

How to Maintain Your Uniform

Blues

Beret:

Upon issue of your beret you should carry out the following steps to ensure that it is correctly moulded to the shape of your head, as it will be new and un-moulded.

1. Place your beret in hot water until all the blue material is covered.
2. **DO NOT** get the leather band wet as it will shrink in the hot water.
3. Place the beret on your head and form it.
4. Repeat the above steps once dry until the beret is moulded correctly.

Run a bowl of warm / hot water in a sink. Make sure the water is cool enough to put your hand in. Then dip the beret into the water ensuring the water does not go on the leather rim and manipulate the beret material in your hands roughly to soften it up.

You must make sure you keep the leather dry as it will shrink in the hot water.

Then take the beret out of the water and place it on your head keeping the badge above your left eye and the rim level around your head, just two finger widths above each eyebrow. Then take the right hand part of the beret pull the material over to the right and down to your right ear, keeping the badge standing upright from your head. Let the beret dry either on your head or on a flat surface ensuring the beret keeps its shape.

Repeat the above steps until the beret holds its shape.

Shirts:

When you are issued with your working blue and wedge wood shirts they must be ironed correctly, ensuring that there are creases in the correct places down each sleeve.

1. Start with the collar and iron both sides.
2. Then iron the sleeves and cuffs, ensuring the crease meets the epaulette in the middle.
3. Then iron the shoulders of the shirt.
4. Then iron the right front of the shirt ensuring you don't run over the buttons.
5. Then iron the back.
6. Then iron the left front.
7. Finally, hang the shirt up on a decent hanger that has good shoulder support to stop it from creasing across the shoulders.

When you are ironing your shirts you must make sure that you keep a very neat crease in the sleeves on the same crease every time, without putting in an extra crease known as a tramline.

Jumper:

The jumper itself takes very little care. There are only two things that need to be done to keep the jumper maintained.

1. Ensure the badges (DofE) are sewn on correctly.
2. Keep the jumper 'bobble' free (not fluffy).

To keep the jumper 'bobble' free you can use a disposable razor blade to lightly shave the surface of the jumper to get rid of the 'bobbles'. This doesn't need to be done often as long as good care is taken to keep the jumper clean.

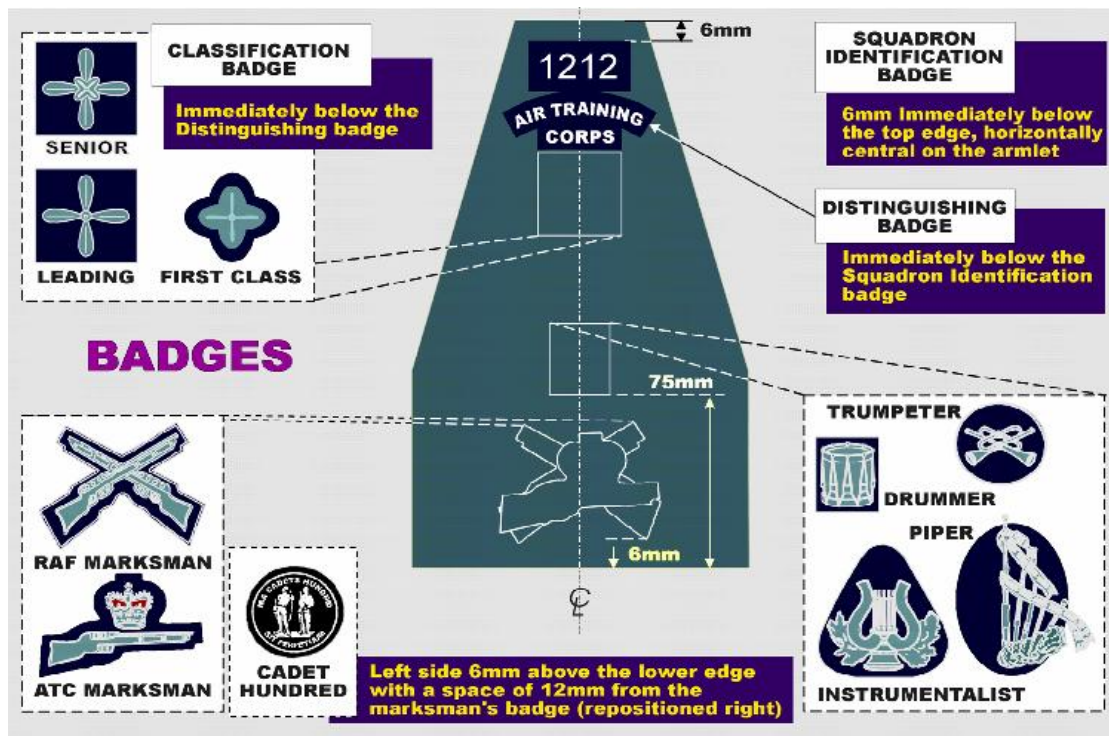
Brassard:

The brassard is also a very low maintenance piece of uniform but it is critical you get it right as it does display your badges.

1. Iron the back of the brassard to get a crease free finish.
2. See diagram below for badge placement.

When you iron your brassard iron the back of it, being careful not to iron over the elastic as it will burn and shrink. This should stop any creases being pressed into the sides of the brassard.

Badge placement is important on the brassard and is illustrated below. You may have to sew on more badges over time and in the process move others to fit new ones on.



Trousers:

The trousers that you are issued with as a cadet need to have neat creases pressed into the front and back of the trousers. These can be especially difficult to get right as the iron needs to pass over the original crease exactly so you don't iron in another crease called a tramline.

1. Start by laying the trousers across the ironing board one leg on top of the other.
2. Then iron the trousers keeping the creases in the right places.
3. Hang the trousers up on a hanger that allows them to hang to their full length unfolded.

When you iron the trousers you must ensure that you don't iron the material directly on the iron as the wool will scorch and go shiny. You must use something like a tea towel to iron through onto the trousers.

So when the trousers are laid out on the board, place the tea towel on top of the trousers ensuring you keep the creases in the right place. Then pressing down with the iron hard all along the leg ensuring the entire length is pressed.

The trousers crease must run all the way from the bottom to the top, on the back **AND** front.

Shoes:

Shoes are the only piece of uniform that cadets are not issued as standard when they join the ATC. They can be bought from most army surplus stores or off the internet.

Cadets will be required to keep their shoes clean and well polished. You can use the basic steps below to get a good shine and progress with more advanced steps once you get more confident.

1. Using Kiwi Parade Gloss brush the shoe all over with a soft bristled brush.
2. Then wet the brush slightly and brush again to bring out the shine.
3. Then using either cotton wool balls or a yellow duster, wet the end with water and apply a small amount of polish to the toe cap by rubbing the polish in small circles.
4. Keep spreading the polish over the toecap until the shine starts to come through and the water starts to soak in.
5. Once there is nothing but shiny polish on the toecap and no dull streaks, carefully wipe off any excess water.
6. Repeat the above steps until you have a good shine on the toecap.

Greens:

Olive Green T-Shirt:

The olive green t-shirt is not issued as uniform. They can be bought from any army surplus store and only need to be kept well ironed.

Soldier 95 Shirt:

The soldier 95 shirt is treated exactly the same as your blues shirts with a crease running all the way down each sleeve.

Soldier 95 Trousers:

The soldier 95 trousers are treated exactly the same as your blues trousers with a crease running all the way from the top to the bottom of the trouser legs on the front and on the back.

Boots:

Boots need to be kept clean and polished. They do not need to be buffed. They should be polished lightly by brushing.