

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

THUNDERBIRDS – GENERAL

Q1. What is the mission of the Thunderbirds?

A1. The mission of the Thunderbirds is to support U.S. Air Force recruiting and retention programs and to reinforce public confidence in the U.S. Air Force and demonstrate to the public the professional competence of Air Force professionals. The Thunderbirds also represent the United States and its armed forces to foreign nations and project international goodwill.

Q2. How many people attend this type of event?

A2. More than 26 million people attend more than 400 air shows annually. During the past decade, air shows drew nearly twice the attendance figures of NFL football games.

Q3. Are Thunderbirds the best in the Air Force?

A3. All Thunderbirds are representative of the excellence and professionalism found throughout the Air Force. Thunderbirds consider themselves lucky to represent the best - those serving around the world.

Q4. What kind of aircraft do the Thunderbirds fly?

A4. The Thunderbirds fly the Lockheed Martin F-16 Fighting Falcon. The F-16 Fighting Falcon is a compact, multirole fighter aircraft. It is highly maneuverable and has proven itself in air-to-air combat and air-to-surface attack. It provides a relatively low-cost, high-performance weapon system for the United States and allied nations.

Q5. How Many Thunderbirds are there?

A5. Members of the Thunderbirds are volunteers drawn Air Force-wide from their respective career fields. There are 12 officers; eight pilots -- six who fly the demonstrations and four support officers. More than 120 enlisted people are on the support team. They come together, combining their experience and skills to form a self-sufficient flying organization capable of planning, accomplishing and supporting the Thunderbird mission.

Q6. Why don't the Blue Angels and the Thunderbirds fly together?

A6. Current Department of Defense policy is to maximize use of military aviation demonstration teams for recruiting and to demonstrate U.S. military aviation abilities to the public. This is best accomplished by having the Air Force and Navy flight demonstration teams perform separately in as many locations as possible throughout the year. However, the Thunderbirds do perform at air shows with the U.S. Army parachute demonstration team, the Golden Knights, as do the Blue Angels.

AIRSHOW 2017

Q7. When is the 2017 Airpower of Altus Airshow?

A7. The Airshow is open to the public September 9, 2017, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The practice show on 8 September is for DoD ID card holders personnel only from 10:45 to 4 p.m.

Q8. How much is the event?

A8. Admission to the Airshow is FREE to all.

Q9. Where do we park? And how much is it?

A9a. For non-military or DoD members, the primary parking area (accessed through the South Gate via 62) will be on the aircraft parking ramp. Follow the traffic guidance after entering the gate. For security, lock your vehicle and follow all parking attendant instructions.

A9b. For military and DoD card holders, please enter through the Main Gate and follow all traffic guidance after entering the gate. The auxiliary parking areas for DoD are the Base Exchange and Commissary parking lots. Parking is free. For security, lock your vehicle and follow all parking attendant instructions.

Q10. Is it safe to come to the Airshow?

A10. Safety is always a priority at airshows. Altus AFB works very closely with local and federal authorities to ensure safety and follows and enforces all security rules and regulations required. You will notice extra security at the airshow, both military and civilian.

Q11. What are the changes to the Airpower over Altus Airshow security?

A11. Containers such as backpacks and coolers will be prohibited on the airfield. Some exceptions will be made for items such as diaper bags, purses, and folding chairs, but all items will be inspected by security personnel. Weapons are strictly prohibited. Weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, blades (including pocket knives), and blunt objects. Patrons with firearms will be asked to leave the installation or their weapons will be confiscated and will not be returned.

Q12. Will there be security checks of personal belongings?

A12. For the safety of all attendees, ALL vehicles, persons and their property are subject to search upon entering Altus AFB. Prior to entering the spectator area, personnel will be asked to provide a state-or government-issued identification card and will process through security screening stations. Federal and/or state issued ID cards include but are not limited to state driver's license, state identification card, immigration card, Department of Defense ID card, and retired military ID card. All personnel and belongings are subject to search.

Q13. What time do the gates open?

A13a. Gates open 9 a.m. Saturday, September 10. Inbound access to parking areas will close at 3 p.m. to transition to outward traffic flow only.

A13b. Tailgating on/off base is not allowed.

Q14. When will the flying begin?

A14. Aerial demonstration performances are scheduled to begin at 11:30 a.m. but there are plenty of aircraft and entertainment to see beginning at 9 a.m. The schedule is always subject to change; please see the most up to date information on our website.

Q15. Where can I find a schedule of events?

A15. The schedule will be posted at <http://www.altus.af.mil/Airshow2017.aspx>

Q16. Does the airshow still take place when it rains or if there is inclement weather?

A16. Yes, but demonstrations may not, depending on the severity of weather conditions.

Q17. Can I bring guests in with my DoD ID card (ie, non-DoD employees) on Friday?

A17. DoD members may escort as many non-DoD members as will fit with seatbelts, in their own vehicle to the South Gate entrance.

Q18. Where do we park for the event Friday (DoD personnel only), and what time may I show up?

A18a. Drive in the main gate from Falcon Road and take the second exit on the round-about to L Avenue. Drive down L Avenue to the ID cardholder parking area marked with event parking signs. Parking staff will be present to assist and direct.

A18b. Parking will be open at 10:15 a.m., but do not expect to enter the ramp prior to 10:30, as setup will still be occurring.

Q19. *Can I park off base and walk through the gate?*

A19. Unfortunately, there are no parking lots available, and due to security restrictions there is no foot traffic permitted through any gate. All audiences must park somewhere on the installation

Q20. *Will the shuttle buses run from local communities?*

A20. There will not be shuttle buses in the community. There is ample parking on base for the general public. ALL General Public will need to enter through the South Commercial gate off of Highway 62.

Q21. *Will the shuttle buses run from on base parking to the Airshow?*

A21. One shuttle bus will run from the BX and Commissary to the Airshow main entrance, however this bus is for DOD/ ID cardholders only. If they prefer not to ride the shuttle, they have the option to follow the signs south to the DOD/ID section of general parking.

Q22. *Where can I park for the Airshow?*

A22a. DOD/ID holders only can enter through the Falcon Rd Gate, there will be a 100% ID check. EITHER, they can then park at the BX/Commissary parking lot and ride the shuttle, OR they can follow the signs south to the DOD/ID section of general parking.

A22b. The General Public will need to enter through the South Commercial gate off of Highway 62. They will be directed to the general parking lot immediately ahead. It is requested that no one park on Highway 62, as it causes traffic flow problems on the Highway. Oklahoma Highway Patrollers will enforce this.

Q23. *Are we allowed to bring in chairs or is there seating available?*

A23. There will be bleachers available for seating but space cannot be guaranteed. Visitors are allowed to bring folding chairs to place near viewing areas only.

Q24. *Will there be specific parking and seating for the handicapped?*

A24a. Yes, there will be handicapped parking very close to the air show ramp. Bleachers will also be available near the front of the crowd line to the right of the Thunderbirds for anyone to use. Wheelchairs are allowed for handicapped personnel. Properly identified vehicles (handicap placard or handicap license plate) will be directed to handicap parking areas.

A24b. Unfortunately, we do not have shuttle service to/from drop off/pickup locations to the seating area due to foot traffic and aircraft proximity. Handicap parking is in close proximity to the entry area. If you require assistance, please notify a security official or staff member.

Q25. *Are pets allowed?*

A25. Pets are NOT allowed with the exception of those specifically trained to assist the disabled.

Q26. *Can individuals with development disabilities attend the air show on Friday?*

A26. Only if they are properly escorted by a DoD authorized member.

Q27. *Do I need an ID?*

A27. Yes, a state or government issued ID is required.

Q28. *What is the process of getting through the gates?*

A28. DOD/ID cardholders may use the main gate or south gate for access to the air show. Everyone without a DOD/ID card must use the south gate for entrance. For security and safety of the base populous and for those attending, all guests will go through a screening process prior to being allowed onto the installation. To speed up this process we recommend trying to limit the size of bags and purses and to leave all contraband and prohibited items at home.

Q29. Can members of the public (non-press) bring video cameras or photo cameras to the 2017 Airpower over Altus Airshow?

A29. Yes, members of the public are allowed to bring cameras.

Q30. What time do the gates open on Friday and Saturday?

A30a. Gates are scheduled to open Friday, Sept. 9 for DoD only at 10:15, with aerial demonstration practice from 10:45 a.m. to 4 p.m.

A30b. The gates are scheduled to open Saturday, Sept. 10 for the public Airshow at 9 a.m. and are slated to close at 6 p.m., with aerial demonstrations starting at 11:30 a.m.

Q31. I have small children. Can I bring a stroller/diaper bag/clothes change/etc.?

A31. Yes. Strollers will be hand-searched at the security checkpoint. Please bring only necessary items in a small diaper bag, subject to hand-search at the security checkpoint. Large diaper bags will not be permitted. You can return to your vehicle during the show to get extra clothes, restock diaper items, etc.

Q32. How can my company become a sponsor?

A32. A considerable amount of support is needed to put on an event as large as the Airshow and many opportunities exist to help out. If you are interested in participating and would like more information about becoming a sponsor or a donor, please contact our Publicity and Sponsorship office at 580-481-1310.

Q33. Who can I call for information about the Wings of Freedom Airshow?

A33. For additional information please check our web site <http://www.altus.af.mil/Airshow2017.aspx>, or call the base Public Affairs office at 580-481-7700.

Q34. What attire should I consider?

A34. On Saturday, all Altus AFB military personnel will wear the uniform of the day. We recommend wearing sunscreen and sunglasses, a hat, and comfortable shoes. Whatever your choice, come prepared to be in the elements.

A34b. On Friday, unless you are working, uniform or any appropriate civilian attire is acceptable.

Q35. Can I bring a fanny pack?

A35. Small fanny packs are permitted, subject to approval by gate security personnel and a hand-search at the security checkpoint.

Q36. Can I bring a purse?

A36. Small purses are permitted, subject to approval by gate security personnel and a hand-search at the security checkpoint.

Q37. Can I bring a cooler, water, drinks and/or food?

A37. Please do not attempt to bring a cooler any day. On Friday, food and beverages will be allowed, as no concessions will be available. You are allowed to bring in one bottle of clear non-alcoholic beverage in a clear "see-through" plastic container to the event. The concessions will have additional bottled water for sale and water refill stations located throughout the airshow. All items brought are subject to approval by gate security personnel and a hand-search at security checkpoint.

Q38. Can I take pictures or get autographs?

A38. Yes. Many of the performers make themselves available for autographs and pictures during the show.

Q39. Will there be any food, drink, or souvenirs available?

A39. There will be concessions at the 2017 Wings of Freedom Airshow on Saturday only. Vendors will have food, drink, and memorabilia items for purchase. There will be no food, beverages or sale items available Friday.

Q40. *Are credit cards accepted?*

A40. No—we recommend bringing enough cash to cover expenses for the day. ATMs may be available but are not guaranteed.

Q41. *Can I bring bikes, heelies, roller blades or skateboards?*

A41. No. Bicycles, roller skates, skateboards, heelies and roller blades are not allowed on the ramp, flightline or hangar areas.

Q42. *What other items are prohibited?*

A42. Firearms, knives (including pocket knives and all-purpose tools, i.e. Leatherman), large golf umbrellas, scanners, backpacks, coolers, and large bags. Alcohol, flammable liquids and drugs are also strictly prohibited. The following items are allowed but will be searched: purses, diaper bags if accompanying a child, and camera bags. See the list of prohibited items at our website <http://www.altus.af.mil/Airshow2017.aspx>.

Q43. *If I cannot bring something in, can I go out to my car during the show?*

A43. Yes. Since the show has no admission fee, you may leave and re-enter as you desire. Anyone re-entering will be required to go through security screening again.

Q44. *Is smoking allowed?*

A44. Unfortunately, there is no smoking allowed on the flightline, this include e-cigarettes as well.

Q45. *Will restroom facilities be easily accessible?*

A45. Yes. Portable restrooms will be located throughout the air show grounds. Several will be located near parking areas and along high-traffic routes.

Q46. *Will it be necessary to have hearing protection?*

A46. This event will have aircraft that take off, land, and perform. Hearing protection should be the same as you would use at any event that will be extremely loud. Visitors to the Airshow are encouraged to bring some form of hearing protection with them.

Q47. *What if I need to go to the Commissary or BX while the Airshow is going on? What gate is best to enter?*

A47. To expedite flow for the public visiting the Airshow, traffic entering the South Gate will be routed to the Airshow parking areas only. Only authorized individuals will be able to use facilities such as the Commissary or Base Exchange. Only military and DoD card holders can enter using the Main Gate. Expect delays and re-routes from your normal route as Airshow traffic will be isolated from the rest of the base.

Q48. *Will recruiters be at the airshow if I or my child want to learn more or enlist? Which services will have recruiters available?*

A48. Presently, it does look like recruiting services will be available for the Army and the Air Force.