

Department of the Army (DA) Photo

Table of Contents

[Summary](#)

[Quick Guide: How to take a DA Photo?](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Links](#)

[References](#)

Summary

The DA Photo is used to quickly determine a Soldier's professionalism and military bearing while conducting a board or in a situation where the Soldier is not physically present. The DA Photo is considered to be a "hand shake" of sorts with a board who may be considering the many objective facets in a personnel file. As with all first impressions the DA Photo can be used as a positive or negative discriminator. Soldiers should check their records before having their photo taken to ensure all medals, badges, ribbons etc. are properly recorded. AR 640-30 states that photos are valid for five (5) years and can only be taken at authorized Visual Information (VI) activities as required by AR 640-30.

[Back to top](#)

Quick Guide: How to take a DA Photo?

1. Make an appointment to be photographed.
Search for facility nearest you by clicking on this [link](#) and entering search information, selecting nearest location and follow on screen instructions.
2. Report to the VI facility dressed in a properly fitted and pressed Class A Army Green Service uniform. Soldiers may also carry their uniform to the photographic facility and change on-site to avoid wrinkling or soiling the uniform en route. (Note: The photo will be taken in the designated Army Blue uniform upon official announcement from DA).
3. Wear basic branch insignia, all permanently authorized awards, decorations, combat and special skill badges and tabs. If affiliated, regimental insignia will be worn. The shoulder sleeve insignia (patch) and distinctive unit insignia (crests) will be worn and are the only exceptions from the permanent rule. (In many cases Soldiers are assigned to DOD agencies, Joint activities, and other federal agencies, with some exceptions, that are not authorized one or both of these insignia items).
4. Ensure that their uniforms and authorized permanent accessories, decorations, and insignia are worn per AR 670-1.

[Back to top](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How do I make an appointment to be photographed?

A. Appointments are made by contacting Soldier's local VI facility and requesting time slot to take the DA photo.

Q. When is a DA Photo necessary?

A. The DA photo is an important representation of the Soldier. It is of particular interest during DA selection boards and career management activities.

Q. What happens if I don't get a DA Photo?

A. This is not an option. Commanders will ensure all Soldiers make an appointment to be photographed and that all official photographs are taken when required by AR 640-30.

Q. What uniform is authorized in the DA Photo?

A. The uniform will be Class A Army Green Service Uniform until the Department of the Army of the Army officially announces the use of the Army Blue Service uniform.

Q. When should I get my DA Photo updated?

A. Soldiers must update their DA photo according to the following criteria:

- The following Soldiers will have an initial photograph made within 60 days of—
 - Selection for promotion to Brigadier General or higher.
 - Promotion to First Lieutenant or higher (includes officers accessed into active duty as First Lieutenant or higher grade).
 - Promotion to Chief Warrant Officer 2 (CW2) or higher.
 - Initial appointment to Command Sergeant Major (CSM)
 - Promotion to Staff Sergeant (SSG) or higher.
 - All other photographs will be taken as needed for announced by selection board zones of consideration.
- Soldiers will update their photograph at a minimum per the following schedule:
 - General Officers – every 3rd year.
 - Officers and NCOs – every 5th year.
 - Reserve Component officers will be photographed during their respective training – BOLC phase III, CCC, and WOBC.
- A new photograph is required when there is an award of the Army Commendation Medal or above.
- Soldiers will be required to submit a new photograph when directed by the Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) commander or equivalent in the Soldier's chain of command. This authority is extended to Majors (MAJs) serving in LTC command positions. Direction to submit a new photograph will be based on cogent reason (such as commander determines there has been a significant change in the Soldier's appearance). Commanders may not direct their entire unit to submit new photographs.
- Soldiers assigned to an area (including hostile fire areas) where photographic facilities are not available or conditions prevent them from being photographed are temporarily exempt from the requirements of this paragraph. These

Soldiers will be photographed within 90 days after reassignment to an area where photographic facilities are available.

- Female Soldiers due photographs during pregnancy are required to accomplish this action within 6 months after the pregnancy.
- Soldiers with approved retirements are exempt from having photographs taken. However, if an application for withdrawal of retirement is approved, the photographs will be updated per paragraphs 4 through 6.

[Back to top](#)

Links

- [Defense Visual Information Facilities](#)
Provides ability to search nearby VI Facilities for DA Photo and other capabilities (i.e. Visual Information Management, Multimedia Management).

[Back to top](#)

References

Regulations

- [AR 640-30, Photographs for Military Human Resource Records](#)
- [AR 670-1, Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia](#)

Documents and Forms

- [DA Form 3903-R, Visual Information \(VI\) Work Order](#)

[Back to top](#)

23 SEP 10