

Five Do's and Don'ts When Writing to Someone at Basic Training or Boot Camp

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So now your son or daughter, boyfriend or girlfriend, brother, sister or friend has headed off to Basic Training or Boot Camp. These next 8 to 10 weeks, or in the case of Marines 13 weeks will be some of the most challenging times for them and you.

Away from home, parents, loved ones, buddies and friends and surrounded by strangers (the other recruits) and non-smiling TI (Technical Instructors) or DI (Drill Instructors), the questions are... How do you stay in touch with them? How often should you write? What should you say to help through the training until you can see them again at graduation?

Here are 5 simple Do's and Don'ts.

The DO's.

1. Simply write often to your soldier, sailor, airman, marine and guardsman. Remember ...The best time of the day for these recruits will be 'Mail Call'especially when their name is called out!
2. You don't have to write a long letter; short upbeat notes from home can be just as effective.
3. Send them photos, news about their favorite sports team or what's going on at home.
4. Use plain white envelopes, don't decorate or scent the envelopes; this can get the Technical Instructor or Drill Instructors attention...usually not a good thing.
5. Do tell them that you're proud of them and that you're looking forward to seeing them at Graduation or when they return home from training for a visit.

The Don'ts

1. Don't send money; they don't have much spare time or access to shopping and all money is logged in and locked up. This more work for the Instructors and trouble for your recruit. I made this mistake myself!
2. Don't send pornography or 'pin-up' or nude photos, off-color or racist jokes or comics. These items can get your soldier, sailor, marine, airman or guardsman in serious trouble.
3. Don't send packages of goodies. Basic is not the time for 'Care Packages'.
4. Don't complain about not being able to talk to them or about how lonely you are. They are worried about doing well in training, may be homesick and wish they could talk more often to you. Hearing that you're upset is another worry for them.
5. Don't send bad news...almost anything can wait until they have completed training. Of course, in the event of family illness or death, you should contact the American Red Cross who will get in touch with your loved ones training commanders.

Services like Write2Them can make it easier for you and their friends to stay in touch while your loved one is at Basic Training or Boot Camp by letting you send email with attachments such as photos or newspaper articles, sport team updates, jokes, funny or inspirational stories, favorite quotes or Bible verses.

<https://write2them.wordpress.com/>