



Frequently Asked Questions for R-Day & Cadet Basic Training

What is R-Day? R-Day or Reception Day is the day the Cadet Candidates enter (report to) West Point. Candidates report early in the day (time assigned by the last digit of their social security number) to begin their in processing for their 47-month experience. Please review the reporting letter posted on the candidate portal.

Entering West Point – All candidates and their families will enter West Point via Thayer or Stony Lonesome Gates. You will be directed to parking in the lettered lots around Michie Stadium and also to Buffalo Soldier Field (near Thayer Gate). Shuttle buses will be available to transport candidates and family members to Eisenhower Hall Theater where the candidates will report, receive a short briefing and begin their in processing for Cadet Basic Training (CBT). You may be waiting in line for a short period of time. Candidates (and family members) will be guided into the theater for the briefing (average group size of 44 candidates at a time).

What is a Parent/Vistor ID, what is the procedure and where do we go to get one? ALL visitors to West Point must be vetted before entering the grounds of the Academy. The Visitor Control Center is open Monday-Friday, 6 a.m.-6 p.m. On the weekends, visitors 17 and over must have a valid government issued photo ID, in order to be allowed entry to West Point. The government issued photo IDs will be scanned at the gates prior to entry.

Parents will be offered the opportunity to apply for a four-year visitor ID. The four-year visitor ID shows that you have been vetted and are allowed access for the four years your cadet is attending West Point. Application forms will be made available via the candidate portals. Forms should be submitted in advance to allow time for the security team to enter the required information into the database and run an NCIC check. This will help expedite the issue of the ID cards when parents arrive for R-Day. The ID cards are only issued in person. The cards require the applicant to sit for a photo. If you have the ability to visit West Point ahead of R-Day, the Visitor Control Center will be glad to enter your information into the system and issue you the 4-year Visitor ID. Please be prepared to present a completed (Parent/Guardian) application, a government issued photo ID (driver's license, passport, etc.) and a copy of your candidate's letter of appointment.

Parents who do not have the ability to visit West Point prior to R-Day should submit an application ahead of time. Your data will be entered into the system for the background check. When you arrive on R-Day, you will be asked to present your government-issued photo ID to the staff at the Visitor Control Center. They will pull up your information and verify your identity, take your photo and present you with your Visitor ID. Please know we will provide a list of accepted candidates to the Security team for your convenience. The Visitor Control Center will be open on Sunday, June 30, 7 a.m.-3 p.m. The Visitor Control Center will open at 6 a.m. on Monday, July 1. We will provide express shuttle buses to the Visitor Control Center from the location of the Parent Welcome Center where the candidates will report and begin their in processing.

(More information to follow on the location, parking, schedule for the day, etc.)

Who may travel to West Point with their parents/family members? Parents and family members may travel to West Point and join their candidate for R-Day. There will be some (candidates) who will travel on their own. Information on travel arrangements can be found in the booklet "Instructions for Candidates Offered Admission" on the candidate portal.

Parking on R-Day? Is there transportation around West Point? As stated above, Parents and family members will enter West Point via Thayer or Stony Lonesome Gates and park as directed in the lots around Michie Stadium. Shuttle buses will transport guests to Eisenhower Hall (the initial reporting site). Buses will be available all day to transport guests around West Point continuing until after the Oath Ceremony.

(R-Day - Reception Day) Schedule – Once the Cadet Candidates have been briefed and have said their good-byes to parents/family members, West Point offers a list of activities to choose from. The schedule will be posted as soon as it becomes available at www.westpoint.edu/parents. Some of the activities include (but not limited to) tours of West Point, boat ride on the Hudson, organ concert in the Cadet Chapel, religious services and receptions, agencies sharing information and the sale of West Point items. The Superintendent and other members of the Academy Leadership team will give a presentation in the afternoon followed by the Oath Ceremony on the Plain at 6:30 p.m. (tentative time). We also hope to offer one or two information sessions during the day – more information to follow.

After the morning briefing will I have contact with my son/daughter again? Once you have said your good-byes, you will not have any direct contact with your son or daughter on R Day. You will have an opportunity to see the New Cadets participate in the Oath Ceremony on the Plain.

Contact during Cadet Basic Training? During Cadet Basic Training, contact is limited to phone calls or regular mail. We ask that you **not** visit West Point during Cadet Basic Training. This is a time for your sons and daughters to experience the challenges and rigors of their initial training. They will have plenty to share via their letters, phone conversations and your visit during Acceptance Day. Please know we have staff photographers who will do their best to capture some of the training events to share with family and friends via our website and social media platforms.

Phone calls - The New Cadets will have an opportunity to call home 2-3 times during their training. The phone calls will be scheduled as time permits, depending on their training schedule. The timeline is often shared in advance. Cadets are offered the opportunity to call home at the midway point (July 21 – New Cadet Visitation Day between 1-5 p.m.). New Cadet Visitation Day is a time for the cadets to visit with staff and faculty for the afternoon. The staff and faculty offer their phones and sometime computers or other smart devices in order for the new cadets to connect with family/friends. Please know we do our best to encourage the new cadets to connect with family members, but ultimately it is their choice to call.

Can I walk around on R-Day? Yes, you are welcome to walk around West Point on R Day, however, Parents/visitors are not allowed to enter the Cadet areas which are clearly marked with **staff/faculty only** signage. While it can be interesting to try and catch a glimpse of the cadets as they make their way around West Point, please know staff photographers are on duty to capture the events of the day.

What is the Oath Ceremony? The ceremony is just that, a ceremony where the New Cadets will march in formation out onto the Plain and repeat the oath taken earlier in the day during their in processing. The oath affirms their commitment to enter West Point as a Cadet. Approximate time – 6:30 p.m.

During the Oath Ceremony, where should I sit for the best chance of seeing my new cadet? A map will be available to with the approximate locations of company positions. (More to follow on Company assignments.) The Cadets will be arranged by height in the formation for the Oath Ceremony. But please know, you can view the ceremony from any seat in the bleachers. This formation is more compact than many of the other parades, ceremonies or reviews.

What time can I expect to depart West Point on R-Day? The Oath Ceremony lasts approximately 30 minutes. Once the ceremony is over, shuttle buses transport guests to the parking lots. Start time is planned for 6:30 p.m.

If a family has to choose between R-Day and Acceptance Day, which is recommended? Although R-Day is a great day to visit West Point, after the morning brief and time for good-byes, there is no further contact with your son/daughter. Acceptance Day is an opportunity to see a wonderful parade, celebrate the end of summer training and spend a lot of time with your cadet. Once the parade is over, the Cadets (now officially plebes), are released approximately one hour to 90 minutes after the parade to spend time with their families. You will be allowed to take your cadet back to your hotel to relax and out for a meal (they must stay in uniform – white over gray). For more information please see the Acceptance Day FAQ.

Is my New Cadet reimbursed for travel to West Point? When? New Cadets should bring receipts for travel costs when they report for R Day. Within a week after their arrival, they will meet with a staff member who will help enter the information necessary for reimbursement; airline costs, a night in a hotel, mileage, etc. Keep in mind the government sets limits on allowable costs. Reimbursement will be deposited into the New Cadet's personal checking account sometime during the summer.

Why does West Point test (academic) the New Cadets? All New Cadets will undergo academic testing within the first week to ten days of reporting. The purpose of the Academic Validation and Placement Program is to place new cadets in the appropriate academic level of instruction during their Plebe year through written examination and/or interview and to prepare them for the collegiate scholastic environment.

For more information regarding academics, please visit – <http://www.westpoint.edu/dean>.

When and what is the New Cadet Visitation Day? The New Cadet Visitation Day (formerly referred to as the Ice Cream Social is usually held on a Sunday (1 -5 p.m.), the mid-point of Cadet Basic Training. The New Cadets will be welcomed to the homes of staff and faculty members for an afternoon of respite while the cadet cadre changes. The hosts will offer use of cell phones, house phones and sometimes computers for the purpose of calling home and connecting with parents/family. Since the New Cadets have had lunch in the cadet mess before being released for the afternoon, the hosts will offer various snacks but most often will offer ice cream, thus the name. *Please note - this is not an opportunity for families to visit with their New Cadet.*

Are the New Cadets issued bug spray or sunscreen for use during CBT? The New Cadets are issued sunscreen and bug repellent (it's a mix of both). Their uniforms are treated prior to issue and the repellent is good for up to 25 washes.

My New Cadet mentioned they have lost weight since reporting on R Day. Is this normal? Yes, it is very normal for a New Cadet to lose weight over the summer. Their eating habits will change from grazing (while at home) to eating 3 family-style meals a day; breakfast, lunch and dinner. Understand that there is no soda/junk food, etc. - they drink water, juice and sports drinks almost exclusively during CBT. They are constantly on the move. They conduct physical training twice a day for the most part. It is not atypical for training to include a field exercise where they will walk well over 20 km over 3 days. They are being taken care of but the weight loss is a natural consequence to the change in lifestyle. Nutrition is paid very close attention during CBT.

They are supplied with meals that have a significant amount of calories to ensure they are properly nourished and have the appropriate energy stores to complete the expected training. For all major training events, they are offered protein bars and energy drinks. A New Cadet's weight is monitored. It is a point of emphasis for all involved.

What if my son/daughter (New Cadet) wants to leave West Point (during CBT)? What is the process and how long does it take? 1. The out-processing from CBT can take anywhere from 2 to 3 weeks. The initial counseling process by the Chain of Command is deliberately extended over the course of a few days to give the New Cadet every opportunity to assess the situation with upperclassmen feedback. At that point they will speak with their Tactical Officer/Deputy Commander who can explain the benefits and opportunities of a career in the Army. The rest of the time is utilized processing the paperwork through the chain of command, to include the Superintendent. During this portion the New Cadet transitions into Summer Garrison Regiment where they will turn in their equipment and attend regular accountability formation waiting for their paperwork to be completed.

Will I be notified or have an opportunity to speak with him/her? One of the out processing tasks at the Tactical Officer level is to contact the parents to inform them. In most cases the TAC authorizes the New Cadet a phone call home as most of the issues tend to revolve around home sickness. In some cases multiple phone calls are authorized to navigate the situation, but are not the norm.

What if my New Cadet has an injury during CBT? All injuries are evaluated and treated on a case by case basis. Continuation and participation in training will depend on the severity of the injury.

Mail and proper mailing address information – The post office boxes are assigned mid-June before R Day and will be posted to the Candidate Portals. Please share with family and friends. Cadets will keep the same box/address for

the duration of their time at West Point. Within a few days of reporting to West Point, the New Cadets will be issued keys for their mail boxes. The boxes are located in the basement of Washington Hall, in the area surrounding the Cadet Post Office. The Cadet Station is staffed by USPS employees. All letters, parcels and packages sent to the cadets are processed through the Cadet Post Office. Please do not send any packages during CBT unless your new cadet communicates a need for something specific and has received permission from their cadre to receive. The New Cadets will visit their mail boxes at least every few days during CBT. Due to training requirements, they may not get their every day, but the cadre does make an effort to program time to check the boxes.

Please make every effort to address all pieces of mail using the appropriate address(es) as outlined in the letter provided by the postmaster. The letter is posted on the Parent Information page on the West Point website – <https://www.westpoint.edu/parents/resources>. During CBT, please include your cadet's company assignment (more on company assignments to follow). It will be helpful with distributing mail while at Camp Buckner.

Once the academic year begins, you do not need to include the company as part of the mailing address. Please do not include anything additional in any mail during the summer (stick of gum, pieces of candy, etc.). **NO PACKAGES** during CBT unless your new cadet specifically requests an item(s).

What is Chaplain's Time? Chaplain's time is held during CBT at the various chapels on West Point. The New Cadets have the opportunity to attend a brief worship service followed by fellowship with community members and their classmates. The cadre is not present for Chaplain's time.

Will my New Cadet have an opportunity to attend religious services during CBT?

Information from the Chaplain's office – Christian New Cadets have services at 8 a.m. on Sundays (various locations). Muslim New Cadets have services at 12 p.m. on Fridays. Jewish new cadets have services at 7 p.m. on Fridays. The mission requirements of training may supersede a particular date time and group for scheduled worship but they are the exception.

What is the March Back? The March Back is the culminating event for Cadet Basic Training. The New Cadets, cadre, members of the staff and faculty and alumni will march (ruck march) from Camp Buckner back to the Cadet area of West Point. The distance covered is approximately 12 miles. The movement pauses at the Victor Constant Ski Slope where they will have an opportunity to eat breakfast and take a brief rest before proceeding through Washington Gate. The formation will be joined by the West Point Band and will continue through the post finishing on the apron in front of Washington Hall. Family and friends are welcome to attend. Please know you will not have any contact with your New Cadet during this time, but they appreciate the support shown by those in attendance. The New Cadets eat lunch in front of the barracks. Once lunch is complete, they will join their academic companies and begin the process of reorganization in preparation for the academic year. It is requested that parents, family and friends depart the area once the March Back is complete.

****Special note for parents (of the Class of 2023)** who are West Point graduates – you are invited to participate in the March Back. Registration is through the Directorate of Academy Advancement -

<https://www.westpoint.edu/about/west-point-trademark/directorate-of-academy-advancement/grad-march-back>.

What is Reorganization Week? Once the New Cadets complete the March Back, the last event of Cadet Basic Training, they begin a period of approximately five days of reorganizing. This reorganization period is for the entire Corps of Cadets. The New Cadets will move into their academic year companies, learn their new chain of command, meet their Team Leader (a yearling assigned to help set the New Cadet/Plebe up for success), receive their academic schedules, pick up books, pick up computers, attend briefings, attend drill practice, learn the locations of their classrooms and more. This is a very busy time for the Corps of Cadets. New Cadets will receive their cell phones during this time (if they brought on R Day) and may be able to make calls/send texts on a limited basis. They will have access to email, usually by mid-week in the event they did not bring their cell phone. During Reorganization Week, the New Cadets are escorted to all locations.

What is Acceptance Day? – Acceptance Day is the day the New Cadets will be accepted into the Corps. The Acceptance Day Parade will take place on (tentative) Saturday, August 17, 2019 at 10 a.m. on the Plain. The parade features the entire brigade of approximately 4400 cadets. Members of the Class of 2023 officially become plebes

during the parade. The New Cadets march out separately from the rest of their companies, but at a certain point during the parade an order will be given for the companies to open their ranks and the New Cadets to join the ranks, being accepted into the Corps. If traveling with guests needing handicapped accommodations, please know handicapped accessible parking is limited in the area of the Plain. You may wish to drop off your guests near the bleachers and park in other lots or along Thayer Road. Shuttle buses will be available for your convenience. Hats, sunscreen and bottled water are recommended depending on the forecast. Point of etiquette for the parade - **please remain seated** until all Cadets have departed the Plain. Thank you! Following the parade, Cadets will be released (usually) no later than 1 p.m. to enjoy appropriate privileges. Cadets must return to the barracks by taps. Cadets are released Sunday morning (5:20 a.m.) but must return to the barracks in time for accountability at 7 p.m. Cadets will be aware of the privileges allowed. For more information, please see the FAQ on Acceptance Day on the Parent Information page.

Social media – Photos and information sharing from West Point Public Affairs – During the summer and continuing into the academic year, the WP Public Affairs office shares photos, videos, links, and information about West Point via a few different sites.

The West Point home page can be found at www.westpoint.edu. The Parent Information page can be found at www.westpoint.edu/parents. Various documents are posted on this site throughout the year.

Photos are posted on Flickr – www.flickr.com/photos/westpointparents and www.flickr.com/photos/west_point
Information and links are posted on Facebook – www.facebook.com/westpointparents and www.facebook.com/westpointUSMA

Videos are posted to www.youtube.com/TheWestPointChannel and linked to the West Point website and/or Facebook.

And, the West Point Association of Graduates also share photos – links can be found on their website – www.wpaog.org.

Flight arrangements for leave/breaks – During the academic year, cadets approved for a pass to depart for the weekend will leave after their last class or duty on Friday and return in time for an accountability formation at 7 p.m. on Sunday (or Monday if a long weekend.) Typically cadets are released for Thanksgiving after their last class on Wednesday, by 1 p.m. (This is a modified class day.) For leave at the end of the semester, the cadets will know their TEE (Term End Exam) schedule by early October. Remind them to keep checking! Once their schedules are finalized, please allow plenty of time between the end of their exam period to departure as they will need time to clear their rooms, complete duties, etc. Buses will be available to transport cadets to the major airports in the area; JFK, LaGuardia and Newark. Bus tickets are sold via a link posted to the S4 internal website. More information will be shared at a later time on bus tickets/purchase.

Once the Academic Year begins, when can I plan to visit my cadet? Please talk to your cadet before making plans to visit West Point. There are duties, responsibilities, training, inspections and parades that happen on weekends at West Point. However, if there is nothing planned, cadets do manage their down time. There are opportunities to visit recreation facilities (bowling alley, movies, ski slope and golf course). They may visit with their sponsor families, walk to Highland Falls, use the gym/work out, etc. It is always best to speak with your cadet to be sure they will be on post and will have time to visit with you or other family members and friends who may be in the area.

What if we have a family emergency (death in the family)? If during CBT, you can call Central Guard Room (845) 938-3030 and leave a message for a member of your new cadet's TAC team. They will call back once they receive the message. Additionally (**VERY IMPORTANT**), please notify the Red Cross.

The Red Cross helps with the verification so the chain of command can make a decision regarding emergency leave. For more information please see this link <https://www.redcross.org/military-emergency-communication.html>. In addition to the website, the Red Cross now has a very helpful app. You can review the services provided via this site - <https://arc.csod.com/selfreg/register.aspx?c=edge%20ext>.

The information below is another way for Service members and families to start a Red Cross message through our new app. The Hero Care App is available to download for free in app stores, by texting 'GETHEROCARE' to 90999.

If an emergency occurs after CBT, you can connect directly with your cadet. If you feel they may need support, especially if delivering news of a loss in the family, you can call the TAC team (office numbers are posted on this link - <https://www.westpoint.edu/military/brigade-tactical-department/about> or call CGR (845 938-3030) and ask for a member of the TAC team to return your call. The TAC or TAC NCO will call as soon as possible. Additionally (**VERY IMPORTANT**), please notify the Red Cross. The Red Cross helps with the verification so the chain of command can make a decision regarding emergency leave. For more information please see this link - <https://www.redcross.org/military-emergency-communication.html>.

Please know counselors and chaplains are available to support cadets as needed.

If you have further questions, send to deb.dalton@westpoint.edu or call (845) 938-8826.
Thank you for sharing your sons and daughters with us!