

THE UNITED STATES ARMY DRILL SERGEANT

I. Introduction.

A. References.

1. <http://www.wood.army.mil/mncoa/dss/fdshat.htm>
2. http://www.jackson.army.mil/tccbde/dss_history.htm
3. <http://www-benning.army.mil/DrillSgt/page3.html>

B. My research consisted of Internet searches and printing articles.

II. Body.

- A. History of the Drill Sergeant starting with the very beginning of the program in late 1962
- B. Drill Sergeant schools that were established at the beginning of the program and are still active today
- C. Tools of the Drill Sergeant to include the hat, creed and badge

III. Closing.

A. Summary: I have just outlined the history of the Drill Sergeant; tools used by the Drill Sergeant and active Drill Sergeant Schools.

B. Question and answer period.

C. Conclusion: The impact that the Drill Sergeant has on a trainee sometimes last a lifetime. This is undoubtedly one of the most if not the most important jobs in today's Army

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BY

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The Drill Sergeant (DS), is the person responsible for training, mentoring, molding, and leading the future soldiers of the United States Army. Drill Sergeant is the job title earned by Noncommissioned Officers (NCO) who successfully complete the 9 week Drill Sergeant's course, and is assigned to an Initial Entry Training (IET) unit. In addition to earning the DS title, course graduates also receive the "X" Skill Qualification Identifier (SQI).

The Drill Sergeant School (DSS) trains Department of the Army (DA) selected Sergeants, Staff Sergeants and Sergeant First Class, on the skills and knowledge required to perform their duties as DS. The training is designed to build on leadership abilities and technical knowledge acquired by the DS candidate. It also develops or improves self-confidence and provides unique skills necessary to train, supervise, and lead IET soldiers. There are three Active Components (AC), and seven Reserve Component (RC) Drill Sergeant Schools (DSS). The primary purpose of each school is to prepare highly qualified noncommissioned officers for duties as Drill Sergeant's in an Initial Entry Training Unit (BCT, OSUT or AIT). In this research paper, I will discuss the history of the DS; the AC, DSSs; and some of the primary "tools" of the DS.

In late 1962, the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Stephen Ailes, was directed to conduct a survey of recruit training in the Army. This survey was extensive and included a variety of experienced personnel. To validate the comprehensive report, Secretary Ailes decided to compare the training techniques of the Army, Marines, Navy, and the Air Force. The final report, submitted to Department of the Army, contained five principal findings along with recommendations and suggestions for eliminating the issues discovered. <<http://usmilitary.about.com/od/armytrng/a/drillsgtschool.htm>>

By comparing the training centers with the other three services, the Army was able to demonstrate that the attitude of the NCOs within the Army training centers was below average. However, the study highlighted factors that contributed to the prevalence of the less than desirable attitude. Study findings highlighted factors such as long working hours, demanding nature of the work, and lack of free time for family concerns. It was also determined that these issues were directly related to inadequate staffing in the training centers. Another issue was the caliber of NCOs being assigned in the Army training center was far below the standards required by the other services. In addition, the study found the demoralizing attitudes of the NCOs had a disheartening effect on the trainee, with the end result being a mental block between the recruit and the trainer, thus creating a negative impact on the quality of training presented.

During the period of April-June 1963, pilot trainer courses were conducted at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, to allow selected Officers and NCOs to participate in testing the revised concept of recruit training. In July-August of the same year, this new training concept was tested with a training battalion at Fort Jackson, and a training company at Fort Gordon, Georgia. The success of these pilot courses resulted in the formation of

DSS throughout the Army. This was the beginning of the DS, and these NCOs were the first to train recruits in the history of the Recruit Training Programs. The Fort Leonard Wood DSS began training NCOs for Drill Sergeant duties in September 1964.

<<http://usmilitary.about.com/od/armytrng/a/drillsgtschool.htm>>

The three established AC DSS are located at Fort Jackson, South Carolina; Fort Benning, Georgia; and Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. The Fort Leonard Wood DSS Company sponsors a DS Prep Course for all DS candidates assigned to the installation. This course is geared to teach basic methodology and fundamentals to the candidates, in preparation for the formal DSS training. The DSS also trains selected soldiers and leaders who work in the IET environment through its Cadre Training Course, Support Cadre Training Course, and the Installation Staff and Contractor Training Course.

The creed is an obligatory motto for all DS, in addition, is the standard from which they will model themselves as Leaders. The DS Creed is as follows:

“I will assist each individual in their efforts to become a highly motivated, well disciplined, physically and mentally fit soldier, capable of defeating any enemy on today’s modern battlefield. I will instill pride in all I train. Pride in self, in the Army, and in Country. I will insist that each soldier meets and maintains the Army standards of military bearing and courtesy, consistent with the highest traditions of the U.S. Army. I will lead by example, never requiring a soldier to attempt any task I would not do myself. First, last, and always, I am an American soldier, sworn to defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, both foreign and domestic. I am a Drill Sergeant”.

In 1958, the crest was adopted as the Training Center's crest and the background were changed to green. Before 1958, it was the regimental crest with a maroon background. *"This We'll Defend"*, is the motto inscribed on the scroll of the DS badge. The thirteen stars represent the thirteen original colonies, while the snake symbolizes preparedness. On one end, the snake is grasping the scroll with his mouth and on the other end, with his tail. The armored breastplate is a symbol of strength, and the green background is called a Jupon, which is a vestment worn under the armored breastplate. The Jupon represents the Army. Finally, the torch is a symbol of liberty that shines over all.

The headgears are the most outstanding and distinguishing features of the DS. These headgears set them apart from the rest of the Army. Females were granted permission to participate in the DS program in late 1971, by an approval from the Chief of Staff of the Army. In February 1972, six Women Army Corps (WAC) NCOs from Fort McClellan, Alabama, were the first to be enrolled in the DS program at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. They were authorized to wear the female DS hat upon graduation. Brigadier General Mildred Bailey designed the hat from the Australian bush hat. The first hat was beige, but the color was changed to dark green and was put in use in January 1983. In 1985, a proposal was made to switch to the DS hat worn by the males, but female DSs at Training and Doctrine Command posts opposed this idea. In June 1985, the decision was made by General Wickham, Jr., Army Chief of Staff, that the female DS would continue to wear the original hat.

This headgear is the most appropriate symbol of a DS. The campaign hat was worn in various campaigns in the field, and in active service in different styles from

1850 through 1939. In 1964, the campaign hat appeared again in its present style, which evolved from the straw or felt slough hat of the 1850's. The center crease was designed in the 1880's and the "Montana Peak" was adopted in 1911.

The DS is responsible for training, mentoring, molding, and leading the future soldiers of the Army. The school training is concentrated on enhancing leadership qualities in order to improve self-confidence, and provides unique skills necessary to train, supervise, and lead IET soldiers. A DS is the most recognizable of all Soldiers because of their uniform, to include the patch and the campaign hat. They can never be mistaken.

The job of a Drill Sergeant is extremely demanding and stressful, yet very important and vital to the survival of our Army. Sometimes, Drill Sergeants are misunderstood and are seen as egotistical and self-centered, but they are simply mission focused, and task-oriented individuals. Though brief, the intent of this research is to impart additional background information about a Drill Sergeant, so that others may gain a better understanding, regarding the outward "complexity" of a Drill Sergeant.

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