SECURITY DOGMA

Security Jobs at Sea: Self-Check

Maritime security (armed anti-piracy) or cruise ship security? Tick every statement that's true for you.

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1	I have combat arms or special operations military experience.	☐	Maritime
2	I've been honorably discharged and can show my service record (for example a DD-214).	☐	Maritime
3	I'm comfortable carrying a weapon and with the legal responsibility of using force.	☐	Maritime
4	I can live with gaps between jobs and income that changes month to month.	☐	Maritime
5	I'd rather be away for a few weeks at a time than for months.	☐	Maritime
6	I have 1 or more years of security, police, hotel or aviation security experience.	☐	Cruise
7	I want a steady monthly salary with my cabin, meals and flights covered.	☐	Cruise
8	I can be away for 4 to 7 months at a time and work every day of the contract.	☐	Cruise
9	I'm good at de-escalation, access control and dealing with crowds.	☐	Cruise
10	I want a clear ladder: guard, supervisor, officer, chief.	☐	Cruise

Mostly Maritime ticks, including #1 and #2?

You fit what armed maritime security companies hire. Read: how to become a maritime security contractor.

Mostly Cruise ticks, or no to #1?

Start with cruise ship security, or port security ashore. Read: how to become a cruise ship security officer.

Keep both doors open

Whatever you choose, STCW Basic Safety Training and a seafarer medical are needed for both jobs.

My notes

General information only, not career, legal or immigration advice. Requirements vary by company, cruise line, flag state and year; check each listing. Pay and requirements summarized from published listings, reviewed Nov 27, 2026.

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Document & Certificate Checklist

What each job at sea usually asks for. Tick what you have; plan for the rest.

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1 Both jobs

- [ ] STCW Basic Safety Training certificate
- [ ] Seafarer medical certificate (for example UK ENG1 or your country's equivalent)
- [ ] Passport with plenty of validity (some listings ask for 12+ months)
- [ ] Clean criminal record / background check
- [ ] Clear spoken and written English

2 Maritime security (armed)

- [ ] Military service record (U.S.: DD-214, honorable discharge)
- [ ] Trauma first aid (for example FREC 3)
- [ ] Weapons competence to the company's standard
- [ ] U.S. roles: active TWIC card
- [ ] Fitness test (running, lifting 50 lb regularly)
- [ ] Roster with an established company, ideally ISO 28007 certified
- [ ] Your own insurance plan if you're a contractor

3 Cruise ship security

- [ ] STCW security training (usually Designated Security Duties)
- [ ] Crew visa if needed: C-1/D for ships calling at U.S. ports; Schengen for some itineraries
- [ ] 1 to 4 years of security, police, military, hotel or aviation experience
- [ ] Seaman's book or discharge book, if your country issues one
- [ ] Application through the cruise line or a licensed crewing agency (never pay a fee to be hired)
- [ ] Fit to stand and walk for long periods and take part in drills

Red flags

1. A cruise "job offer" that asks you to pay a recruitment or processing fee.
2. A security company that can't show its insurance or ISO 28007 certification.
3. Any offer that doesn't say whether pay is monthly or per day, and in what currency.