

A PARENTS GUIDE TO SURVIVING BOOT CAMP



Once a recruit stands on these yellow footprints, he/she will be forever changed.

SUPPORT FOR OUR
TROOPS BEGINS AT
BOOT CAMP.

Why do parents need a Survival guide to boot camp

Boot camp is difficult for everyone involved. When my son went away to boot camp, it was on his 18th Birthday. What a wake up call for me. It was then I realized I would never see my boy again... the next time I would see my son, he would be a Marine. That was a really difficult concept to grasp in 24 hours. With that experience behind me now, I wanted to let others know that they are not alone, and all the emotions you are feeling as a parent, wife, or lover, are normal. This brochure will provide you with the tools necessary for you and your family to survive 90 days of worry, anxiety, depression, excitement, anticipation and PRIDE.

Your son/daughter's recruiters do a great job. However, they often overlook what the family is going through. Although they have been through boot camp themselves, they have not had a son/daughter leave for boot camp. It is a very trying time for all.

No matter how you feel right now about your son/daughter, husband/wife, grandchild, joining the Marine Corps, you will be changed at the end of these 90 days, just as your loved one is. Pride will be a word that has new meaning.

So, try not to be too stressed out about Boot Camp – Stay informed and lean on others who have been through it.



what to expect in the first week.

- 1) You will not hear from your Recruit for the first 12-24 hours. You will most likely receive a collect phone call (in the middle of the night). You will hear your recruit speaking in a loud voice, he/she will speak quickly, so listen carefully. Recruits read from a sign in front of the phone with the drill instructor (DI) yelling in the background. You will not get an opportunity to speak with your recruit; they will read the sign and hang up.
- 2) The next time you hear from your Recruit, will be via a post card/form letter which will have his/her new address. The address will contain the Recruit's Battalion, Company, and Platoon. Keep this post card/form letter handy and address your letters as directed on the post card/form letter. (I made up labels on the computer and handed them out)
- 3) **START WRITING.** Keep writing. It is a good idea to write at least 3 times a week. I wrote every day. Letters are important to all Recruits. They are a link to home, and are most often invaluable to their mental health. I have listed a few do's and don'ts for all to follow.

DO'S

- Write as often as possible.
- Make labels for family and friends.
- Write about funny, happy events going on at home.
- Send clean funny jokes, cartoons.
- Send slips of paper with words of encouragement, proverbs, quotes, Bible verses, etc.
- Send self addressed stamped envelopes for return letters.
- Encourage your Recruit at all times.
- Follow the training Matrix, it will help you follow your Recruit's training progress.

Don't s

- Say I miss you.
- Say I wish you were here.
- Ask how hard it is.
- Give any bad news.
- Send anything your Recruit doesn't ask for.
- Send letters in scented envelopes with stickers, lipstick, etc. on the outside.
- Send anything that would draw attention to your Recruit.
- Send dirty pictures, cartoons, etc.
- Address the envelope wrong, it will not get to your Recruit in a timely manner.
- Be Negative in any way.
- Tell your Recruit anything you read from the message boards/groups.
- Call your Recruit a Marine until after Graduation.

Support for the family

You will not be able to talk to your recruit until Liberty Sunday (Sunday before graduation). That will be very difficult, but you can do it, think of what your Recruit is going through.

Below is a list of several websites, and message boards that you can visit for questions/answers and general support. These sites and boards are run by Marine Corps family volunteers. These people have been in your shoes and offer invaluable support, compassion and information. Some are D.I. wives, some are Marines, some are moms, some are veterans. PLEASE VISIT THESE SITES.

Without these sites, I do not know how I would have survived. Please join at least one message board (free) you will find people just like you all over the country and in your own back yard who can offer support during boot camp and beyond.

- 1) www.usmc.mil
(Official Marine Corps Website)
- 2) www.mcrdpi.usmc.mil
(Official Parris Island website)
- 3) www.mcrdsd.usmc.mil
(Official San Diego website)
- 4) www.recruitparents.com
(your link to everything boot camp)
- 5) <http://p088.ezboard.com/bparrisland>
(Direct link to Parris Island message board)
- 6) www.mcrdpi.usmc.mil/training_matrix.htm
(Official link to training matrix)
- 7) www.marineparents.com
(Your link to information after boot camp)

Family day & graduation A TRIP TO REMEMBER

If at all possible, I strongly suggest that you attend your Recruit's graduation. Graduation is on a Friday, with Family Day on Thursday. Family Day is the day your Recruit will receive his/her Eagle Globe and Anchor (EGA Ceremony). This is the defining moment for every Marine. **Don't miss it.**

On Family Day and/or Graduation it is customary to wear your Recruit's Company colors. I designed my own T-shirt and Hoodies to wear. They were a big hit. Now I am offering them to other families. Don't leave for graduation without yours.

You can purchase company t-shirts, hoodies and sweatshirts through my website. www.MarinePride.com These garments are custom made to show your Recruit's Company, Battalion and Platoon. The shirts at the PX on base are just a colored shirt with a small logo on the upper left corner. You should order your garments about 1 month before you are ready to leave. Please feel free to email me if you have any questions about boot camp. Proudmom@marinepride.com



MarinePride.com
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