

How to Say "Thanks for Your Service" to a Veteran

How to Say 'Thanks for Your Service' to someone who's a Stranger or Acquaintance

When considering ways to thank a person you don't know too well, try to give it some context. By that, let them know that there's some backstory to your words instead of the empty words they hear.

1. 'My family comes from a long military background, so I just wanted to thank you for your sacrifice.'

Here's a relatable way to express that you're familiar with the Military and that you're also grateful for their service. If it sparks a conversation, that's even better.

2. 'Sorry to interrupt, but my brother also served in the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict. Can I buy that beer for you?'

After you have discovered a connection and decide that buying a beer for someone is a great way to say thank you, offer to cover this round or the next.

3. Shake their hand. Look them in the eye.

For some generations, a firm handshake and good eye contact, followed by a thank you is the most respectful way to show gratitude. You'll probably want to ask if you can shake their hand first.

4. Give them a day off on Veteran's Day

If you have a dependable employee who's also a veteran, consider giving them a paid day off to thank them for this Veteran's Day. After all, anyone who served 24/7, 365, and risked their life for their country deserves a few kickbacks, right?

5. Nod your head

If you recognize a veteran (one wearing a "hat" or poppy pin or anything else that stands out) or a current military member in uniform but don't know what to say, make a noticeable gesture. Just make eye contact so they know—the recognition will speak volumes.

Ideas for Saying 'Thanks for Your Service' on Social Media

Social media provides us the opportunity to rally support for a cause. So, when veteran holidays come around, take the time to use your platform to both show your support as well as tell your story.

1. 'Happy Veteran's Day, Dad!'

Although he may no longer be around, you can still honor your dad posthumously. But why stop there? You can send gratitude to every single member of your family who has served.

2. Post a picture of the US flag

If nothing else, a simple but powerful statement would be posting a picture of the US flag followed by as many #hashtags as you like.

3. Expressions of gratitude

Instead of thanking someone in particular, start a group conversation about how veterans have positively impacted people in your circle.

4. 'To all the Sailors, Marines, Soldiers, Airmen, Guardians, and Coast Guardsman, our thoughts and prayers are with you'

As a military spouse, remembering the people in your partner's wheelhouse speaks for your support of the whole boat locker (and the like).

While this descriptive sentiment was written for Sailors, you may want to elaborate on whichever branch they served in.

5. 'On behalf [business] and our employees, we would like to thank all service members for your sacrifice to protect our employees and the American way of life.'

As a business, you may want to recognize the contribution of the US service members who've sacrificed their lives to ensure that you have the future privileges of commerce and enterprise.

6. 'Thank you.'

Sometimes the simplest words speak more volumes than the needling of responses. So, rather than patronize or expect a response, just let the words speak for themselves.

How to Say 'Thanks for Your Service' in a Card or Text

When absent from the military member's circle on federal holidays, you may want to send a card or text that voices your gratitude. Here are a few ways to consider doing so.

1. 'You're my hero.'

Has your brother or sister served their country? A short and sweet text will make their day, assuming they already know your thoughts and beliefs.

2. 'I have my freedoms because of you.'

Here's a message that's a bit more formal and would work for an aunt or uncle who has served in the Military.

1. 'Your service made it possible for all of us to be the country we are today.'

Even more formal, this message works well for any parent or grandparent on your list.

2. 'Thinking of you today. What you gave was the ultimate show of friendship.'

Whether you're an active duty service member or a buddy from back home, it's nice to hear from people who believe in you.

3. 'We miss you at home, but we know you're giving the ultimate sacrifice.'

If your friend is deployed, any message from back home will give them comfort.