AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION'S

CYBERPATRIOT

NATIONAL YOUTH CYBER EDUCATION PROGRAM

How it Works | The National Youth Cyber Defense Competition

CyberPatriot is the premier national youth cyber defense competition created to inspire high school and middle school students toward careers in cybersecurity and other STEM disciplines critical to our nation's future.

What makes up a team?

Coach: The team coach is typically a teacher or adult leader of a team-sponsoring school or youth organization. Coaches need no special technical background. Any individual with the desire to help students learn something new, exciting and relevant can be a great CyberPatriot coach!

Competitors: The team roster must have between two to six competitors (five active, one substitute). Competitors must be registered with the CyberPatriot Program Office and must be enrolled with the school or organization they are competing with. All cyber teaching materials are provided and no prior cybersecurity knowledge is required for a competitor to be successful.

Technical Mentor (Optional): In cases where a team desires help with the provided online training or with specific topics, the coach may request assistance from the CyberPatriot Program Office in finding qualified technical mentors from our program. Technical mentors are registered volunteers who possess appropriate IT knowledge and skills. Background checks are performed on all technical mentors in our network.

Teams compete in three divisions:

- **Open Division:** High schools, scouting units, boys and girls clubs, home school programs across the country, and other youth organizations upon approval from CyberPatriot Program Office
- **All Service Division:** High school JROTC / Civil Air Patrol / Naval Sea Cadet Corps
- **Middle School Division:** Open to teams of middle school students (typically grades 6-8)

What are the technical requirements?

Two to three computers and an Internet connection are required for occasional weekend use during the online portions of the competition. A full list of hardware and software requirements is available on www.uscyberpatriot.org. For teams needing alternate Internet connection, CyberPatriot provides a limited number of AT&T 3G Air Cards. These are provided on needs/first come-first serve basis.

Is there a registration fee? What does the fee cover?

There is a $205 registration fee for each high school team and a $165 fee for each middle school team registered for the competition, with the exception of the following fee waiver opportunities:

- **All-female teams:** In an effort to attract more girls to STEM, all-female teams pay no fee
- **Title I Schools:** Teams from Title I schools and other schools with inadequate funding may request fee waivers
- **All Service Division:** JROTC/CAP/NSCC team fees are automatically waived given an agreement with service HQs

Every registered coach, competitor, and technical mentor receives access to the Microsoft Imagine store as well as to Cisco's Networking Academy. These programs allows the team to download a number of operating systems and productivity tools that can be used to prepare for the competition, a benefit that alone is worth several thousand dollars. Additionally, participants are sent a CyberPatriot t-shirt, and commemorative coin during the season.

Team registration for CyberPatriot XI (2018-2019) opens April 1, 2018.

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What training materials are needed?

Although coaches are welcome to supplement the provided teaching materials as they wish, all materials necessary for a successful competition are provided on the CyberPatriot website. Teachers (and other coaches) are encouraged to use the provided materials not solely for use in preparing their team for competition, but also to educate all students in their school or organization about good cybersecurity practices and safe computer and Internet use.

How does the competition work?

The early rounds of the competition are done online during weekends from the teams' home locations (schools, homes, libraries, etc.).

Prior to the rounds, teams download "virtual image" representations of operating systems with known cybersecurity "vulnerabilities." At the beginning of the round, a password to unlock the virtual image is sent out. Teams then choose any 6-hour period during the designated round to compete, finding and fixing the cybersecurity vulnerabilities while keeping critical computer functions working. Team progress is recorded by a central CyberPatriot scoring system.

For the Open and All Service divisions, the scores from two online qualification rounds are added together to determine team placement into one of three tiers for the State Round: Platinum, Gold, or Silver. These tiers have cybersecurity challenges of different degrees of complexity, with Platinum being the tier with the highest degree of difficulty and the only tier where teams have the opportunity to advance to the National Finals competition. After the online State Round, the top teams in each state advance to the Semifinals.

Following the Semifinals, the top 12 Open Division teams and top two teams from each All Service Division category (Air Force/Army/Marine Corps/Navy JROTC, CAP, NSCC) and one wild card team advance, all-expenses paid, to the in-person National Finals Competition held in Baltimore, Md. There, the Finalists compete face-to-face against other teams in their division to defend virtual networks from a professional aggressor team. Winners are awarded scholarship grants.

The competition is slightly different at the middle school level. There are no skill tiers in the Middle School Division, and all teams compete against each other for the full duration of the season. After three qualifying rounds, the top 50% of teams advance to the Semifinals. From there, the top three teams advance to the National Finals Competition.

Questions? Visit **www.uscyberpatriot.org** to learn more!

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