

HOW TO RUN ALPHA FOR FORCES



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INTRODUCTION

This resource is designed to take you through the stages of running an Alpha course on a military base, onboard a ship, or while out on operations.

Other course materials that you will need include: *The Alpha Course Guest Manual*, *The Alpha Course Team Training Guide* and *Questions of Life*, by Nicky Gumbel.

Alpha for Forces courses vary enormously due to the diversity of service life. Therefore, not all of the suggestions made in this handbook will apply to your course; the aim is to provide a framework to help you get started.

What is Alpha?

The Alpha course offers people from all backgrounds the opportunity to explore the Christian faith during a number of thought-provoking sessions, including teaching and discussion in small groups. The Alpha course is currently being conducted in tens of thousands of churches of all denominations in more than 160 countries around the world, and its core materials have been translated into more than 110 different languages.

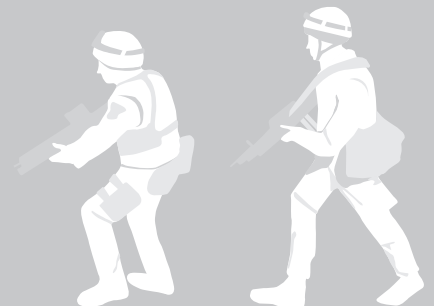
The standard Alpha format consists of fifteen sessions of teaching and small group discussion delivered over the course of ten weeks. Each Alpha course includes a weekend away during which the themed series of talks on the Holy Spirit are given. The sessions are as follows:

Launch Event	Is There More to Life than This?
Week 1	Who Is Jesus?
Week 2	Why Did Jesus Die?
Week 3	How Can We Have Faith?
Week 4	Why and How Do I Pray?
Week 5	Why and How Should I Read the Bible?
Week 6	How Does God Guide us?

Alpha Weekend or Day Away

	Who Is the Holy Spirit?
	What Does the Holy Spirit Do?
	How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?
	How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?
Week 7	How Can I Resist Evil?
Week 8	Why and How Should I Tell Others?
Week 9	Does God Heal Today?
Week 10	What about the Church?

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Alpha for Forces is simply the classic Alpha course adapted to suit service life. It is being run in all three services of the British Armed Forces, as well as within the armed forces of many countries around the world. Courses can vary in length depending on time constraints, but most Alpha for Forces courses are between six and ten weeks long. Each session will consist of three elements:

1. A social time, preferably with food
2. A talk about a subject central to the Christian faith
3. Small group discussions

Who can be involved in running Alpha for Forces?

Forces chaplaincy

In the UK and around the world, Alpha for Forces is being run by both single denomination and ecumenical chaplaincy teams. Courses should always fall under the authority of the chaplaincy.

Servicemen

Alpha can be run by chaplains and other Christian servicemen of any rank.

Local churches

Churches that are located close to military bases can often provide invaluable support to chaplains, especially when they have experience running Alpha within a civilian context. Alpha for Forces course leaders have tapped into local churches around the world for a variety of resources, including speakers, group hosts and, in some cases, worship groups.



PLANNING YOUR COURSE

Brief chain of command

Servicemen planning to run smaller courses should make the base chaplain aware of their plans. Courses should always come under the authority of a chaplain, even if they are not directly involved. For larger courses, we recommend that those in positions of authority are briefed about the Alpha course before the advertising campaign begins. Commanders at all levels appreciate being informed of issues in their area of responsibility, and a briefing will help raise the profile of Alpha on the base. The briefing should be hosted by the course leader and should include representation from the chaplaincy. Senior officers are often willing to use their influence to support courses in terms of resources, advertising, catering, etc.

Select dates and timings

Avoid running your course during major deployments or exercises unless you are specifically planning to run Alpha within an operational environment.

In an armed forces context, it is often difficult to find a ten-week window of time in which to conduct a complete Alpha course; therefore, in many cases, groups choose to reduce the overall length of the course to accommodate their specific needs. This is achieved by conducting more than one session per week, or by combining talks to reduce the number of sessions. **Note:** If you choose to combine certain talks, you will either need to use live speakers or the Student Alpha versions of the talks. (see page 7 for further information).

The following table shows how a complete Alpha for Forces course can be run in just five weeks. **Note:** In the UK, this example would probably be more suited to a lunchtime Alpha course since Thursday nights are a popular time for servicemen to go out.

Launch	Thursday	Is There More to Life than This?
Week 1	Monday Wednesday Thursday	Who Is Jesus? Why Did Jesus Die? How Can We Have Faith?
Week 2	Monday Wednesday Thursday	Why and How Do I Pray? Why and How Should I Read the Bible? How Does God Guide Us?

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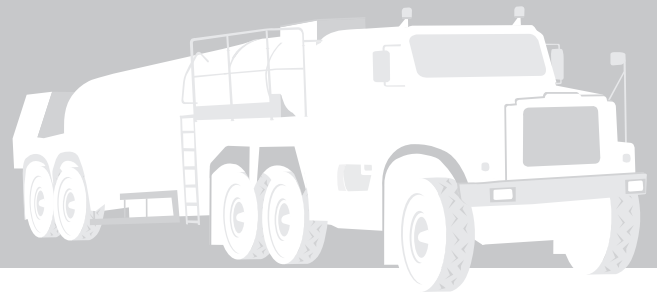
Week 3	Monday Wednesday Thursday	Who Is the Holy Spirit? What Does the Holy Spirit Do? How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?
Week 4	Monday Wednesday Thursday	How Can I Resist Evil? Why and How Should I Tell Others? Does God Heal Today?
Week 5	Monday Wednesday	What about the Church? How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?

The following examples show how specific talks can be combined to reduce the number of sessions.

Example 1

	Proposed session	Classic sessions contained
Session 1	Who Is Jesus and Why Did He Die?	Who Is Jesus? Why Did Jesus Die?
Session 2	Why and How Should I Communicate With God?	Why and How Should I Read the Bible? Why and How Do I Pray? How Does God Guide us?
Session 3	Holy Spirit talks (combine to make one talk or give three talks on a day or weekend away)	Who Is the Holy Spirit? What Does the Holy Spirit Do? How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?
Session 4	How Can We Have Faith?	How Can We Have Faith? Does God Heal Today?
Session 5	How Can I Resist Evil?	How Can I Resist Evil?
Session 6	What Next?	Why and How Should I Tell Others? What about the Church? How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?

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Example 2 (Student Alpha model)

	Proposed session	Classic sessions contained
Session 1	Who Is Jesus?	Who Is Jesus?
Session 2	Why Did Jesus Die?	Why Did Jesus Die?
Session 3	How Can We Have Faith?	How Can We Have Faith?
Session 4	What about the Bible and Prayer?	Why and How Should I Read the Bible? Why and How Do I Pray?
Session 5	Holy Spirit talks (combine to make one talk or give three talks on a day or weekend away)	Who Is the Holy Spirit? What Does the Holy Spirit Do? How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?
Session 6	How Can I Resist Evil/ Does God Heal Today?	How Can I Resist Evil? Does God Heal Today?
Session 7	How Does God Guide Me to Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?	How Does God Guide us? Why and How Should I Tell Others? What about the Church? How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?

If you are combining talks, please note that the sessions on the Holy Spirit should occur in the middle of the course, and the session entitled, 'Does God Heal Today?' should follow these.

In situations where you have periods of downtime separated by periods of intense activity, it may be useful to run a modular course. In the downtime, you may be able to cover quite a number of the sessions. We suggest splitting the course into the following modules:

Module 1: Talks 1–6

1. Is There More to Life than This?
2. Who Is Jesus?
3. Why Did Jesus Die?
4. How Can We Have Faith?
5. Why and How Should I Pray?
6. Why and How Should I Read the Bible?

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Module 2: Talks 7–11

7. How Does God Guide Us?
8. Who Is the Holy Spirit?
9. What Does the Holy Spirit Do?
10. How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?
11. How Can I Resist Evil?

Module 3: Talks 12–15

12. Why and How Should I Tell Others?
13. Does God Heal Today?
14. What about the Church?
15. How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?

The duration of the sessions varies between forty-five minutes and two-and-a-half hours. The *Alpha Express* DVD talks are between twenty and twenty-five minutes long, and are perfect if time is limited. The following sample timetable shows how you could run each session in just an hour.

- 11.50 Set up and pray
- 12.00 Guests arrive and begin lunch
- 12.10 Play DVD/give talk
- 12.35 Small group discussion
- 13.00 Finish

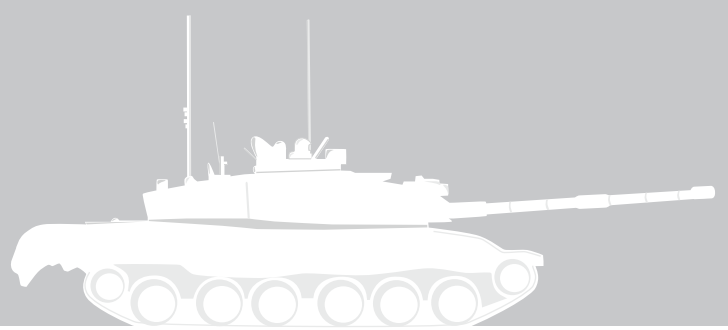
In the previous timetable, no worship takes place and guests can continue to eat their lunch during the talks. The time constraints will prevent the guests from socialising as they would on a normal Alpha course, so try and look for ways of socialising with the group outside of the specified course times.

If you have more time to run the sessions – two hours, for example – each of the elements can last longer:

- 18.50 Set up and pray
- 19.00 Meet/eat
- 19.45 Welcome/worship (possibly)
- 20.00 Play DVD/give talk
- 20.45 Small group discussions
- 21.30 Finish

Consider a few final things when choosing the date, day and time of your course. First, try to avoid major exercises or anything else on the unit long-cast that will

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disrupt the course. Secondly, try to start your course at the end of the month; at this time, it's likely that servicemen have already spent much of their monthly income. Finally, try to choose a day and time that will not conflict with anything else that the guests may want to be doing. Consider avoiding certain events, such as:

- Local student nights
- Major televised sporting events
- Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights (unless on deployment)

Select venue

The best venue for your course will be the place where your guests feel most comfortable.

Alpha for Forces has been run in a wide variety of locations, from barracks, bases, homes, and pubs to ships, FOBs, and the SF bases.

In some situations, you will need to make the best of whatever space you have available, but if you have a choice, you may like to consider a venue that:

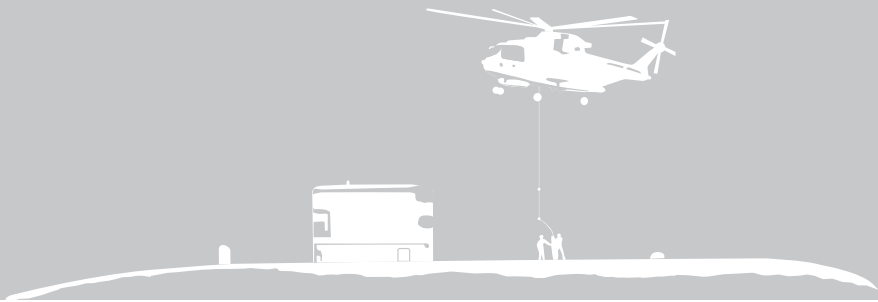
- Has catering facilities (if you are planning to have cooked food)
- Is located where most of your guests live
- Is a place where your target group (eg: officers, soldiers, or both) will not feel uneasy
- Has enough ample space for the small groups to have discussion privately
- Is accessible and easy to find
- Is available each week at the same time (no need to move rooms)
- Is in a quiet and uninterrupted location
- Has privacy – some guests may not want others to know they are attending the course
- Has all the facilities you may require: a TV, a DVD player, a screen, a projector, a music system, etc

Select and train your team

First, and most importantly, if there are other Christians on the base, you should encourage them to get involved in your Alpha for Forces course.

We understand that there are very few Christians in some units and although it is not the ideal situation, we want you to know that it is possible to run small, successful

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courses on your own. If you need more support to run your course, please see 'local church involvement' on page 15.

It is vital to get the right people leading and helping on your Alpha course. The right team transforms a course and directly affects the number of guests attending. Your team should consist of:

- **The course leader** – will host each Alpha session, as well as the team training sessions. The course leader will have pastoral responsibility for the course
- **Small group hosts and helpers** – we recommend a ratio of roughly eight guests for every four hosts/helpers, ie: two-to-one. Hosts and helpers should be confident, positive, outgoing facilitators who are able to relate well to individuals outside the church. They do not need to be great theologians or have vast spiritual maturity in order to lead or help in a small group. A person who has been a Christian for just a few months can often make a great helper

There is a simple way to help you decide whether someone would make a good host or helper. When considering someone as a host or help, just ask yourself: 'Would I happily put my closest friend who is not a Christian in that person's group?' If the answer is 'yes,' then that person will probably make a good host/helper; if the answer is 'no,' they may not be quite right for these roles.

Once you have selected your team, they should be trained using *The Alpha Course Team Training DVD*. If they have no service experience, it may be useful to brief the group about the culture, regulations and practicalities of ministering in a military environment.

It is important that your small group hosts and helpers attend the training; otherwise, the small groups will descend into question and answer sessions, as opposed to discussions.

The Alpha Team Training material covers the following areas:

- Hosting small groups – facilitating discussion, modelling Bible study, praying together
- Pastoral care – methods of developing maturity in Christ
- Prayer ministry on Alpha – biblical authority, respecting dignity of individuals

For larger courses, you may want to consider having a core team as well as hosts and helpers. Your core team can assist with:

- Setting up the venue
- Preparing and serving food
- Clearing up after the meal
- Clearing up at the end of the session

Your core team members will be the first people at your venue each week and the last

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people to leave. Their help will allow you to concentrate exclusively on the guests. For small courses, you will only need one or two members on your core team. As your course increases in size, you will need more people to help. It is advisable to ask one person to head up the core team.

Register your course online

Registering their course is the one thing that many people forget to do! However, it is vital that you register your course so that we can plot the growth of Alpha for Forces. You can register your course online at alphafriends.org/register.

Alternatively, you can contact the Alpha for Forces office and ask them to register your course for you. They can be reached at forces@alpha.org or **020 7052 0339**.

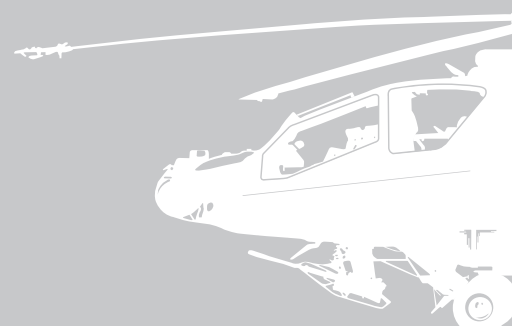
Registering your Alpha course has a number of benefits:

- The course listings in the Alpha Directory can be accessed on the website – alpha.org – by anyone looking for a course. Courses are listed geographically. (Operational courses will not be listed)
- New courses will receive a discount on resources for their members when they register
- Using the directory, people can find courses not only for themselves, but also for their friends and family
- Servicemen and women being drafted (who may already be part of the way through an Alpha course) can use the website to find another course in their new location
- We will ensure that your course receives additional prayer support

Order resources

The Alpha talks are available on DVD, in both full length and shortened (between twenty and twenty-five minutes) versions. These shorter 'express' talks can be used to run condensed sessions where time is limited. The DVDs have been used successfully with military audiences in the UK and around the world; however, if an experienced speaker can give all or some of the Alpha talks using the material from the book *Questions of Life*, it is often more effective, especially when the speaker has had some experience of ministry in the forces.

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Student Alpha Talks

If you are short on time and a live speaker is not an option, there is a seven week Alpha course that is available online, which has been developed by the Student Alpha team. Although the course is primarily aimed at students, it is totally applicable to the forces context. Not only is the course itself shorter (seven weeks), but each talk has also been condensed to run between twenty and thirty minutes. The talks are presented by Revd. Jamie Haith, and his down-to-earth, humorous style is well-suited to a forces audience.

To view to the talks online, please visit **studentalpha.org**

Transcripts of the classic Alpha talks, which assist live speakers with preparation, are available online at **alphafriends.org/node/1287**

Key resources

Helpful resources to use when running Alpha for Forces include:

Questions of Life by Nicky Gumbel – if you are giving the talks live. Each chapter of this book corresponds with the Alpha talk by the same title

Searching Issues by Nicky Gumbel – looks at some of the most frequently asked questions on Alpha

The Alpha Course including Alpha Express DVD set (talks by Nicky Gumbel)

Student Alpha Talks – online resource (talks by Jamie Haith)

The Alpha Course Guest Manual (camouflage cover) – one per guest (optional)

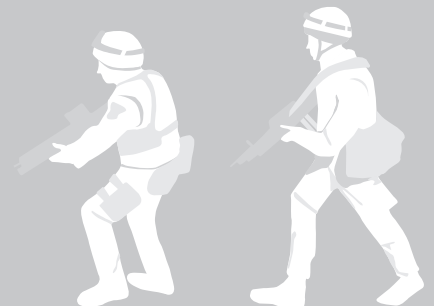
The Alpha Course Team Manual (camouflage cover) – one per small group host/helper (optional)

The Alpha Course Team Training DVD

Alpha for Forces – An Introduction DVD – as seen on the Alpha for Forces website

Why Jesus? (camouflage cover) – presents an overview of the Christian faith (optional)

To order resources, please visit **alphashop.org** or call 0845 752 1278.



PROMOTE THE COURSE

Extending personal invitations to friends and colleagues and encouraging other Christians to do the same is by far the most effective method of bringing guests on to the Alpha course. While other methods of advertising do raise awareness, they are simply a backdrop to the personal invitation, not a substitute for it.

Note: Please remember that you may need permission to advertise the course on the base.

We've listed a few ways that you could promote your course. Not all will be applicable, though, and the methods you choose will depend on the scale of the course you are organising.

New joiners

If new joiners to your unit receive any kind of pack upon arrival, you may want to consider including an invitation to the next Alpha launch event.

Posters

Posters can be placed on centralised notice boards and around the military base. They are an effective way to advertise, and will help raise the profile of your course. Do contact the Alpha for Forces office if you'd like some templates to help you create your posters and other promotional materials.

Alpha invitations

Invitations can be handed out after services, meetings or mealtimes. Try to recruit as many volunteers as possible – each helper can take responsibility for approaching a different group of people.

Local press and PR

Investigate opportunities for coverage on local radio stations and in the local press. Courses run in the British Armed Forces have used the BFBS radio and TV, SSVC Cinema, *Soldier Magazine*, *Sixth Sense*, and other military publications to advertise their courses. Real life stories and testimonials in local publications provide a powerful way to generate interest in the course. The Alpha for Forces office can provide you with stories of changed lives of servicemen around the world.



Personal invitations

Past Alpha events have shown that when serving Christians unite and commit to extend personal invitations to friends and colleagues, the number of guests who attend the course is consistently higher.

Your course will continue to grow because of the testimonies of individuals who have attended Alpha in the past and are now sharing Jesus and their own experience with others. Despite the frequent movement of personnel, statistics show that the more times the Alpha course is run, the more the course numbers continue to grow. This underlines the importance of running Alpha as a rolling programme.

One aim of the talk 'Why and How Should I Tell Others?' is to motivate the guests from your current course to invite people to the next one.

Alpha launch event

Potential guests can be invited to an event, which acts as an advertisement for your course. The idea is to make it informal and relaxed in order to attract non-Christians to come and enjoy themselves, as well as provide an opportunity to tell them about the Alpha course. The most popular format is a meal followed by a short evangelistic talk and testimonies. Pitch the event to the tastes of your target audience.

If you need help with organising your launch event, please get in touch with Alpha for Forces; our team will help you find suitable speakers and suggest possible formats.

Launch event checklist:

- Book a venue
- Recruit a team
- Plan advertising campaign
- Plan event content
- Plan prayer support
- Make a budget
- Appoint overall coordinator
- Plan follow-up



LOCAL CHURCH INVOLVEMENT

We recommend linking up with local churches, as they can often provide invaluable support to chaplains and servicemen running the Alpha course. In the past, churches have provided speakers, hosts and helpers, worship groups and food for Alpha for Forces courses. Moreover, they can often assist with the planning of the Alpha weekend or day, and provide the continuity that the military lacks due to the constant movement of personnel. Of course it is essential that those running the course work closely within the regulations of the base, so that they do not jeopardise relationships within the base hierarchy.

If you would like to be linked to a local church that already has experience running Alpha, please get in touch with the Alpha for Forces office.

THE SESSIONS

The Alpha Course includes three essential elements:

1. Social time
2. Talk
3. Small group discussions

These and other elements are discussed in more depth below:

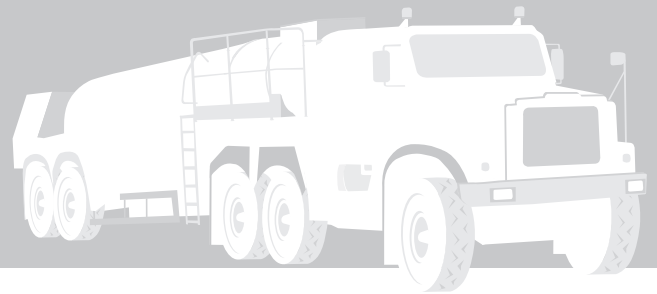
Team meetings

Hosts and helpers should meet before each session to pray and discuss any difficult questions that could arise.

Food

Food normally accompanies the social time since eating together is a great way of helping the group(s) connect. Now that 'pay as you dine' has been implemented, the prospect of a free meal is more appealing than it used to be!

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Suggested options for providing food:

- Give out meal tickets so that servicemen can get a free core meal in the cookhouse/galley. With this approach, you will need to section off an area or use another room in the same building to run the course
- Link with a local church who might be able to help you with the catering
- Approach a local pub and see if they can do a deal on the food – if so, run the course in the pub
- Keep it simple and just provide snacks and drinks
- With smaller courses, you might be able to manage the cooking yourself – something simple like pizzas, salad and garlic bread
- Again with smaller courses, consider ordering take out

Worship

It is not easy to get servicemen to sing, and to date, the only place where it has worked extremely well is at the Military Correctional Training Centre, where they sing with great enthusiasm! Generally speaking, however, in a service environment worship will only work when there is a crowd, so we do not recommend attempting worship on smaller courses. Furthermore, if worship cannot be led competently, we suggest not attempting worship on a smaller course.

If you do decide to include worship, then you should pay particular attention to your song selection. It is a good idea to use songs with weightier lyrics that express objective truths about God, for example: 'Amazing Grace,' or 'Be Thou My Vision.' Many contemporary worship songs romanticise our relationship with Jesus, and this will be very off-putting for most servicemen.

Talks

Ideally, live speakers often provide a powerful impact, but we realize that this won't always be possible. It is therefore perfectly acceptable to use the Student Alpha talks (online), or *The Alpha Course including Alpha Express* DVD box set.

Speakers

It can be advantageous to have servicemen or ex-servicemen presenting the talks, although this is not essential. The most important thing is that your speakers have credibility with your audience. They should be able to relate to the audience and command their respect and attention.

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Making the talks your own

When it comes to preparing the talks, there are a number of resources available to help you:

- The book *Questions of Life* by Nicky Gumbel. Each chapter corresponds to one of the sessions on the course, and it is useful to read the relevant chapter before preparing your talk
- The transcripts of the talks can be found online at alphafriends.org/node/1287. The format of the transcripts makes it very easy to replace Nicky's stories with your own personal ones
- *The Alpha Course Manual*. This contains bullet points and Bible quotes for each talk, making it easy to extract the key information

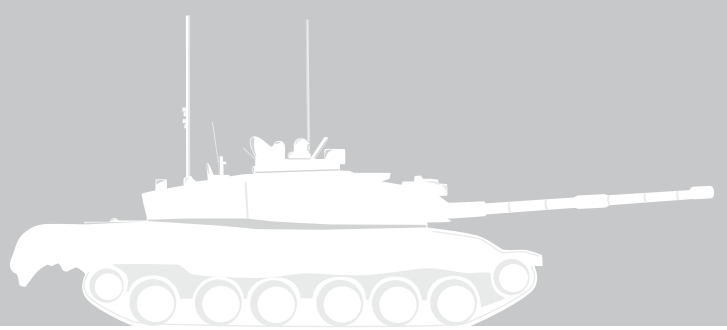
Small groups

Small groups are a vital part of the Alpha course. This format style allows people to respond to what they have heard, think through issues and ask questions. This group time can be ruined by one of two things – weak leadership that allows one group member to do all the talking, or excessively dominant leadership, during which the host does all of the talking rather than giving people the time and space to think and say what is on their minds. Hosts from the forces tend to lean more towards a dominant style of leadership and should watch out for this.

What do you do if no one in the group will say anything?

You should refer to the questions in *The Alpha Course Team Manual* for help with guiding your small group discussion. Do not be anxious if people are quiet after you have asked them a question. Often it takes people time to think through what they want to say. It is better to have a few long silences than for other hosts and helpers to jump in with an answer which can, over time, make guests feel less and less inclined to speak.

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Prayer on Alpha

‘Evangelism without prayer is like a bomb without a detonator and prayer without evangelism is like a detonator without a bomb.’

Dutch Sheets, The Prayer Summit

The main aim of the Alpha course is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to those who don't know him. This work can only be done when it is covered in prayer, and we recommend that, in addition to praying regularly with your team, you form a prayer group to support you. This is one of the ways that a local church can be invaluable.

It is important to meet together as a team (assuming you have a team) to pray before each session. This will not only benefit the guests, but will also bond the team together. We also recommend that group hosts pray for the guests in their group in their own time.

Holy Spirit sessions

The teaching on the person and work of the Holy Spirit is a vital part of the course and should not be omitted. We allocate more time to this subject because the talk ‘How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?’ ends with the guests being given the opportunity to invite the Holy Spirit to fill them, followed by a time of ministry. This is obviously a sensitive subject and you will need to run this session in such a way so as not to alienate your audience.

Content

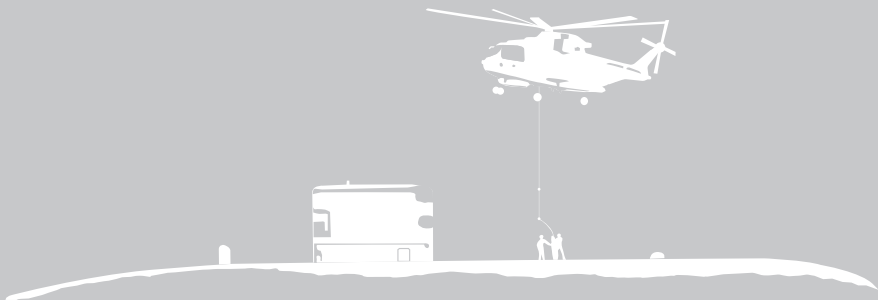
On a normal Alpha course the following four sessions would take place on a day or weekend away:

- Who Is the Holy Spirit?
- What Does the Holy Spirit Do?
- How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?
- How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?

Timing

The ideal time for the Holy Spirit talks is between the talks on ‘How Does God Guide us?’ and ‘How Can I Resist Evil?’ It should always fall between the talks on ‘Why and How Do I Pray?’ and ‘Does God Heal Today?’ It is preferable to have the talk ‘How Can I Resist Evil?’ following the weekend sessions.

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Venues

You may like to have a change of scenery for your weekend/day away. The MOD has a number of retreat houses which can be used for events such as these. Try enquiring through the chaplaincy department for possible venues, or contact the Alpha for Forces office for suggestions.

Inviting guest speakers

If you would like someone to lead your Alpha weekend/day, please contact the Alpha for Forces office.

Many Alpha for Forces courses have run an Alpha day and a handful have even managed to run a weekend away, but this can be difficult in the forces context. Aim for the solution which is highest on the following list, depending on what your situation allows (1 being the most preferable):

1. Alpha weekend

The following suggested timetable will help you to plan your weekend.

Saturday

- 08.30 Arrive at the venue/meet up with your team
- 09.00 Set up, team briefing and prayer
- 09.30 Greet the guests
- 09.40 Introduce the team and worship
- 10.00 **Talk 1: Who Is the Holy Spirit?**
- 10.45 Break
- 11.15 **Talk 2: What Does the Holy Spirit Do?**
- 12.00 Small group discussion
- 12.45 Lunch
- Afternoon free
- 16.30 Break
- 17.15 **Talk 3: How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?**
- 18.00 Worship and ministry
- 19.00 Dinner
- 21.00 Entertainment

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Sunday

- 09.00 Breakfast
- 10.00 Small group discussion
- 11.00 **Talk 4: How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?**
- 11.45 Informal communion service
- 12.15 Lunch
- 14.00 Close and depart

2. Alpha day

The following suggested timetable will help you to plan your day.

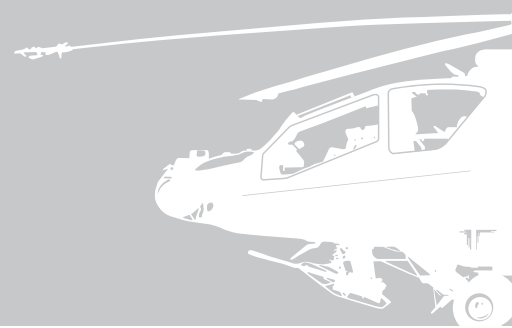
- 08.30 Arrive at the venue/meet up with your team
- 09.00 Set up, team briefing and prayer
- 09.30 Greet the guests
- 09.40 Introduce the team and worship
- 10.00 **Talk 1: Who Is the Holy Spirit?**
- 10.45 Break
- 11.15 **Talk 2: What Does the Holy Spirit Do?**
- 12.00 Small group discussion
- 12.45 Lunch
- 14.15 **Talk 3: How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?**
- 15.15 Worship and ministry
- 16.45 Small group discussion
- 17.30 Close and depart

3. Give each of the three Holy Spirit talks separately at your normal Alpha time and place.

Ensure that you allow extra time for the talk, 'How Can I Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?'

You could also consider combining the talks 'Who Is the Holy Spirit?' with 'What Does the Holy Spirit Do?'

4. Combine the three Holy Spirit talks and deliver them as one extended session at your normal Alpha time and place.



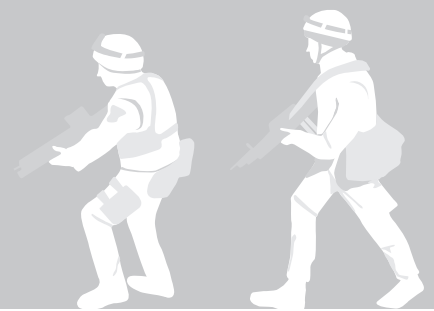
FOLLOWING ALPHA

It is important that guests who become Christians on Alpha receive support after the course. You might consider continuing to meet regularly for Bible study and social events. Perhaps you'll decide to expand the church on the base or feed the guests out to a church in the local area. How to disciple new Christians is a matter of personal choice.

Follow-up resources

A number of resources have been compiled with the aim of giving people solid biblical roots for their faith and lifestyle, as well as addressing problems and difficult issues in a clear and simple way. These can all be ordered from alphashop.org, and include:

- A Life Worth Living – a nine-week course based on the book of Philippians. The material has been written specifically for those who are just starting out in the Christian life. The course comes with a DVD of the talks and guest manual
- Searching Issues – tackles the seven issues most often raised on Alpha, such as the question of suffering, the validity of other religions, and sex before marriage. Comes with the *Searching Issues* book and guest manual
- Challenging Lifestyle – eighteen Bible studies, divided into three different series, that seek to apply Jesus' teaching on the Sermon on the Mount to our daily lives. This material aims to inspire and encourage new believers as they seek to practically live out their faith. Each series has a DVD of the talks and guest manual



QUEEN'S REGULATIONS

It is important that both chaplains and lay personnel seeking to promote Alpha in the forces are aware, and take full advantage, of any legitimate authority or existing regulations which will support their cause in the military environment. For example, in the British Army, the Queen's Regulations contain a number of clauses that clearly support religious observance and instruction. The following clauses are a series of useful extracts from chapter 5, part 7, entitled 'Religion and the Chaplaincy Services':

1. J.5.262. 'The reverent observance of religion in the armed forces is of the highest importance. It is the duty of all concerned to make adequate provision for the spiritual and moral needs of all personnel'
2. J.5.263. 'Commanding officers are to encourage religious observance by those under their command and to set a good example in this respect'
3. J5.276. 'Chaplains are responsible for ... giving religious instruction to the personnel of the armed forces and to their families and children living with them, including those in Service children's schools overseas'
4. J5.277. 'Courses are arranged by the service chaplaincies. Commanding officers are to foster attendance at such courses and make personnel available, subject to the most urgent needs of the Service, to fill any vacancies allotted to them'

ALPHA FOR FORCES



CONTACT US

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