

What If I Refuse To Go?

If you ignore your induction notice, and they find you, you'll almost certainly be given another chance to cooperate. Selective Services records are so inaccurate that thousands of people will never receive their induction notices. Selective Service will probably assume you're one of them.

If you get a draft notice, show up, and refuse induction, you'll probably be prosecuted. However, some people will slip through the cracks in the system, and some will win in court.

If you show up and take the physical, there's a good chance that you'll flunk. (If you have a medical problem that would make it hard for you to be a soldier, you should see a draft counselor and a doctor now and get documentation of your condition.) But if you pass, you'll really be stuck. Those who get that far and then refuse induction will be much easier to find and convict than those who don't show up at all.

If you pass the physical and the don't want to go, tell the soldiers who are ordering you around that you are refusing to be inducted. Remember: once you submit to induction, you'll be under military law, which is much harsher than civilian law. Don't take that step.

Can I Go To Canada?

Maybe, but you can't count on it. So far, Canada has refused to grant sanctuary to U.S. military resisters. Like other countries, Canada has its own unemployment and economic problems, and doesn't welcome unskilled young Americans. If your asylum claim is denied, and you don't meet the qualifications for Canadian immigration, you'd be deported back to the U.S. Health care workers might be more welcome, though licensing might present a problem.

If you have or can get citizenship in another country, if you're familiar with the language and culture, if you think you'd like to live there for the rest of your life, and if you have resources to get there and establish

yourself, then emigration might make sense. If you leave the U.S. after you get an induction notice, you risk prosecution if you ever come back.

What About Deferments?

To get a deferment you must register, notify the SS whenever you move, and then apply for a deferment within a few days of receiving your induction notice. By applying for a deferment, you admit you received the induction notice, which will make it harder to win in court if you later decide to refuse induction.

Lesbians, gays, and bisexuals are considered unfit for the military, but that could change. If you're opposed to all war you might qualify as a conscientious objector, although you'd still have to do alternative service. There are several other deferments, but very few people will qualify for them. (Students are not exempt from the draft or likely to be deferred.) If you plan to try for a deferment, you should talk to a draft counselor now. Once draft notices go out, there won't be enough time or enough draft counselors.

Why Break The Law?

People resist the draft for many reasons. If you're healthy, heterosexual, and can't qualify as a conscientious objector, breaking the law is probably the only way you can avoid being drafted.

The most useful thing you can do today to keep from being drafted is to organize against the draft! Members of Congress are worried about the domestic unrest a draft will provoke -- and if the price looks too high, they won't dare try to draft you or anybody else.

**If enough of us resist now,
no one will be drafted.**

Resisters.info

*This leaflet and more are at:
<http://www.resisters.info>
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What To Do If You Don't Want To Be Drafted

These are your options if you don't want to be drafted:

- Don't register.
- Don't tell Selective Service your new address when you move.
- Get lucky in the draft lottery.
- Don't show up for induction.
- Show up and flunk the physical.
- Show up and refuse induction.
- Convince the draft board that you're a conscientious objector, and do alternative service.
- Convince the draft board that you qualify for some other deferment (most people don't).
- Leave the country, or hide, for the rest of your life.
- Organize *now* against the draft

The surest way not to be drafted is to prevent the draft entirely. This leaflet explains how you can help protect yourself from the draft by joining in the resistance to the draft and wars.

Will There Be A Draft?

With the U.S. at war in Iraq and Afghanistan, recruiters aren't able to meet their quotas. With American soldiers dying every day in foreign wars and occupations, people don't want to enlist no matter how desperate they are for a job. Even if the fighting stops soon, U.S. troops will probably stay in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Gulf for years. If Army recruits have to spend a year sitting in the desert in a hostile country, who's going to volunteer next year ... or the year after? Members of Congress are already talking about bringing back the draft -- but they're afraid of draft resistance.

Who Will Be Drafted?

The first people to get drafted will probably be doctors, nurses, and other health care workers (both men and women). The military was short of health care workers even before the current wars began, and as the bodies pile up Congress may authorize a "Doctor Draft" of medical professionals. Selective Service has contingency plans for a "Health Care Personnel Delivery System" to draft men and women ages 20 through 44 who are doctors, nurses, technicians, therapists, or other medical professionals. (One way for such people not to be drafted -- unless they are also young men eligible for the general draft -- is to give up their medical or professional licenses. But they'll have to do it before they are drafted. Unless you're already thinking about a career change, that's not much of a choice.) For more on the health workers draft, see: <<http://www.MedicalDraft.info>>.

If there is a draft for cannon fodder, men who registered for the draft (if you didn't register, you won't be drafted) and who turn 20 this year would be called up first. In 2006, men born in 1986 would be drafted first. It would be up to Congress, when it decides to reinstate authority for inductions, to decide whether or not to include women.

If you get drafted, you'll get a letter giving you ten days to report for a pre-induction medical exam. If you show up, pass the physical, and submit to induction, they'll put you on a bus to basic training the same day.

What Will Happen To Me?

We can't give you any guarantees. There is a lot you can do to keep from being drafted, but luck plays a big role. The government can always violate its own policies or invent new ones. You have to weigh the uncertain legal risks of resisting the draft, against the very clear hazards of submitting to the draft -- the choices aren't easy.

If the Vietnam War draft is a guide, the odds favor people who resist. Most of the people who resisted illegally -- especially those who never registered -- were never caught. They weren't drafted, they didn't go to prison, and they were never even charged in court. Even of the 210,000 men who were formally accused of violating the draft laws, only 4,000 went to prison. Another 5,000 got probation, and 41,000 avoided prosecution by submitting to induction. The rest -- more than 75% -- were either never caught, never went to trial, won in court, or flunked their induction physicals!

What If I Didn't Register?

You're not alone. Millions of men have refused to register since 1980, and millions more have violated the draft laws in other ways. Only 20 nonregistrants were prosecuted, none since 1986! Between 5-10% of the 19 and 20-year-olds who would be called first have never registered, according to government data. Most of them will never be caught, even if there's a draft.

If you decide to resist registration or induction, you'll probably get warning letters from Selective Service. These letters are usually junk mail, and you are unlikely to be prosecuted for ignoring them. In 2004 alone, the SS forwarded more than 162,000 names and addresses of suspected nonregistrants to the Justice Department. None of them were investigated or prosecuted.

The dangerous letters are Certified or Registered letters (letters you have to sign for). Don't sign for any letter from Selective Service or the Justice Department. Your signature is evidence that you know you are supposed to register or appear for induction. Refuse to accept the letter, and see a draft counselor or lawyer immediately.

Even if you are caught, there's a good chance you won't be prosecuted. The courts are already overwhelmed by the war on drugs; the government could only afford to prosecute a few token or outspoken draft resisters.

Most people who are caught will be able to avoid prosecution by registering and submitting to the draft. Even the vocal public nonregistrants prosecuted in the early 1980s were allowed to register without penalty up until the day they went on trial.

Some will choose to go to trial, and a few may not get that "last chance" to register. A criminal record is no laughing matter, but many draft resisters imprisoned during the Vietnam War, as well as some of the 20 nonregistrants prosecuted in the early 1980s, now hold professional jobs in business, in academia, and with non-governmental organizations. Most are proud of what they did and would do it again. Besides, is life in a minimum-security prison any worse than life in the Army? Some of us who have been there think not.

But What If I Already Registered?

Selective Service might never find you. They admit their computers have the wrong addresses for about 10% of the men who registered, and the real figure is probably a lot higher. If you don't tell Selective Service where you live, the same legal risks as for nonregistrants would apply. In order to prosecute you, they would have to prove that you knew you were breaking the law. So if they finally found you, you could probably avoid prosecution by submitting to the draft.

You should think about what you want your parents (or whoever lives at the address you gave when you registered) to do if the government comes looking for you. If you want to resist the draft and your parents support you, they can help by sending back, unopened, any mail for you from Selective Service. You can help yourself by doing the same thing.

It's a crime to lie to Selective Service or the FBI, but you have the right to remain silent. When they say, "Anything you say will be used against you," they mean it. Your family doesn't have to accept mail for you, or tell the Feds where you live or anything else about you.