



Air Assault at Ft. Indiantown Gap

FACT SHEET

Current as of 07/2017

General Information

U.S. Army Air Assault School is a 10-day course designed to prepare Soldiers for insertion, evacuation, and pathfinder missions that call for the use of multipurpose transportation and assault helicopters. Air Assault training focuses on the mastery of rappelling techniques and sling load procedures, skills that involve intense concentration and a commitment to safety and preparation.

Training is broken into three phases, each lasting three days: Combat Assault Phase, Sling Load Phase, and Rappel Phase. Cadets will perform a 12-mile rucksack march on their final day of training, earning their wings as official Air Assault Soldiers and graduating the following day.

Air Assault School is necessarily physically and mentally demanding, as Soldiers will be required to handle heavy equipment and perform dangerous tasks under extremely stressful conditions. Successful candidates must possess a keen eye for detail and a dedication to meticulous preparation.

Fort Indiantown Gap Air Assault Course

In an effort to expand its training courses offered and make Air Assault training more readily available in the Eastern Region, Fort Indiantown Gap has begun hosting Air Assault courses at the installation. The first Air Assault Course at Fort Indiantown Gap was held in the summer of 2017 and started with 241 students, though a cycle may consist of up to 270 students. Both the instructors and students are National Guardsman from across the nation. Pennsylvania National Guard personnel support the training with logistics, manpower, vehicles and equipment. Aside from Fort Indiantown Gap, seven other military installations in the nation offer Air Assault courses.

Training Phases

Candidates must successfully complete an obstacle course and a two-mile run before they are officially considered "Air Assault Students".

During the **combat assault phase**, candidates will learn aircraft safety and orientation, along with the principles of aero-medical evacuation, pathfinder operations, and combat assault operations among several other topics.

During the **slingload operations phase**, candidates will learn how to rig equipment onto rotary aircraft with a sling, an operation that generally requires the loading Soldier to hook a tether to the underbelly of a helicopter hovering just a few feet above the ground. Typical loads can range anywhere from 1,000 to 8,000 pounds.

In the **rappelling phase**, Soldiers receive basic instruction on ground and aircraft rappelling procedures. By the end of the phase, trainees must complete two rappels from a 34-foot tower and two rappels from a UH-60 Blackhawk, hovering at 70-90 feet.

Contact Us

 717-861-6254

 ftig.png.pa.gov

 ng.pa.paarnq.list.pao@mail.mil

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