

## A-Day

First, what is "A-Day?". It is Acceptance Day(I believe August 4th), it is the parade held at the beginning of the school year where your now Basic Cadet is officially accepted into the Cadet Wing and is then referred to as Cadet having completed all of Basic training. On a side note, the graduation parade that took place in May is symbolic to your Basics because it is there the Firsties march away from the Cadet Wing thereby opening a slot for your Basics to then come and step into. At this Parade they are officially accepted in and will receive their Four Degree(Doolie) shoulder boards.

Second, what does this mean to me as a parent? In the past so many years, it has become more popular for parents to attend who are able and who would like to come. It is by no means mandatory and I would say less than half of the cadet families in attendance. Unlike Basic where you are not allowed to say go to Jack's Valley, you may attend the parade and watch your then Cadet receive their shoulder boards

Third, what does the day look like? Well..... here is the rough timeline if you choose to attend. Parade is usually 9or 9:30 start time. You may arrive by 8 and just watch them practice. You cannot speak to your Basic until after the parade. After the parade you can see your DS/DD put on their shoulder boards right there on the parade field. After the parade you will have about 2 hours with your Cadet. Many parents who come bring lunch with them to share. They MAY NOT leave the local cadet area! That means picnicking in parking lot, under a shady tree, up near the cadet area like by the chapel, Arnold Hall, etc... Patti and I laughed because both of our cadet requested Jimmy Johns for their lunch. Made it easy to pick up early and keep in a cooler in the car until after the parade. You will not have time to run off base to grab them food after the parade so you do need to plan ahead. Places like Jimmy Johns, Panera bread, Chick fil A, Qudoba are all places I know that others have used and should be able to have food ready at 7am for you to have pre-ordered. Just packing sandwiches is also a good thing! You will also hear people start to talk about what they are bringing their Cadets. Yes, starting then your cadets can have some plastic containers with snacks in them, their school supplies, an alarm clock(with no music), etc... This is also stuff that can be brought out parents weekend so if you cannot make it don't worry!!!!

Fourth, what happens after our 2 hours is up? You must say goodbye. There is no campus tours they can give, no hanging out. You will get to do all of that on Parents weekend. So, do I think that day is worth it to come if you are able--yes! I thought that was the fastest two hours I have spent, but I did love every minute of it! But I also know it is not feasible for everyone to attend. I was blessed to be able to stay with good friends as we drove through. Part of why I bring this all up now is so that if any of you would like to come, you have time to plan.

I will say that for cadets whose families don't/can't make it, other parents always bring extra food to feed squadmates! Don't worry about that! So, that is it in a nutshell.

Here are some suggestions from another parent.

Suggested items to bring to Acceptance Day or provide over Parents weekend

Bins to store dry goods - approx. 20 gal (My DD does not have this big of bins. I do believe they will fit in the storage above the closet but I am not sure. I would stick with the size of a crate or smaller so that they will fit on their book shelf)

Medicine kit: Tylenol/ Motrin, Pepto Bismol, bandaids, Neosporin, sunscreen, chapstick, Cough drops, zinc lozenges, Emergen-C, vitamins, cold medicine

School supplies - pencils, pens, eraser, post it notes, index cards, scissors, stapler, subject notebooks

New undergarments

Clear & neutral colored nail polish

Flip flops for shower

Small stud earrings - regulation only

Make up - regulation only

Lint Brush

Odor eaters

Desk fan (considered a personal item)

Monitor for computer (considered a personal item)

Personal printer - not mandatory as cadets may use squad printer

Paper & extra printer cartridges if printer is purchased

Sleeping bag or light blanket - Some Doolies like to sleep on top of their SAMI beds

Mattress Topper

Assorted dry goods - for Doolies it's all about the snacks

Bread, flavored rice cakes, peanut butter, honey, crystal light (or something similar) granola bars, bevita bars, apple sauce, protein bars, fruit snacks, trail mix, nuts, animal crackers, cookies, chocolate, hard candy -- any kind of snack that you think your basic will enjoy. Squad dependent but some will allow popcorn (ASK FIRST), instant oatmeal (ASK FIRST - as hot water is needed for Oatmeal and Doolies are not allowed heating appliances in their room).

Case of water

YOU DEFINITELY WANT TO PROVIDE BINS TO STORE FOOD - Mice can be a problem

Gift cards are always WELCOME. Whenever a family member asks what they can send to my daughter I respond GIFT CARDS!

Local eateries the cadets frequent are: Chick fil-a, Panera bread, Ihop, PF Changs, Cracker Barrel, BJ'S, California Pizza Kitchen, Starbucks, Q-doba, Olive Garden, Subway, (the one on campus will accept gift cards) and of course WALMART - as they will buy most of their supplies from here including food to store in their room.

GET A LIST FROM YOUR DOOLIE ahead of time - I'm sure they will have plenty of requests ☺

LASTLY: You have a limited amount of time with your cadet on A-day. Avoid C-store and mailroom. All they really want from you is a BIG hug, lots of love & affection and maybe a few goodies. Hand your cadet some money to buy essentials for their room (they can purchase later @ C-store or Walmart). Cherish your time with them.

You won't be allowed to bring anything into stands with you during the parade. (I am not sure if this includes food. I left my food in the car last year and we walked back and ate it under a tree near the car) Anything you buy will require a walk/bus ride back to car to retrieve. Try not to get caught up in frenzy of having to do it all. ASK your DD/DS what their priorities are and what can wait till PW. As far as lunch goes, a sack lunch will go down just as easily as catered meal. Your cadet will be so appreciative that you're there. Plus Parents Weekend is 4 weeks after A-Day -- that's when the real shopping occurs!

Welcome to the family!