

CADET WELCOME COURSE LESSON PLAN

Vision & Synopsis	The 2021 Cadet Survey indicated that awareness of major opportunities like Cadet Wings was low (28% of cadets, 49% of adult leaders). The Cadet Welcome course aims to help improve internal communication and ensure new cadets are aware of the exciting programs ahead of them.
Goal	Cadets will gain familiarity with the New Cadet Guide, chain of command, expectations for their first year, the Cadet Flight Plan, and beyond.
Audience	New cadets, during the first month in CAP, as they work on their Curry Achievement
Setting	Typically completed online, through Cadet Interactive. This classroom-based lesson plan is an alternative for cadets/squadrons lacking internet access or assisting cadets with special needs.
Instructor	A Cadet Programs Officer or Cadet Officer familiar with the Cadet Program
Duration	30-40 minutes
Best Practice	Conduct as part of <i>Cadet Great Start</i>
Equipment Needed	A New Cadet Guide for each cadet
Course Completion Requirement	Cadets satisfy the Cadet Welcome Course requirements if, in the instructor's judgment, they participated actively.
Recordkeeping	Record course completion in eServices using the Cadet Promotions module. eServices Cadet Promotions > Data Entry/Accomplishments > Achievement 1, Cadet Welcome Course. May also be entered for multiple cadets using the Bulk Entry module in Accomplishments.

I. Introduction

3 min

1. Warm-Up Activity. New Cadet Guide Sparks

Concept: In this activity cadets share their reason for joining CAP, or something they're looking forward to in the program, take a look at the New Cadet Guide and identify items of particular interest relating to those sparks.

Equipment:

- New Cadet Guide for each cadet

Process:

1. Have cadets share their reason for joining CAP, or a goal or activity they look forward to during their cadet career. (E.g. An interest in a military career, desire to be a pilot, serving their local community, heard Encampment was cool and looking forward to participating.)
2. Instruct cadets to page through the New Cadet Guide, not reading thoroughly, but scanning for any exciting photos, intriguing quotes, surprising statistics, or anything they want to know more about. Cadets will likely be drawn to subjects related to their interests, but may also find new things to be sparked by.
3. Have the cadets share what they found. What are they excited to see/do/learn in their coming cadet career?

II. Welcome

8 min

1. **Cadet Programs Elements.** Your Cadet Program is organized around four main elements. Everything you do as a cadet will point back to one or more of these elements in one way or another.
 - a. **Leadership**
 - b. **Aerospace**
 - c. **Fitness**
 - d. **Character**
2. **Motto, Mission, Vision. Let's look at the guiding principles for the Civil Air Patrol and the Cadet Program.**
 - a. **Motto.** The CAP motto is *semper vigilans*, or "always vigilant." This means staying alert and ever on the watch.
 - b. **Mission.** The mission of the CAP Cadet Program is to develop dynamic Americans and aerospace leaders.
 - c. **Vision.** "Today's cadets ... tomorrow's aerospace leaders" is the vision of the CAP Cadet Program. This vision shows that cadets are an important part of America's aerospace future.
3. **First Year Expectations**
 - a. Stay with CAP for at least 1 year.
 - b. Give the cadet experience a chance to impact your life.
 - c. Attend squadron meetings regularly. If you'll be absent, let your squadron know in advance.
 - d. Attend one "Saturday" event per month.
 - e. Participate in an orientation flight.
 - f. Attend encampment. See page 9.

- g. Earn the Wright Brothers' Award.

4. Chain of Command

- a. The chain of command is a team of leaders who run the squadron. They are here to help you out.
- b. The "chain" is an order of authority, a way that leaders share the burden of running a squadron. The chain links the most junior person, you, with the highest-ranking leader in the organization.
- c. When you have a question or concern, use the chain to get help.
- d. Always try to resolve issues at the lowest level.

II. Cadet Life

8 min

1. Ranking up.

- a. Your starting grade in CAP is Cadet Airman Basic. What does that mean to you? What do you think about moving up to higher ranks? Passing the tests and being an active member make you eligible for promotion, but how you personally perform as a cadet also counts.
- b. Take a look at the Cadet Promotion Requirements diagram in the Cadet Life section of your New Cadet Guide. It gives you an overall picture of the requirements for cadet promotion.
- c. Next, look at the Cadet Super Chart in the back of the booklet. In particular, you'll want to keep the leadership expectations in mind. These are the skills and attitudes you'll need to focus on to earn promotions.
- d. Each time you earn a promotion, you receive a new cadet grade and grade insignia. The higher you climb in the Cadet Program, the more that leadership opportunities and exciting activities will become available to you.
- e. But as you advance, your squadron will expect you to accept new responsibilities and perform at an even higher level of excellence.

2. Uniforms.

- a. There's only one right way to wear the uniform.
- b. Your uniform is a visual representation of your commitment to the Core Values. The uniforms are unique—only CAP cadets wear the CAP cadet uniform—and a source of pride.
- c. Wearing the uniform is part of your leadership training. The uniform helps you develop self-discipline, personal responsibility, and self-respect.
- d. Whenever you wear the uniform, you represent not just yourself but also all of CAP and the U.S. Air Force, so wear the uniform with pride.

3. Awards.

- a. CAP Cadet of the Year- Best cadet overall for the total duration of their membership
- b. Air Force Association Award to Outstanding Cadets- Best first-year cadet
- c. VFW Award to Outstanding Cadet Officers- Veterans of Foreign Wars honor to cadet officer for leadership performance
- d. VFW Award to Outstanding Cadet NCOs- Excellence from a younger cadet NCO
- e. Air Force Sergeants' Association Award to Outstanding Cadet NCOs- Best overall cadet NCO for the total duration of his or her membership
- f. Cadet of the Month- Outstanding performance by a cadet airman or NCO during the preceding month

III. Tips to Achieve Awesomeness

8 min

1. Cadet Flight Plan

- a. First Cadet Year
 - i. CAP enrollment
 - ii. Squadron meetings
 - iii. O-Flight
 - iv. Rank-Up

- v. Encampment (CEAP can help you financially.)
 - b. Second Cadet Year
 - i. National Flight Academy (TOP Cadets can help you financially.)
 - ii. National Cadet Special Activities (Cadet Lift can help you financially.)
 - c. Third Cadet Year and Beyond
 - i. Private pilot license (Cadet Wings can help you financially.)
 - ii. College Reserve Officers' Training Corps, service academies, or scholarships (for financial help)
 - iii. Professional pilot
2. Encampment
 - a. An event that the word "awesomeness" was made for is Encampment. This weeklong event will be the high point of your first year.
 - b. Why? Encampment lets you experience all the opportunities of cadet life.
 - c. And it challenges you to get outside your comfort zone and unlock abilities you didn't know you had.
 - d. You'll have an awesome, unforgettable time.
 - e. At Encampment, you'll participate in hands-on activities and tours that emphasize leadership and character, fitness, and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).
 - f. Inspire you to develop leadership skills, learn about aviation, space, and technology, commit to a habit of regular exercise, and live the Core Values.
 3. Once you've completed an Encampment, reached a certain age and rank, and gone through a selection process, you can attend National Cadet Special Activities.
 - a. These summer activities focus on career exploration, leadership skills, search and rescue training, STEM careers, and flying. Many immerse you in an Air Force career, while other camps focus on civilian opportunities.
 4. New Cadet Guide Tips
 - a. Read the Pro Tips section, which includes guidelines on social media, studying, and personal productivity.
 - b. In the Awesomeness section, learn about Cadet Invest, which offers financial assistance for cadets.
 - c. Then, in the Reference section, look through the Cadet Super Chart and the Personal Cadet Tracker, which you'll use to record your progress through CAP.

IV. Questions, Wrap Up, & Final Thoughts.

3 min

1. **Questions.** Does anyone have any last questions?
2. **Wrap Up.** Did you learn about the thing that sparked your interest in the opener? How can you get more information about that?
3. **Final Thought.** There are many exciting opportunities ahead in your cadet career.