SOFTWARE & TECH

Army 346 License Form

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Understanding the Army 346 License Form: A Complete Guide for Military Personnel

Driving or operating heavy equipment in the U.S. Army is a responsibility that demands precision, safety, and strict adherence to regulations. Whether you are a new recruit preparing for your first deployment or a seasoned non-commissioned officer overseeing a motor pool, the **Army 346 License Form** is a document you will encounter. This form serves as the official record for authorizing service members to operate government vehicles and equipment. In this comprehensive guide, we will explore everything you need to know about the Army 346 License Form, including its purpose, who needs it, how to obtain it, and common mistakes to avoid. By the end, you will have a clear understanding of why this form is critical for both safety and operational readiness.

What Is the Army 346 License Form?

The Army 346 License Form, officially known as **DA Form 346**, is the U.S. Army's standardized document for issuing, renewing, or documenting military vehicle operator licenses. It is part of the Army's licensing program governed by **AR 600-55** (Army Regulation for Driver and Equipment Operator Training and Licensing). The form captures essential information about the service member, the type of vehicle or equipment they are authorized to operate, and the expiration date of the license. While many soldiers refer to it simply as the "346 form," its official title is the **U.S. Army Test Control Officer's Record** — though it also functions as a license record for operators.

It is important to note that the Army 346 License Form is not a civilian driver's license. Instead, it specifically authorizes the operation of military tactical vehicles (such as HMMWV's, LMTV's, and heavy trucks), engineering equipment (like graders, loaders, and bulldozers), and other specialized fleet assets. Without a valid DA Form 346 on record, a soldier is not legally permitted to drive any Army-owned vehicle — even if they hold a valid state driver's license.

Who Needs the Army 346 License Form?

Any soldier whose duties require operating Army vehicles or equipment must possess a current, properly filed Army 346 License Form. This includes:

- Combat Arms personnel (infantry, armor, artillery) who drive tactical vehicles during field exercises.
- Motor transport operators (88M Military Occupational Specialty) whose primary job is driving heavy trucks and convoys.
- Engineer equipment operators (12N, 12T) who run graders, scrapers, and excavators.
- Maintenance and support soldiers who need to move vehicles around motor pools or work sites.
- Officers and NCOs who supervise vehicle operations and may need to drive during inspections.

Even if you only occasionally drive an Army vehicle during annual training or a deployment, you must have a completed and approved DA Form 346 on file with your unit's licensing section. Additionally, each vehicle category requires its own endorsement on the form. For example, driving a light tactical vehicle (like a HMMWV) is one category, while operating a heavy wrecker requires a separate qualification.

Why the Army 346 License Form Matters

The importance of the Army 346 License Form cannot be overstated. First and foremost, it is a **safety requirement**

. Military vehicles are often larger, heavier, and far more powerful than civilian automobiles. They operate in hazardous environments, including rough terrain, combat zones, and congested training areas. The licensing process ensures that every operator has passed a comprehensive training program, a written examination, and a hands-on driving test specific to each vehicle type.

From an administrative perspective, the form provides a clear audit trail. If an accident occurs, the unit's safety officer can immediately verify whether the driver was properly licensed. Failure to produce a valid DA Form 346 can result in severe disciplinary actions under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), including fines, rank reduction, or even court-martial. Additionally, units that cannot demonstrate accurate licensing records may fail safety inspections, leading to operational delays or loss of privileges.

Finally, the Army 346 License Form directly supports force readiness. A well-maintained licensing program ensures that the right soldiers are trained and certified to operate the equipment their mission requires. Without this system, commanders would not know who is qualified to drive which vehicle — a dangerous uncertainty in any operation.

Step-by-Step Guide to Obtaining an Army 346 License

The process of getting your Army 346 License Form completed can seem intimidating, but breaking it down into clear steps makes it manageable. Follow this guide to ensure you meet all requirements.

Before you do anything else, identify the specific vehicles or equipment your duties require. Each type has a unique license code. Common codes include:

- Code A (Light Wheeled Vehicle) — sedans, pickup trucks, SUVs, up to 1 ton capacity.
- Code B (Medium Wheeled Vehicle) — 2.5 ton and 5 ton cargo trucks like the LMTV and FMTV.
- Code C (Heavy Wheeled Vehicle) — heavy equipment transporters, tank retrievers, and tractor trailer combinations.
- Code E (Engineering Equipment) — bulldozers, graders, backhoes, scrapers.
- Code F (Forklift) — material handling equipment.

Your supervisor or unit licensing NCO can help you identify the exact codes you need.

The Army mandates that all operators undergo training before testing. This typically includes:

- Classroom instruction on vehicle safety, preventive maintenance, and Army driving regulations.
- Hands-on training under the supervision of a qualified instructor or senior operator.
- Completion of any prerequisite online courses (e.g., the Army Training and Certification system or the Driver's Training Course).

Training hours vary by vehicle complexity. For a simple light wheeled vehicle, a few hours may suffice. For heavy equipment, you might need several days of practice.

Once training is complete, you must pass a **written test** covering vehicle specifications, safety regulations, and emergency procedures. The test is usually administered by a unit Test Control Officer (TCO). After passing the written portion, you will take a **practical driving test** in the actual vehicle. The evaluator will check your ability to perform a pre operation inspection (PMCS), drive safely in traffic or off road, park, and maneuver in confined spaces. You must achieve a score of at least 80% to pass each component.

After passing both exams, the Test Control Officer (or your unit's licensing clerk) will fill out **DA Form 346**. The form will include:

- Your full name, rank, and SSN (or DOD ID number).
- The vehicle code(s) you are licensed for.

- The date of the test and the expiration date (typically 4 years for most licenses).
- Signatures from the TCO and your commander or their designee.

Make sure all information is accurate before signing. Errors could delay processing or cause the form to be rejected during an audit.

The completed DA Form 346 is typically filed in your unit's master licensing file. Some units also issue a **pocket-sized license card**(SF 46 or a locally generated card) that you can carry while on duty. Keep this card with you whenever you operate government vehicles. The form itself remains in your unit's records.

Remember that your license is not permanent. It must be renewed before the expiration date. Renewal usually requires a refresher course and a new practical test, though some units allow an abbreviated process for good drivers.

Common Mistakes to Avoid When Handling DA Form 346

Even experienced soldiers can make errors with the Army 346 License Form. Avoiding these pitfalls will save you time and prevent administrative headaches.

1. Driving without a valid form: Never operate an Army vehicle if your DA Form 346 has expired or if you do not have it on file. Even moving a vehicle a few feet in a motor pool can result in an Article 15 if caught.
2. Using the wrong vehicle code: Your license only applies to the specific codes listed on the form. If you need to drive a different type of vehicle, you must go through the testing process again for that code.
3. Allowing the form to expire: Mark your calendar! Many soldiers forget to renew until they are stopped by a safety inspector. Set a reminder at least 60 days before the expiration date.
4. Omitting signatures: DA Form 346 requires both the TCO and commander signatures. An unsigned form is invalid. Always double check before filing.
5. Losing your license card: While the official record is on file, losing your card can delay operations. Report a lost card immediately and request a replacement from your licensing NCO.

How the Army 346 License Form Integrates with Army Safety Programs

The Army 346 License Form is not a standalone document; it is part of a broader safety ecosystem. It connects to the **Army Accident Avoidance Program**, the **Motor Vehicle Accident Prevention Program**, and the **Ground Risk Management**process. When a unit conducts a risk assessment for a convoy or field exercise, one of the first things they verify is that every driver has a current DA Form 346. This ensures that no untrained operator is placed behind the wheel of a vehicle that could cause injury or damage.

Furthermore, the form supports the Army's **Digital Training Management System (DTMS)** and the **Army Training and Certification System (ATACS)**, which allow commanders to track licensing status across the unit. In recent years, the Army has moved toward digitizing many licensing records, but the DA Form 346 remains the authoritative hard copy source. Keeping a physical copy in your record jacket is still mandatory in most units.

Frequently Asked Questions About the Army 346 License Form

Q: Can I use my civilian driver's license instead?

No. A civilian license is not a substitute for the Army 346 License Form. However, a valid state driver's license is often a prerequisite before you can begin training for an Army license, especially for light wheeled vehicles.

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