; During zero day students will participate in a uniform/packing list inspection, submit required course administrative documentation, and be evaluated on their physical and mental stamina by completing a nine obstacle, obstacle course and 2mile run for time in ACUs and running shoes. Upon successful completion of all zero day events and administrative in processing, students will be admitted into the AAC. Those students who fail to meet the standards for any event or portion of an event will result in the Soldier not being admitted into the AAC and returned to their respective unit/command.
 - b. Phase I, Combat Air Assault: During this phase of the AAC students receive instruction on the various aspects of combat air assault. This includes; aircraft orientation, aircraft safety, aero medical evacuation, pathfinder operations, combat assault and hand and arm signals. Students will be administered and must pass two tests during this phase; a written test and a performance oriented, hand and arm signal test. Students may re-test each exam one time. Requirements to move to PH II Written test consisting of 50, multiple choice questions. Students must score 70% or better to pass this test. Hand and arm signals practical exam, students will successfully perform at least seven of the ten hand and arm signals.
 - c. Phase II, Sling Load Operations: During this phase students receive instruction on preparing, rigging and inspecting of various military sling loads to include the M998 HMMWV, M119 Howitzer, fuel/water blivets, cargo nets, A22 cargo bag and M149 series water trailer. Students will be administered and must pass two tests during this phase; a written test and a performance oriented, hands-on test. Students may re-test each exam one time. Written test consisting of 50, multiple choice questions. Students must score 70% or better to pass this test. Hands-on test, students will inspect 4 of 6 sling loads identifying 3 of 4 deficiencies in 2 minutes or less per load.
 - d. Phase III, Rappelling Phase: During this phase students receive instruction on tying a rappel seat, hook-up techniques, lock-in procedures, belay

procedures, and combat rappel. Students will conduct multiple rappels from a rappel tower and from U.S. Army rotary wing aircraft. Students will be evaluated on the following tasks. Tie a rappel seat in 90 seconds or less with no deficiencies. Conduct three evaluated rappels. Rappel without equipment, executing three breaks. Rappel executing a lock-in Rappel with combat equipment, executing three breaks. 12 mile foot march: Students must complete a 12 mile foot march with prescribed equipment weighing between 25-30 pounds in three hours or less. At the conclusion of the foot march, students' uniform and equipment will be inspected. Students who fail to meet the time standard or adherence to the prescribed packing list, will receive a NO-GO for the 12 mile foot march event.

2. Preparation goals: Students arriving at the Air Assault School should be in good physical condition. Potential students should be able to score a minimum of 240 points on the APFT. Soldiers arriving able to meet the before mentioned standard will have little difficulty with the physical aspects of the course, students should also be able to climb a vertical rope to a height of 16 feet.
3. this is a program that if followed will enhance your ability to successfully complete the AAC
 - a. Pull-up improvement- If you can do pull-ups, there are several good workouts to increase the number of repetitions you can perform. Here are two:
 - Find the number of repetitions you can perform comfortably. Then pick the number of repetitions you want to be able to do consecutively. The workout is to do a set of the number of pull-ups you do comfortably, with a minute rest, until it totals the number that you want to do consecutively. Example: you can do a comfortable set of five pull-ups and want to do a set of consecutive 50 pull-ups. Workout would be 5 reps, 1 minute rest for a total of 10 sets. As you get stronger, decrease the rest between sets.
 - Ladder sets. Perform one repetition then drop from the bar for a short rest. Then remount and do two repetitions, short rest then three repetitions. Keep going until you reach muscle failure. The rest should be brief, not more than 30-60 seconds. As this workout becomes easier, you can work your way back down once you hit failure. Example: You reach failure at ten. The next set would be nine repetitions, then eight, and so on.
 - b. If you cannot do pull-ups at all, a good way to start is by doing negatives. A negative pull-up is performed by grabbing the bar while standing on a crate or chair until it is about eye level. Jump from that platform until your chin is above the bar. Slowly let yourself down until your arms are locked out. Remount the platform and repeat. The key is to let yourself down as slowly as you possibly can. Do as many repetitions as you can.

c. Rope climb improvement- Rope climbing is not just a great upper body exercise; it is a tremendous confidence builder as well. If you can do five pull-ups, you will have no problem climbing a 20' rope. Climbing a rope is more technique than strength. There are several techniques for rope climbing, find what works best for you. As a rule of thumb start at the bottom of the obstacle and grab the rope as high as you can. Holding on with your hands pull your legs up as high as you can “inch worm” style. Grasp the rope with your feet by either squeezing the rope between your legs or wrapping the rope around your feet. Once you have “anchored” yourself in, climb hand over hand with your hands as high as you can reach. Continue this technique until you reach the top. Once at the top, you can descend the rope FAST rope style by holding the rope between your feet and doing a reverse hand over hand technique until you reach the bottom of the obstacle.





e. Foot marches: While attending the Air Assault School students will complete two foot marches. The first foot march takes place on the morning of day 2 and is six miles in length over rolling hills which must be completed in less than one and a half hours (90 minutes). The second foot march is the culminating event and takes place on the morning of day 12. The final foot march is 12 miles in length and each student must complete the march in three hours or less carrying the prescribed packing list. Must everyone can walk 12 miles when there is no time, and they are not carrying any weight.

f. Foot March improvement plan.

If you ask any old time infantry Soldier how do you improve road marching skills and distance, they will say walk then walk some more. That is a technique and, of course, it will improve your ability to do ruck marches. Here is another method you can use as well to gain improvements along with some hints to make your walk a little more comfortable. You must train for prior to some of the advanced Army courses. The best way to train for these to move out with a rucksack for 1-4 hours at a time combined with smart foot care.

The most important part of training (running or rucking) in boots is proper fit and blister control. Here are some tips to deal with training in boots and treating / preventing blisters:

- Break in your boots to your feet. One way to break in your boots is to take a shower with your new boots and walk around in them for about two hours. This will mold them to your feet.
- Place insoles into your boots -- good arch supporting and heel cushioning inserts are thick and may require you to purchase boots that are one size larger.

- Wear two pairs of socks. Wear a tight fitting polyester pair of socks that cling to your feet underneath the thicker pair of regulation socks. This will enable your foot to have a protective layer on it and prevent blisters. It will also keep sand and dirt from rubbing your feet inside your thick sock, which is what will cause a blister – even in perfect fitting boots.
- DO NOT RUN with too much weight -- you can power walk at a fast pace but running with weight 50% - 100% of your bodyweight will damage the lower extremities (shins, knees, lower back) IF done over long periods of time. When walking, stride with short, fast steps and straighten the knee each step to relax the leg muscles briefly. Walk straight, with the weight of the body kept directly over the feet, walking flat-footed. Conversely, bend your knees when going downhill to absorb the shock of each step. Dig in the heels with each step.
(From USAREC Pam 601-25)

An additional tip is when training use a weighted object that resembles an m-4 rifle in weight and shape. This will help you maintain the low ready posture you will carry your rubber duck in unless running or drinking water.

g. Improvement workout:

this workout to improve foot marching ability is taken from Alpha Company our sister company. A Co trains Pre Ranger Students. And has a full work out to get a Soldier ready for the rigors of Ranger school. Note that this work out is to be used in conjunction with the pull up work out, and a good running plan.

Week 1

Mon: perform a 3mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 45 minutes or less

Fri: Repeat Mondays march same distance weight and time

Week 2

Mon: perform a 4mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 60mins or less

Fri: repeat Mondays march same distance weight and time

Week 3

Mon: perform a 5mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 75mins or less

Fri: repeat Mondays march, same distance weight and time.

Week 3

Mon: perform a 6mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 90mins or less

Thr: repeat Mondays march, same distance

At the completion of week 3 you should be able to complete the first road march distance of 6 miles you will have on day 2 while attending Air Assault School. You may also have to move one of your training days for

foot marches to Saturday or Sunday to accommodate the longer distances and time requirements.

Week 4

Sun: perform a 7 mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 1hr and 45mins or less

Fri: perform a 6mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 1hr and 45mins or less

Week 5

Sun: perform a 8mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 2hrs or less

Thr: perform a 7 mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 1hr and 45mins or less

Week 6

Sun: perform a 9mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 2hrs and 15mins or less.

Thr: perform a 7 mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 1hr and 45mins or less

Week 7

Sun: perform a 10 mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 2hrs and 30mins or less

Thr: perform a 7 mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 1hr and 45mins or less

Week 8

Sun: perform a 11 mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 2hrs and 45mins or less

Thr: perform a 7 mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 1hr and 45mins or less

Week 9

Sun: perform a 11 mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 3hrs or less

Thr: perform a 7 mile ruck march with $\frac{1}{4}$ of your body weight in 1hr and 45mins or less

Once you finish week 9 you will be able to complete the 12 mile Air Assault foot march in time and earn your wings. If you don't have a full nine weeks before you are scheduled to attend the school you will have to accelerate your training. Be realistic and don't break your self up getting ready.

4. Summary: All students wishing to attend the Army National Guard Air Assault School should ensure that they are physically and mentally prepared to attend, and

succeed at the course. Potential students also need to ensure that their paper work is in order. This includes;

- a. WTC form 100
 - b. PHA (current)
 - c. Complete packing list (found at WTC web page, and welcome letter)
 - d. **Note if you wear contact lenses get a pair of glasses. Absolutely no contacts will be worn during attendance at the Air Assault School**
5. Point of contact for this document is SFC McCarthy at (706) 575-8963 email brian.mccarthy2@us.army.mil

GREGORY A.CALHOUN
1LT, IN
Commanding