

# The Chart Page

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## Uniform Respect

Among more than half of Americans, US military officers enjoy “very great” prestige. Fully 96 percent of Americans believe the occupation has at least some prestige. In fact, being a US military officer is the fifth most prestigious occupation in the country, behind only firefighter, scientist, teacher, and doctor. That is the result of an annual Harris Poll, released Aug. 1, which measures perceptions of 23 professions and occupations. On the prestige scale (see table below), officers wearing the military uniform rated higher than even

nurses, police officers, and clergy. They far surpassed those professionals at the bottom: bankers, actors, and real estate brokers. Moreover, the 25-year prestige trend for military officers shows a dramatic upswing. In 1982, according to Harris, the occupation got a “very great” prestige rating from only 22 percent of Americans. That figure has risen more or less steadily ever since, and finally broke the 50 percent mark last year. It rose from 51 to 52 percent in the most recent year.

	Very Great Prestige	Considerable Prestige	Some Prestige	Hardly Any Prestige At All	Not Sure/ Refused
	%	%	%	%	%
Firefighter	61	26	10	2	-
Scientist	54	28	13	4	*
Teacher	54	24	16	6	*
Doctor	52	35	12	1	-
<b>Military officer</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>*</b>
Nurse	50	29	17	4	-
Police officer	46	27	19	7	*
Priest/clergy	42	23	26	9	*
Farmer	41	16	26	17	-
Engineer	30	37	25	6	1
Member of Congress	26	32	23	17	2
Architect	23	33	39	6	*
Lawyer	22	20	41	17	*
Athlete	16	20	45	19	*
Business executive	14	28	42	15	*
Journalist	13	24	47	16	*
Union leader	13	20	36	30	1
Stockbroker	12	17	46	25	1
Entertainer	12	16	42	31	-
Accountant	11	25	48	16	1
Banker	10	28	45	17	*
Actor	9	19	34	38	-
Real estate agent/broker	5	18	43	34	*

Source: Harris Poll, “Most Prestigious Occupations,” released Aug. 1, 2007.

\* Less than .05%.

- No response.