

Advice: Preparing for R-Day (Reception Day) at West Point

Here are three tips we learned from my daughter's recent experience with the Class of 2024:

- Start running. 3-4 times a week. Start with 2-3 miles working up to 5. Do not worry about speed, you will naturally go faster as you get in better shape, usually after week 6. You cannot run enough. West Point is hilly, and you will be sleep deprived during Beast (the nickname for summer training), so athletic performance will not be optimal. Build a reserve now. Seriously, put down this letter and go for a run.
- Visit: <https://www.army.mil/acft/> and start doing as many of the "how to train for this event" exercises as you can 2-3 times a week. The Army Combat Fitness Test is tough since some of the exercises are something that very few sports will prepare you for. Leg Tucks are the event most cadets fail or struggle with. Start now and you will not be one of them.
- In your candidate portal is a link to the packing list. Buy your boots now. Road march at least 2 times a week. Start with a backpack of 20lbs and walk for an hour. Whenever that feels easy, add 5lbs and 15 more minutes. It will take your shoulders and abs/core several weeks to get in shape. You cannot cram this in at the last minute so start right away. It is OK to wear regular running shoes or civilian hiking boots until your Army boots arrive. However, the sooner you get them, the more time you will have to break them in to avoid blisters during the summer.

In our upcoming communications for the West Point Parents Club of North Texas we will be announcing virtual Cadet Candidate sessions and an Ice Cream Social. Each of these events will be full of information to help you and your parents get ready for the summer. I hope to get the chance to meet you and your parents at these events.

Please reach out if you have any questions – we want you to be successful! Good luck and welcome to the 47-month journey to becoming a West Point graduate.

-Rich Russo USMA '93, husband of a USMA '91 and Dad to a USMA '24
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