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Each branch has its own identity, and their slogan or motto is meant to capture that identity—what it means to be a part of that service. But, where do these mottos come from? What is the history? Some have a history rooted before the country was even independent from Britain, while others are more modern.

U.S. Army - “This We’ll Defend.”

The Continental Army was [established in 1775](#), a full year before the nation exerted its independence from Great Britain, and their goal was not to fight for sovereignty, but to defend liberty. The phrase “This We’ll Defend,” traces back to the founding of the ‘War Office’—an intermediary between the states and the Army. In a 2012 post, former Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno said “the pronoun ‘we’ reinforces our collective or team effort, and ‘defend’ remains our Army’s main mission.”

U.S. Marine Corps - “*Semper Fidelis*”

Often [shortened to “Semper Fi,”](#) the Marine motto is highly recognized, even amongst civilians and foreigners, as belonging to the Corps. The Latin phrase, which means, “always faithful,” dates back to the 14th century, and was used as a motto [for many early English towns](#). The Marines adopted it as their motto in 1883, after dropping three previous mottos, including *Fortitudine*, meaning “with courage,” *Per Mare, Per Terram*, meaning “by sea, by land,” and the hymn motto, “To the shores of Tripoli.” The Marine motto is associated with the fierce dedication and loyalty to ‘Corps and Country,’ even after leaving the service.

U.S. Air Force - “Aim High: Fly-Fight-Win”

The Air Force has [had several mottos](#) and recruiting slogans, including “No One Comes Close,” *Uno Ab Alto* (“One From On High”), “Aim High,” Cross into the Blue,” “We’ve Been Waiting For You,” “Do Something Amazing” and “Above All.”

In 2010, after nine months of research and surveys with active duty airmen, they landed on their current motto, which is considered a call and response.

U. S. Navy - "America's Navy," in transition

Currently, with the closing line, "America's Navy," in its commercials, the Navy is without an official motto. Its previous motto, "A global force for good," was dropped in Dec. 2014 during the Army-Navy football game, and a contest was launched this year to find a replacement. However, due to controversy, no slogan was chosen as the winner. The goal is to eventually find a suitable motto for the service, but, for now, they remain branded as "America's Navy."

About the author



Rachel is a freelance writer, blogger and content creator, specializing in military and military family issues, pregnancy and parenting, and relationships. Her work has been featured on and in The Huffington Post, DFWChild.com, Military Spouse magazine, Parenting magazine, Mom365.com, and many other websites and print publications. She has also contributed to local magazines in the area around the military installation where she lives with her active duty military husband and children.