

NDA 2026 Eligibility Criteria: Age, Height, Education & Nationality

The **National Defence Academy (NDA) 2026 examination**, conducted by the **Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)**, is the gateway for candidates aspiring to join the **Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force** as commissioned officers.

Before applying, it is extremely important to understand the **NDA 2026 eligibility criteria**, as even a small mismatch in age, education, or physical standards can lead to disqualification at later stages.

This article explains **NDA 2026 eligibility in detail**, covering **age limit, educational qualification, nationality, and height & physical standards**, along with FAQs at the end.

NDA 2026 Eligibility Criteria - Overview

To be eligible for NDA 2026, a candidate must satisfy **four mandatory conditions**:

1. **Nationality**
2. **Age Limit**
3. **Educational Qualification**
4. **Physical & Medical Standards (Height, Weight, Vision, etc.)**

Failure to meet **any one** of these criteria will result in rejection.

NDA 2026 Nationality Criteria

A candidate applying for NDA 2026 must be:

- A **Citizen of India**, or
- A **Subject of Nepal**, or
- A **Subject of Bhutan**, or
- A **Tibetan refugee** who came to India before 1 January 1962 with the intention of permanent settlement, or
- A **Person of Indian Origin (PIO)** who migrated from Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Zaire, Ethiopia, or Vietnam with the intention of permanently settling in India.

☐☐Candidates other than Indian citizens must produce a certificate of eligibility issued by the Government of India.

NDA 2026 Age Limit (Most Important Criteria)

Age is one of the **strictest eligibility conditions** for NDA.

NDA 1 2026 Age Limit

- Candidates must be **born between 2 July 2007 and 1 July 2010** (both dates inclusive)

NDA 2 2026 Age Limit

- Candidates must be **born between 2 January 2008 and 1 July 2011** (both dates inclusive)

Important Points

- ✓ Minimum age: **16.5 years**
- ✓ Maximum age: **19.5 years**
- ☐ No age relaxation for any category
- ☐ Married candidates are **not eligible**

NDA 2026 Educational Qualification

Educational eligibility depends on the **wing applied for**.

Wing-wise Educational Qualification

Wing	Required Qualification
Army Wing	12th pass from any recognized board
Air Force Wing	12th pass with Physics & Mathematics
Naval Wing	12th pass with Physics & Mathematics
Naval Academy	12th pass with Physics & Mathematics

☐☐ Candidates **appearing in Class 12** are also eligible to apply, provided they produce proof of passing during admission.

NDA 2026 Height & Physical Standards

Candidates must be **physically and medically fit** according to NDA standards.

Minimum Height Requirement

For Male Candidates

- Army & Navy: **157 cm**
- Air Force: **162.5 cm**

For Female Candidates

- Army & Navy: **152 cm**
- Air Force: **162.5 cm**

☐☐ Height relaxation is applicable for candidates from hilly regions and certain categories.

Weight Standards

Weight must be **proportionate to height and age** as per official medical standards. Overweight or underweight candidates may be declared **medically unfit**.

Chest Measurement (For Males)

- Minimum chest expansion: **5 cm**
- Chest should be well-developed

Vision Standards (Key Requirement)

- Normal vision standards apply
- No permanent body tattoos except permitted areas
- Candidates using spectacles are **not eligible for Air Force flying branch**

NDA 2026 Medical Standards - Key Points

- No history of mental illness
- No hearing impairment
- Normal blood pressure
- No permanent deformities
- No chronic diseases

Medical fitness is checked during the **SSB Medical Examination** stage.

NDA 2026 Marital Status Rules

- ✓ Only **unmarried** male and female candidates are eligible
- ☐ Marriage during training leads to **disqualification and discharge**

Who is NOT Eligible for NDA 2026?

- Married candidates
- Candidates outside the age limit
- Candidates without required educational subjects
- Medically unfit candidates
- Candidates with incorrect details in application form

Why NDA Eligibility Criteria Are Strict?

The NDA training is **physically demanding, mentally challenging, and discipline-oriented**. Strict eligibility ensures that only candidates capable of handling **military life and leadership responsibilities** are selected.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q1. What is the minimum age for NDA 2026?

A: 16.5 years.

Q2. What is the maximum age limit for NDA?

A: 19.5 years.

Q3. Can girls apply for NDA 2026?

A: Yes, both male and female candidates are eligible.

Q4. Is Mathematics compulsory for NDA?

A: Mathematics is compulsory for all candidates. Physics & Maths are mandatory for Navy and Air Force.

Q5. Is there any height relaxation in NDA?

A: Yes, for candidates from hilly regions and certain categories.

Q6. Can 12th appearing students apply for NDA 2026?

A: Yes, they can apply provisionally.

Q7. Is there any category-wise age relaxation?

A: No, NDA does **not provide age relaxation**.

Q8. Are tattoos allowed in NDA?

A: Only small tattoos on permitted body parts are allowed.

Final Words

Understanding the **NDA 2026 eligibility criteria** is the first and most crucial step in your defence career journey. Before applying, carefully verify **age, education, height, and nationality** to avoid rejection at any stage.

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