

How to Simulate Shipboard Life at Home

Do you know someone in the Navy? Have you wondered what all of the "adventure" is like? The following is a simulation of shipboard life you can enjoy in your own home!

When commencing this simulation, remember to lock all friends and family outside, communicating only with letters that your neighbors will hold for two weeks before delivering, losing one out of every five.

Surround yourself with 800 people you don't like. Good choices for this are: people who chain smoke, fart loudly, snore like a Mack truck in an uphill grade or use expletives the way kids use sugar on cold cereal.

Unplug all radios and televisions to cut yourself off completely from the outside world. Have a neighbor bring you a Time and Newsweek magazine from last month and a Playboy (or Playgirl) magazine with all the pictures cut out.

Monitor all operating home appliances hourly, recording all vital parameters (plugged in, light comes on as door opens, etc.) If not in use, log in as "secured."

DO NOT flush the toilet for the first three days to simulate the smell of forty persons using the same commode. After that, flush once daily.

Wear only approved coveralls or proper NAVY uniforms. No special T-shirts or cut-offs. Even though nobody really cares, clean and press one uniform once a week and wear it for twenty minutes, after which you change back into your coveralls.

Cut your hair once weekly, making it shorter each time until you are bald or you look as if you tangled with a demented sheep shearer.

Work 18 hour cycles, sleeping only four at a time, to ensure your body doesn't know or care if it's day or night.

Listen to your favorite cassette tape six times a day for two weeks. Then play music that causes acute nausea until you are glad to get back to your "favorite" cassette.

Cut a twin mattress in half lengthwise and enclose three sides. Add a roof that prevents you from sitting in any position (18 inches is a good height.) Place it on a platform so that it is at least six feet off the floor. Place a dead animal under your sheets to simulate the smell of your bunkmate or your bunkmate's sheets.

Set your alarm clock to go off at the snooze interval for the first hour of sleep to simulate the various alarms of watchstanders and night crew going off at an odd time and waking you up. Place your bed on a rocking table to ensure you're tossed from side to side for the remaining three hours. Alternately use a custom built alarm clock that sounds like a fire alarm, a police whistle and a new wave rock band combined to simulate the various drill alarms on board a ship so that you will not get accustomed to ignoring your regular alarm clock.

Prepare all of your food while blindfolded. Use all the spices that you can find or use no spices at all to simulate shipboard food. Remove the blindfold and eat (as humanly possible.) If the food does not stick to an inverted plate when cold, use more lard. If the food contains more than one part per thousand of fiber, dispose of it. Always take more than you can possibly eat to keep up with the waste standards of the NAVY.

Periodically shut off the power at the main breaker and run around screaming "Fire in the main engine! Fire in the main engine!" Do this until you are sweating profusely or you lose your voice, then restore power.

Buy a gas mask. Smear the seal with rancid animal fat and scrub the faceplate with steel wool until you can't see out of it. Wear this for two hours every fifth day, even to the bathroom.

Prepare yourself for an emergency that will require you to leave the premises, knowing that if you exit, the biker gang you hired will simulate sharks and cut off your arms and legs. Study first aid for bleeding until you can quote the book verbatim.

Remove all plants, pictures and decorations. Paint all furnishings and walls gray, white or the shade of green of hospital scrubs.

Study the owner's manuals of all the appliances in the dwelling. At regular intervals, take each one apart and put it back together again. Test operate it at the extremes of its tolerances.

To make sure you are living in a clean and happy environment, every week clean from top to bottom, working hard all day even if it is only a three hour job, whenever and as often as possible repeating your efforts. When complete, inspect your work, criticizing it as much as possible. Never be satisfied with a good effort.

Once a week plug in your television and watch a movie that you walked out on last year. Then watch an episode of "Charlie's Angels" that you didn't like the first two times you saw it.

Since you have no doctor, stock up on Band-aids, Motrin and Sudifed, which have been proven to cure every disease known to man.

To simulate liberty in a foreign port, once every three weeks go outside directly to the city slums wearing your best clothes. Enter the raunchiest bar you can find and ask the bartender for a bottle of the most expensive imported beer he carries. Drink as many of these as fast as you can in four hours, then hire a cab to take you back by the longest route he can find. Tip the driver after he charges you double because you were dressed funny. Lock yourself back in your dwelling for another three weeks.

To simulate life as an Operations Specialist, keep the temperature of where you sleep and work no higher than 60 degrees, except during a fire drill, in which case turn off the ventilation and put on your winter coat, gloves and ski mask for protection. Replace all of the lights where you work with blue bulbs and all the rest with red bulbs to prevent a loss of night vision. Stay inside for three or more days at a time and only look outside at noon so the sun can chase you back into your dark world. Practice planning everything about how ships, planes and subs can destroy each other for when the Soviet Union finally sends that invasion force they've convinced us they'll never send. Read Tom Clancy books and test yourself on the technical stuff in them. Play "Flight Simulator," "Harpoon" and other games that are really about the same as OSs controlling aircraft and firing missiles and all of the other stuff we do.

To simulate some of the good things, put the water from the cleanest pool (but without chlorine and twice as clear) in a moat around the house so that you can see the bottom of the foundation of the house clearly. Fill the moat with beautiful sea life from around the world. Put twice as many stars above your house as Maine on a crisp October evening, and combine Florida sunrises with California sunsets. Visit family and friends (too infrequently) and feel the respect and gratitude for helping preserve freedom around the world.

This simulation must run for a minimum of six months to be effective. The exact date of the end of this simulation will be changed no fewer than seven times without your knowledge. This is done to keep you guessing about when you can get back to a semi-normal life. It is also done in hopes of screwing up any plans you have made or would like to make.