**Fort Carson**

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| **Fort Carson** |
| [El Paso](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El_Paso_County%2C_Colorado) / [Pueblo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pueblo_County%2C_Colorado) / [Fremont](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fremont_County%2C_Colorado) counties, outside of [Colorado Springs, Colorado](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colorado_Springs%2C_Colorado) |
| Shoulder sleeve insignia of units stationed at Fort Carson |
| **Type** | Army post |
| **Built** | January 31, 1942 |
| **In use** | 1942–present |
| **Controlled by** | United States |
| **Garrison** | [4th Infantry Division](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/4th_Infantry_Division_%28United_States%29)[10th Special Forces Group](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/10th_Special_Forces_Group) |

**Fort Carson** is a [United States Army](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Army) installation located near [Colorado Springs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colorado_Springs%2C_Colorado), primarily in [El Paso County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El_Paso_County%2C_Colorado), [Colorado](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colorado). It is 40 miles (64 km) north of [Pueblo, Colorado](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pueblo%2C_Colorado) in [Pueblo County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pueblo_County%2C_Colorado). The 137,000-acre (550 km2) installation extends south into Pueblo and Fremont counties. The portion of the installation located within El Paso County forms a [census-designated place](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Census-designated_place) (CDP), which had a population of 13,813 at the [2010 census](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010_United_States_Census).[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Carson#cite_note-Census_2010-0#cite_note-Census_2010-0) Fort Carson is the home of the [4th Infantry Division](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/4th_Infantry_Division_%28United_States%29), the [10th Special Forces Group](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/10th_Special_Forces_Group_%28United_States%29), the [71st Ordnance Group (EOD)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/71st_Ordnance_Group_%28EOD%29), the [4th Engineer Battalion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/4th_Engineer_Battalion_%28United_States%29), the [759th Military Police Battalion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/759th_Military_Police_Battalion), the [10th Combat Support Hospital](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/10th_Combat_Support_Hospital), the [43rd Sustainment Brigade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/43rd_Sustainment_Brigade_%28United_States%29), and the [13th Air Support Operations Squadron](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/13th_Air_Support_Operations_Squadron) of the [United States Air Force](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Force). The post also hosts units of the Army Reserve, Navy Reserve and the Colorado Army National Guard.

**History**

Fort Carson was established in 1942, following Japan's attack on [Pearl Harbor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pearl_Harbor). The city of Colorado Springs, Colorado purchased land south of the city and donated it to the War Department. Construction began immediately and the first building, the camp headquarters, was completed January 31, 1942. Camp Carson was named in honor of the legendary Army scout, General [Christopher "Kit" Carson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher_%22Kit%22_Carson), who explored much of the West in the 1800s.

Training on a [37 mm anti-tank gun](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/37_mm_Gun_M3) at Camp Carson

At the construction's peak, nearly 11,500 workers were employed on various construction projects at the new camp. Facilities were provided for 35,173 enlisted men, 1,818 officers and 592 nurses. Nearly all of the buildings were of mobilization type construction, with wood sided exteriors. The hospital complex was constructed of concrete block, and considered to be semi-permanent, and had space for 1,726 beds, expandable to 2,000 beds. The [89th Infantry Division](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/89th_Infantry_Division_%28United_States%29) was the first major unit to be activated at Camp Carson. During World War II, over 100,000 soldiers trained at Camp Carson. Along with three other infantry divisions – the [71st Infantry Division](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/71st_Infantry_Division_%28United_States%29), [104th Infantry Division](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/104th_Infantry_Division_%28United_States%29) and [10th Mountain Division](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/10th_Mountain_Division_%28United_States%29)–more than 125 units were activated at Camp Carson and more than 100 others were transferred to the Mountain post from other installations.

Nurses, cooks, mule packers, tank battalions, a Greek infantry battalion, and an Italian ordnance company trained at Camp Carson during the war years. Camp Carson was also home to nearly 9,000 Axis prisoners of war – mostly Italians and Germans. The internment camp at Camp Carson opened on the first day of 1943. These POWs alleviated the manpower shortage in Colorado by doing general farm work, canning tomatoes, cutting corn, and aiding in logging operations on Colorado's Western Slope.

Between 1942 and 1956, pack mules were a common sight at Camp Carson. The first shipment arrived by train from Nebraska in July 1942. The mules were used by Field Artillery (Pack) battalions to carry equipment, weapons and supplies over mountainous terrain. The most famous of these animals was Hambone, the pride of the [4th Field Artillery Regiment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/4th_Field_Artillery_Regiment_%28United_States%29). For 13 years, he carried First Sergeants up Ute Pass to [Camp Hale](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camp_Hale). Camp Hale, located near [Leadville, Colorado](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leadville%2C_Colorado), was where the Army conducted cold weather and mountain warfare training. Hambone died in March 1971, and was buried with full military honors.

Activity at Camp Carson was greatly reduced following the end of World War II. By April 1946, the military strength at the Mountain Post had dropped to around 600. It appeared that Camp Carson would be closed. With the onset of the Korean War, however, activity once again increased. Many Reserve and National Guard units were called to active duty and stationed at Camp Carson during this time.

Camp Carson became "Fort Carson" in 1954. In the 1960s, mechanized units were assigned to the Mountain Post. At that time additional training land was purchased, bringing the post to its current size of 137,000 acres (570 km²). Fort Carson also has its own aviation facility, Butts Army Air Field, which was constructed between 1963 and 1966. The facility primarily supports helicopters and has extensive landing pad facilities, as well as a 4,573-foot (1,394 m) runway for light fixed-wing aircraft such as the [C-12](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-12). Heavier fixed-wing military aircraft supporting Fort Carson, such as USAF [C-130s](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-130), will typically operate from nearby [Peterson AFB](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peterson_AFB).[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Carson#cite_note-1#cite_note-1)[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Carson#cite_note-2#cite_note-2)

Throughout its history Fort Carson has been home to nine divisions. An additional training area, comprising 235,000 acres (959 km²), was purchased in September 1983. Named the [Piñon Canyon Maneuver Site](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pi%C3%B1on_Canyon_Maneuver_Site), this training area is located approximately 150 miles (240 km) road miles to the southeast, and is used for large force-on-force maneuver training. Comprehensive maneuver and live fire training also occurs downrange at Fort Carson.

One of the entrance signs at Fort Carson

Exercises and deployments continually hone the skills of Fort Carson soldiers. When not deployed, soldiers train annually at Piñon Canyon Maneuver Site and the National Training Center near Barstow, California. Additionally, units participate in joint exercises around the world, including Central and South Africa, Europe, and Southwest Asia. In 2003, most Fort Carson units were deployed in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Troops from the 984th Military Police CO, 759th Military Police BN were also sent in support of the guard mission at [Guantanamo Bay Naval Base](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guantanamo_Bay_Naval_Base), Cuba. President George W. Bush addressed soldiers and family members at the post on November 24, 2003, in praise of the soldiers' determination and the sacrifices their families have made.

Fort Carson's beautiful scenery has made it one of the most requested duty stations in the U.S. Army. It is considered the second most popular CONUS duty station, after [Fort Lewis, Washington](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Lewis%2C_Washington), and adopted "Best Hometown in the Army" as its motto in 2007.

Fort Carson has undergone a construction boom in 2007 and 2008 in preparation for the return of the 4th Infantry Division (4ID) from Fort Hood, Texas. The 4ID will set up headquarters at Fort Carson after returning from their 2008 deployment to [Operation Iraqi Freedom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Iraqi_Freedom). Arrival of the 4ID (headquarters and a heavy brigade) will bring with it approximately 5,000 additional soldiers to Fort Carson.

**Geography**

Fort Carson is located at 38°44'45" North, 104°47'6" West (38.745744, −104.784907). It is located in [Pueblo County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pueblo_County), El Paso County, and [Fremont County](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fremont_County%2C_Colorado).

According to the [United States Census Bureau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Census_Bureau), the CDP has a total area of 8.7 square miles (22.6 km2), all land.

**Demographics**

As of the [census](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Census) of 2000, there were 10,566 people, 1,679 households, and 1,620 families residing in the CDP (the number increased to 13,183 by [2010](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Census%2C_2010)). The [population density](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Population_density) was 1,126.8 people per square mile (434.9/km²). There were 2,664 housing units at an average density of 196.8 per square mile (75.9/km²). The racial makeup of the CDP was 62.8% [White](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_%28U.S._Census%29), 20.0% [African American](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_American_%28U.S._Census%29), 2.1% [Asian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asian_%28U.S._Census%29), 1.7% [Native American](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_American_%28U.S._Census%29), 0.8% [Pacific Islander](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific_Islander_%28U.S._Census%29), 7.9% from [other races](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Race_%28U.S._Census%29), and 3.8% from two or more races. [Hispanic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispanic_%28U.S._Census%29) or [Latino](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latino_%28U.S._Census%29) of any race were 15.4% of the population.

There were 1,679 households out of which 84.9% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 85.4% were [married couples](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marriage) living together, 9.7% had a female householder with no husband present, and 3.5% were non-families. 3.2% of all households were made up of individuals, none of whom were 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 3.70 and the average family size was 3.74.

In the CDP the population was spread out with 27.5% under the age of 18, 37.1% from 18 to 24, 34.2% from 25 to 44, 1.2% from 45 to 64, and 0.1% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 22 years. For every 100 females there were 195.0 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 251.7 males.

The median income for a household in the CDP was $34,883, and the median income for a family was $34,385. Males had a median income of $19,865 versus $17,582 for females. The [per capita income](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Per_capita_income) for the CDP was $12,772. About 7.8% of families and 9.4% of the population were below the [poverty line](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poverty_line), including 12.1% of those under the age of 18 and none of those 65 and older.

**Controversies**

On February 14, 2007, the U.S. Army announced it was moving forward with a plan to expand the Piñon Canyon Maneuver Site in southeastern Colorado. If expanded, Piñon Canyon would be the Army's largest single training area in the nation, tripling the size of the current site by adding 418,000 acres (1,690 km2) of private ranch land. At 650,000 acres (2630 km²), it would be nearly the size of the state of [Rhode Island](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhode_Island). Many in the local civilian population are opposed to this plan, because much of the land in rural areas that would be added to the training site is civilian-owned ranch land, and many current landowners are unwilling to be supplanted, regardless of the compensation that may be offered. The Pinon Canyon Expansion Opposition Coalition, an activist group opposing the plans, says that former maps it obtained from the Army showed a "future expansion area" significantly greater than is now being contemplated. The Army's position is that expansion is essential for preparing soldiers for battle in ever growing theaters such as Afghanistan and the Middle East.

In response to a Congressional ban on Army funding for an expansion plan, the United States Air Force moved in with a plan to use the area for [V-22 Osprey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V-22_Osprey) flights.

**Notable former Fort Carson soldiers**

[Boyd Melson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boyd_Melson)

* [Boyd Melson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boyd_Melson), boxer
* [Colin Powell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin_Powell), US Secretary of State
* [Dennis Reimer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dennis_Reimer), Chief of Staff of US Army
* [Lionel Rivera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lionel_Rivera), mayor of Colorado Springs
* [Bernard W. Rogers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bernard_W._Rogers), Chief of Staff of US Army, and later NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Europe and Commander in Chief, US European Command
* [John William Vessey, Jr.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_William_Vessey%2C_Jr.), Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff
* [Martin Dempsey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Dempsey), Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff

**See also**

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|  | [***Geography portal***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal%3AGeography) |
|  | [***North America portal***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal%3ANorth_America) |
|  | [***United States portal***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal%3AUnited_States) |
|  | [***Colorado portal***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal%3AColorado) |

* [Outline of Colorado](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outline_of_Colorado)
	+ [Index of Colorado-related articles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Index_of_Colorado-related_articles)
* [State of Colorado](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_of_Colorado)
	+ [Colorado cities and towns](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colorado_cities_and_towns)
		- [Colorado census designated places](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colorado_census_designated_places)
	+ [Colorado counties](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colorado_counties)
		- [El Paso County, Colorado](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El_Paso_County%2C_Colorado)
	+ [Colorado metropolitan areas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colorado_metropolitan_areas)
		- [Front Range Urban Corridor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Front_Range_Urban_Corridor)
		- [South Central Colorado Urban Area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Central_Colorado_Urban_Area)
		- [Colorado Springs, CO Metropolitan Statistical Area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colorado_Springs%2C_CO_Metropolitan_Statistical_Area)
* [John E. Butts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_E._Butts)
* This page was last modified on 15 August 2012 at 13:29.