



# UNITED STATES ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE  
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## THE BLACK DAGGERS U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND PARACHUTE DEMONSTRATION TEAM

The U.S. Army Special Operations Command Parachute Demonstration Team — the Black Daggers — is comprised entirely of volunteers from throughout the Army special operations community. They have diverse backgrounds and possess various military specialties. The team represents the professionalism and dedication of Special Operations Forces and performs aerial demonstrations in support of U.S. Army Special Operations Command community outreach and recruiting efforts.

The U.S. Army Special Operations Command, better known as USASOC, activated Dec. 1, 1989, at Fort Bragg, N.C. USASOC is the Army component of U.S. Special Operations Command, headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. The command is 28,000 strong including special forces, civil affairs, rangers, psychological operations, signal and support, and Army special operations aviation Soldiers.



For almost three-quarters of a century, highly-trained groups of Soldiers have been inserted behind enemy lines to disrupt the movement of enemy troops and supplies to the front lines. These brave Soldiers have frequently used parachutes as a means to infiltrate without being detected. Although most of the airborne forces of the world still use round parachutes, some specialized units use the Ram Air Canopy as their primary means of infiltration.

The Black Daggers use the military variant of the ram-air parachute, which allows a free-fall parachutist the ability to jump with more than 100 pounds of additional equipment attached. In addition to the extra weight, the jumper must also withstand high winds, frigid temperatures and low oxygen levels, all of which require the jumper to be highly skilled.

When exiting the aircraft, normally from an altitude of 12,500 feet, the jumpers free fall for about two miles at approximately 120 miles per hour. They maneuver their bodies using their hands, arms, legs and shoulders to control their flight. The parachutes used by the USASOC team are flexible wing gliders.

The Black Daggers' mission is to perform live aerial demonstrations in support of U.S. Army Special Operations Command community relations and recruiting.

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