

10 Steps to the New Bill

Your Cheat Sheet to the Post-9/11 GI Bill

1. Meet your newest benefit.

[GI Bill 2.0](#) went into effect in 2011. The updated program expands and streamlines many of the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. Under GI Bill 2.0, students can receive tuition payments made directly to the school, a housing allowance and a book stipend.

2. Know your eligibility.

Air Force, Navy, Army and Marine personnel on [active duty](#) can use GI Bill benefits, as can service members who are training overseas. Veterans with at least 90 days of active service after 9/11/2001 are eligible for the [new GI Bill](#). National Guard and Reserves members with three years of active duty service after 9/11/2001 also qualify.

3. Decide on a program.

Find out your options for education and training and make sure the program is approved for VA benefits. If you have a school in mind, the school's financial aid office should also be able to help you. If you're undecided, check out all the [degree programs](#) in your area.

4. Select a GI Bill.

Once you've chosen a program, you can [compare your GI Bill benefits](#) to find out whether the Post-9/11 GI Bill or the Montgomery GI Bill offers you the best deal. The programs differ in tuition benefits and other details, so do your homework to get the best deal.

5. Get your paperwork.

Before you can apply for the GI Bill, you'll need to [gather some documents](#). Make sure you have a copy of your discharge papers. You'll also need DD form 2384 if you are applying for the MGIB and documentation if you have made contributions to any buy-in programs.

6. Apply for your benefits.

Fill out a [Veterans Online Application](#) (VONAPP) through the Department of Veterans Affairs and select Form 22-1990. You can also apply through the mail. You can apply for your benefits before selecting a program.

7. Register for classes.

The VA will send you a certificate of eligibility once your application is processed. If you are certain about which benefits you are eligible for, you can enroll before receiving this form. Under the new GI Bill, your school will submit a claim directly to the VA for tuition and fees.

8. Get your housing allowance and book stipend.

If you have selected the Post-9/11 GI Bill, you can also receive a monthly housing allowance and a book stipend of up to \$1,000 per semester. The VA mails this check to you directly.

9. Head to class.

Now that your benefits are in order, it's time to focus on being a student. If you need help making the transition back to the classroom, reach out to other veterans in your school or contact organizations such as Student Veterans of America or the VA for helpful resources.

10. Stay informed.

Changes to the GI Bill can impact your benefits. Stay up-to-date about your benefits by taking advantage of your school's financial aid office, networking with other veterans, and getting information from sources such as the VA, veterans' service organizations and [GI Bill.com](#).