



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO
**MARINE CORPS
BOOT CAMP**

MCRD SAN DIEGO

YOU DON'T JOIN THE MARINES. YOU BECOME ONE.

Welcome to the complete guide to Marine Corps boot camp at MCRD San Diego. This guide will provide you with all things related to Marine Corps boot camp from when your Recruit steps off the bus at MCRD San Diego, until they graduate and earn the title of a United States Marine. As your recruit begins their first battle, boot camp, you too will begin your journey into learning and understanding more about what your recruit is doing and about the Marine Corps. Included in this guide are:

- A break down of boot camp by phase
- An interactive countdown calendar
- Letter writing topics
- Tips on how to support your recruit
- Marine Corps facts and history

As your recruit begins to learn what it means to be “The Few, The Proud.” you will learn how to support, motivate and encourage them so that they will be successful throughout the rest of their military career.



MARINE CORPS

FACTS AND HISTORY

1775

Marine Corps Birthday. On November 10, 1775, during the American Revolutionary War, Captain Samuel Nicholas formed the first two battalions of Marines by a resolution of the Second Continental Congress.

1776

First Amphibious Raid. March 3, 1776 marks the first amphibious landing of the Marine Corps. Led by Captain Samuel Nicholas, Marines stormed the beaches of New Providence in the Bahamas.

1805

To the Shores of Tripoli. Marines successfully assist in the battle to overthrow the Barbary ruler of Tripoli. This is the first United States victory on foreign soil, and is later enshrined in the Marine Corps Hymn.

1847

From the Halls of Montezuma. During the Mexican-American War, Marines stormed Chapultepec Hill, successfully claiming the Hall of Montezuma Castle. This battle is commemorated as the opening line in the Marine Corps Hymn.

1918

Devil Dogs. June 7, 1918 marks the Battle of Belleau Wood against German soldiers. Over the course of 20 days Marines pushed forward through enemy line defeating the Germans who then nicknamed the Marines Devil Dogs for their relentless fighting spirit.

1945

Battle of Iwo Jima. After 36 days of fighting, Marines would prove themselves victorious against the Japanese after securing the island of Iwo Jima. It was here that Marines raised the American flag in the iconic picture that is now a symbol of the Marines ability to overcome and win battles.

MARINE CORPS

FACTS AND HISTORY

Marine Corps Recruit Depot. Also known as MCRD, the Marine Corps has two different training locations for boot camp. MCRD San Diego is on the west coast and MCRD Parris Island is on the east coast. The determining factor for which training location your recruit attends is their geographic location. The one exception to this is all female recruits attend boot camp at MCRD Parris Island.

Honor. Courage. Commitment. These are the Core Values of the Marine Corps. Your Recruit will have to live and breathe these values for the duration of boot camp in order to prove to their Drill Instructor that they have what it takes to be a United States Marine.

Semper Fidelis. The Latin phrase meaning “Always Faithful”, Semper Fidelis symbolizes the lifelong commitment held by every Marine.



OOH-RAH. The Marine Corps battle cry. Marines use “Ooh-Rah” to greet other Marines, to affirm something, or to display excitement and enthusiasm.

Eagle Globe and Anchor. Every Marine must earn the emblem of the United States Marine Corps, the eagle globe and anchor. The eagle represents the nation they defend, the globe the Marine Corps worldwide presence, and the anchor the Marine Corps’ naval heritage and its ability to access any coastline in the world.

Drill Instructor. Also known as a “D.I.”, drill instructors will be responsible for the transformation of your recruit from a civilian into a Marine.

RECEIVING WEEK

PHASE ONE

Your recruit will arrive on base at San Diego late on Monday or Tuesday night (or in some cases on Wednesday), and immediately step into a high-pressure and stressful situation. They will be ordered to step off of the bus and onto the infamous yellow footprints, where they as well as every other recruit who lands at San Diego for the first time will be told:

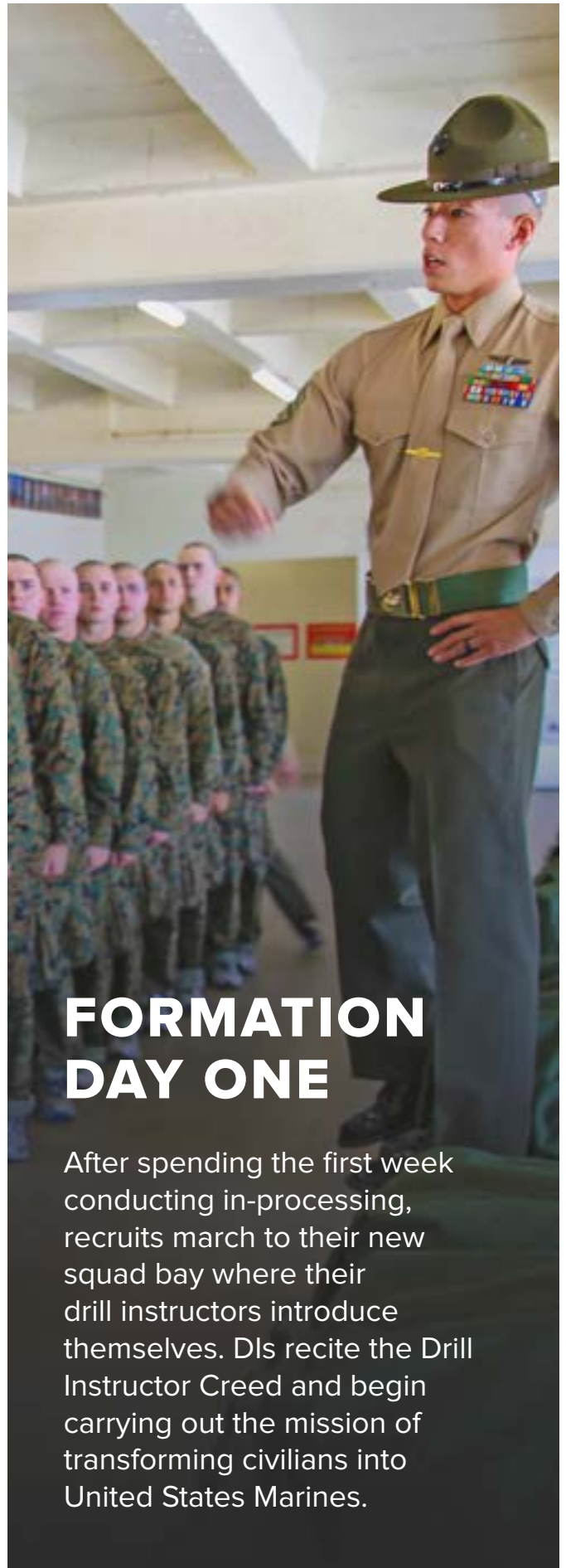
“You are now aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, and you have just taken the first step toward becoming a member of the world’s finest fighting force, the United States Marine Corps.”

Next, your recruit will walk through two silver doors, called hatches, which will mark the symbolic threshold between MCRD San Diego and the outside world. Your recruit will never walk through these doors again, as they symbolize the end of one chapter, and the beginning of the next one.

After crossing through the hatches, your recruit will go through in-processing, which consists of getting their first military haircut, uniform, and gear issue. They will be evaluated medically and given an initial strength test (IST) to ensure that they are prepared and ready for training. Typically conducted on Friday mornings, this is the same IST that they were required to execute with their recruiter prior to arriving at San Diego.

Finally, your recruit will meet a team of three or four Drill Instructors (DI), who they will be with for the duration of their time at boot camp, and are responsible for transforming them until they become an official member of the U.S. Marine Corps. These DIs will quickly become their best worst enemies, if they aren’t already.

To get in-depth weekly updates like the one above, [download Sandboxx](#) on your mobile phone. You’ll receive a weekly update every Sunday so you can know what lies ahead for your recruit and send them the encouragement and motivation that they need.



FORMATION DAY ONE

After spending the first week conducting in-processing, recruits march to their new squad bay where their drill instructors introduce themselves. DIs recite the Drill Instructor Creed and begin carrying out the mission of transforming civilians into United States Marines.

PHASE ONE

WEEKS 0-3

Phase one of training will begin the first Monday after Receiving Week. This is where the battle begins. Recruits will be taken out of their comfort zones and into a world of chaos, stress, and intensity. Marine Corps boot camp is not designed to be comfortable, and will break recruits to a point of exhaustion, doubt, and fear. The first three weeks will be filled with lots of physical activity, time in the classroom learning the history of the Marine Corps, customs and courtesies, leadership and more. Recruits will learn discipline by spending hours on close-order drill and train in the Marine Corps Martial Arts program. From training day one your recruit is going to need your support and encouragement to help get them through this first phase. With [Sandboxx](#) your recruit can start receiving Letters from you during the first week of training, ensuring that they get your love and support right when they need it most.

As each week passes recruits will be pushed harder than the week before. Recruits will discover what they are truly made of and find the fighting spirit within them. From week one all the way through graduation recruits will learn to importance of the Marine Corps Values; Honor, Courage and Commitment. In order to graduate from Marine Corps boot camp, recruits will have to have prove not only their knowledge and understanding of these values but will have to demonstrate and live them too.

PHASE ONE EVENTS

INTRO TO CORE VALUES

Your recruit will learn the importance of Honor, Courage and Commitment.

INTRO TO MCMAP

The Marine Corps Martial Arts Program (MCMAP) will teach recruits hand to hand combat techniques.

INTRO TO O-COURSE

The O-Course is designed to help improve the strength and speed of recruits throughout the duration of boot camp.

INTRO TO CFT

The Combat Fitness Test (CFT) prepares recruits for the physical demands of combat operations that they will face in their future. Recruits are tested on an 880 yard run, ammo lifts, and maneuvering under fire.

CONFIDENCE COURSE

The confidence course will consist of multiple obstacles that will cause recruits to push through and overcome their fears in order to complete their mission.

INITIAL DRILL

The first time recruits are formally tested on their appearance, weapons handling, and ability to march in formation.

PHASE TWO

WEEKS 4-6

By phase two recruits will begin to learn the fundamentals of Marine Corps marksmanship. Marines set themselves apart from other branches by training every Marine to be a rifleman. Recruits will learn the basics of marksmanship so that if they are called upon, they will be combat ready. Most of phase two training is spent in the field. This will allow recruits to become more comfortable with their rifle, and gain more confidence in themselves.

All throughout training recruits will begin to look forward to mail call, when they can escape the realities of boot camp for a while and feel connected to their friends and families back home. The [Sandboxx app](#) helps get letters to boot camp faster, increasing morale and helping recruits stay connected to their family and friends. Use our countdown calendar in this guide to give you topics to write about all throughout boot camp. [Send your first Letter](#) now. 📧

PHASE TWO EVENTS

COMBAT WATER SURVIVAL

Your recruit will take a course to learn how to survive in the water with full combat gear.

FIRST UNIFORM FITTING

Your recruit will try on the Marine Corps uniform for the first time. They will wear these uniforms at graduation.

STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE COURSE

A two-and-a-half-mile course with various exercise stations throughout will test recruits strength and endurance as they push through their exhaustion.

FIRST WRITTEN EXAM

Recruits will be tested on all Marine Corps history, customs and courtesies.

RAPPEL TOWER

Recruits will rappel down a 60-foot tower to conquer and push past their fears in order to complete their mission.

PHASE THREE

WEEKS 7-9

During phase three recruits will continue to be pushed mentally and physically. Recruits will learn survival combat skills through Basic Warrior Training, learning how to maneuver under fire, navigate through the outdoors, and handle their rifles properly are just a few skills that recruits will be expected to handle. They will be tested on everything they have learned during Marine Corps boot camp in order to prepare them for the last few battles they will face before they can claim the title of United States Marine. Weeks 7 through 9 will be the hardest part of training as recruits will have to give everything they have and more to keep pushing forward. Sending Letters during these weeks will be crucial to keep their fighting spirits high. [Sandboxx](#) will help you get your words of encouragement to your recruit quickly so that they can have the support and love they need to get through these last few battles.

At the end of phase three recruits will go through The Crucible. The Crucible is a 54-hour field event where recruits will have to complete a series of mini events. Each event will test their knowledge, perseverance, leadership, honor, courage, and commitment. This is their defining moment. Upon successfully completing The Crucible, recruits will march their last hike as recruits as they head to the Eagle Globe and Anchor Ceremony where they are given the title of a United States Marine and take their oath.

PHASE THREE EVENTS

GRASS WEEK

Your recruit will learn the fundamentals of marksmanship, how to operate an M-16 service rifle and the mechanical functions that make an M-16 work.

RIFLE QUALIFICATION

Recruits will be tested on their marksmanship and earn one of three levels of expertise; marksmen, sharpshooter, and expert.

LAND NAVIGATION

Recruits will learn how to navigate through terrain only using a compass and a map.

FINAL COMBAT FITNESS TEST

The CFT test is a pass or fail test, and your recruit will need to pass in order to graduate on time. The CFT prepares recruits to be combat ready.

GEAR HIKES

Recruits will hike over 20k during phase three with full gear. These hikes prepare them for the physical and mental strength they will need to be successful in order to complete missions and win battles throughout their career.

PHASE FOUR

WEEKS 10-12

Recently added to the Marine Corps boot camp training schedule phase four was developed to give new Marines mentorship and to help them have a successful career. Phase four is where everything your recruit has learned throughout training is put to the test. Week ten will be the hardest week your recruit faces, but if successful, they will then earn the title of United States Marine.

Upon successfully completing all thirteen weeks of Marine Corps boot camp Marines will have a graduation ceremony to celebrate their accomplishments with friends and family who are able to attend graduation. After graduation Marines will be given ten days of leave until they have to report to the School of Infantry (SOI), where they will continue their training before they are sent to the fleet.

PHASE FOUR EVENTS

FINAL EXAM

The final written exam your recruit will take covers every topic they have learned over the last ten weeks. They will need to pass this exam in order to graduate.

CONFIDENCE CHAMBER

Recruits will learn how to properly employ equipment that is used during biological and chemical attacks. Your recruit will never forget their first gas chamber experience.

THE CRUCIBLE

This 54-hour in the field event is the culminating event of boot camp. Your recruit will go through various obstacles with a small team of other recruits, requiring them to work together as a team in order to complete each mission that they are given.

EAGLE GLOBE AND ANCHOR CEREMONY

Upon successful completion of the Crucible recruits will hike 15km with their packs to the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor ceremony where they will be given the title of United States Marine and given their Marine Corps emblem.

FAMILY DAY AND GRADUATION

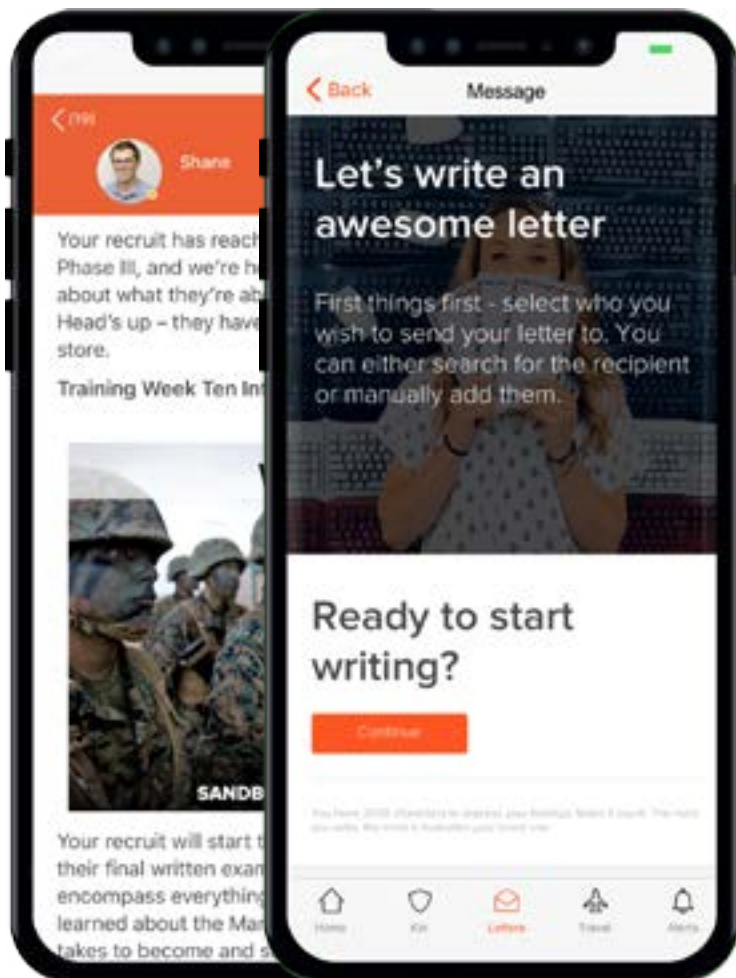
Two days of events where you will be able to see your new Marine for the first time.

SANDBOXX

CONNECTING OUR MILITARY COMMUNITY

Developed by veterans with decades of service, Sandboxx provides recruits, Marines and their families the tools and support needed to confidently navigate the transitions that will be made throughout their entire military journey.

With Sandboxx, service members and their loved ones can stay in touch, no matter how far apart they may be. Digitizing the time-consuming processes of sending physical letters and simplifying the booking of military-related travel, Sandboxx empowers service members to maintain meaningful bonds with family and friends back home. Whether it is a recruit receiving a Letter and photograph on the third day of boot camp, a Marine flying home to their parents for Christmas, or a single mother attending her son's boot camp graduation, Sandboxx transforms quality contact with loved ones from a possibility to a reality.



Sandboxx Features:

Send Letters. Snap a photo and write a Letter to your recruit from anywhere at anytime with [Sandboxx](#). Letters come with a pre-addressed return envelope for your recruit to easily write back to you.

Receive Updates. Get weekly in-depth updates of what your recruit is doing during boot camp to help you support them the entire journey.

Book Travel. [Plan and book](#) your travel to MCRD San Diego, for graduation, worry free with our team of military travel experts.



MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
<input type="checkbox"/> Wish your recruit luck and send them some motivation for swim week. T18	T19	T20	<input type="checkbox"/> Give your recruit a play by play of how your week went.	<input type="checkbox"/> Send your recruit a Letter asking how they did on their PFT.	T23	S4
<input type="checkbox"/> Send your recruit a motivational quote to get them through this week of fitness. T24	<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel rates will begin to rise, see our Sandboxx approved hotels. T25	T26	<input type="checkbox"/> Send your recruit a Throwback Thursday photo of you and them.	T28	<input type="checkbox"/> Ask your recruit how their 5k hike with full gear went today.	S5
<input type="checkbox"/> Give your recruit some encouragement for their first written exam this week. T30	<input type="checkbox"/> For the best rates, your travel plans should be near complete. T31	T32	<input type="checkbox"/> Write to your recruit about something you've learned about the Marine Corps.	<input type="checkbox"/> Ask your recruit how they did on the 60 foot-tall rappel tower.	<input type="checkbox"/> WOO-HOO! Send a celebratory Letter on making it half way through boot camp.	T35
						S6

Calendar Check List

1. Check off your Letters so you can keep track of what you've sent to your recruit.
2. Mark off the days to countdown till graduation.
3. Send your Letter by 5pm EST Monday-Friday to get your Letter sent out that night and delivered to MCRD Sand Diego the next day.

SANDBOXX CALENDAR KEY

- Sandboxx Boot Camp Update (in-app)
- Sandboxx Letter Topic
- Sandboxx Travel Tip



MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Wish your recruit the best of luck for Grass Week. T36		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Send your recruit some fun/cute pictures of your pets. T38	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Tell your recruit about a time that they made you proud. T39			<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> S7
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Your recruit is at the range this week. Send some encouragement to calm their nerves. T42	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Flights, Hotel, & rental cars should be booked and ready to go. T43		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Send a picture of the sunset or sunrise to remind them that every day is a new day. T45		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Ask your recruit how their feet are doing after the 13k hike today. T47	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> S8
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Another week in the field, send your recruit motivation to conquer their land navigation. T48		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Ask your recruit what their favorite MRE has been so far. T50	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Let your recruit know how excited you are to see them at graduation! T51		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Ask your recruit what they qualified for on their marksmanship. T53	
	T49			T52		S9

* Send your Letter by 5pm EST Monday-Friday to get your Letter sent out that night.

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MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Send your recruit motivation to push through and crush the crucible. T54	<input type="checkbox"/> Today is the last day to send your Marine a Letter before graduation. M3	<input type="checkbox"/> Tomorrow your recruit becomes a Marine, let them know how proud you are. T56	<input type="checkbox"/> Pack your bags it's time to head to MCRD San Diego. M10	<input type="checkbox"/> Send your Marine a celebration photo to celebrate their accomplishment. M2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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AFTER BOOT CAMP

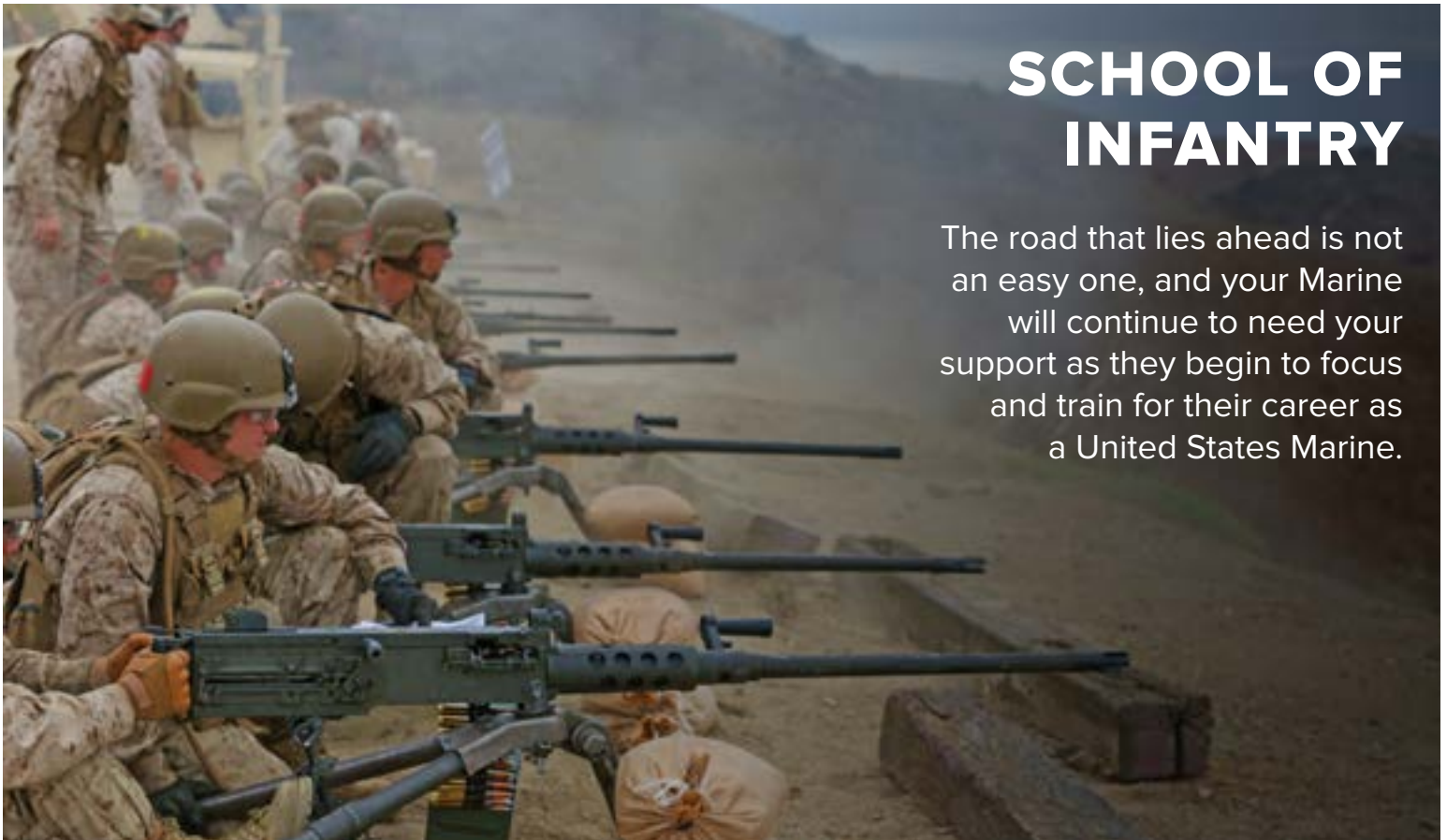
THE SCHOOL OF INFANTRY

After Marine boot camp, newly graduated Marines will all go to the School of Infantry (SOI). Once graduation is over Marines will have ten days of leave to go home and get what they need in order before heading on to their next school for training. Since your Marine attended boot camp at MCRD San Diego they will report to SOI West at Camp Pendleton.

The School of Infantry (SOI) is divided into two different schools; Infantry Training Battalion (ITB) and Marine Combat Training (MCT). The Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) of the Marine will determine what training path they will take. Marines with an infantry or weapons system MOS will go to ITB. Any Marines without an infantry MOS will train at MCT. SOI is where basically trained Marines become Marine warriors.

Since a majority of SOI training is conducted in the field, Marines will not always have access to their phones. You can [use Sandboxx](#) to continue to send your Marine love and support during their training at SOI through Letters.

Get your Marine's new address for after boot camp [on our blog](#).



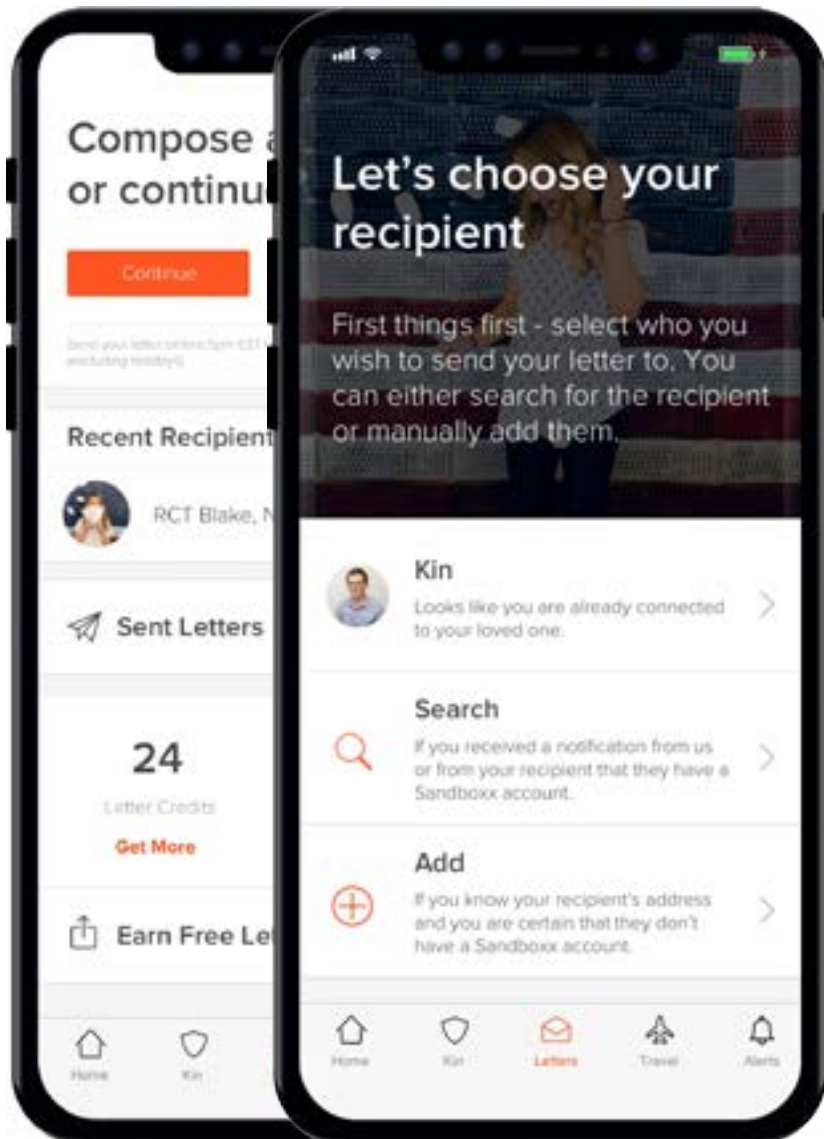
SCHOOL OF INFANTRY

The road that lies ahead is not an easy one, and your Marine will continue to need your support as they begin to focus and train for their career as a United States Marine.

SANDBOXX LETTERS

KEEPING YOU CONNECTED WITH YOUR RECRUIT

Mail call is the only connection recruits have to friends, family, loved ones, and the rest of the outside world. Your recruit will face a lot of hard days and may struggle to keep moving forward. Your constant support and positive words will be what keeps your recruit going and help them stay confident so that they can succeed. Your Letters to boot camp don't need to be long and they don't need to be fancy. What's important is that you're sending Letters to support them through this journey.



Sandboxx Letters are:

Easy. With Sandboxx, you can send a Letter directly from our app from the palm of your hand, wherever you are.

Meaningful. Each Sandboxx Letter includes a custom message that you write, a color photo for a more personal touch, a card and a pre-addressed return envelope.

Fast. We use FedEx to overnight ship Letters to many basic training bases.

Pre-Sorted. We pre-sort all Letters that we send to base so that it gets through the mail room, and into your recruit's hands, faster.



SANDBOXX TRAVEL

GETTING YOU TO YOUR MARINE

The feeling you get when you see your new Marine for the first time will be more than you could ever imagine. It is truly a special day and time to enjoy and celebrate with your Marine and family. Let us help you take the worry out of your travel, and allow you to focus more on supporting your recruit.

Sandboxx Travel benefits:

TravelPlus. Need to cancel or change your booking? No problem with Sandboxx Travel Plus.

Sandboxx Approved. Hotels are not all the same. We have put our stamp of approval on hotels we know you'll love.

Military Travel Experts. With over 20 years experience in booking military travel, Sandboxx Travel has dealt with and will ensure that your trip to MCRD San Diego goes off without a hitch.

Recruits Flight Home. After graduation your new Marine will get ten days of leave to go home. Sandboxx Travel allows you to book your recruit's flight home with you, often at a discounted active duty military rate.

[Start Planning Your Trip](#)

travel.sandboxx.us

