A Day in the life of an NYPD Officer

This week, our journey to explore the lives of everyday heroes takes us to one of the most exciting cities in the world, New York! It is in this city where we will take a sneak peak in a day in the life of an NYPD officer. A role heavily defined by risking one’s life for the sake of others in the line of duty, NYPD officers are required to go through extensive training prior to obtaining their badge.

The Real Deal
So what exactly does an average day involve for one of New York’s finest? Well contrary to the thrilling portrayal of the NYPD on popular TV shows, such as this season’s “24,” police work is usually both routine and unpredictable. And while it can get exciting at times, it can also be mundane at others.

Starting Out the Day
Officers usually begin the day with a briefing, also known as a shift meeting or a roll call, depending on the specific department. The briefing consists of a meeting lead by the senior officer in charge, during which the shift assignments are given out. Police officers are also updated on the latest information they need to know about during the briefing, including:

- Extra patrols
- Shift/departmental news or information
- Updates on previous shifts and the activities that took place
- BOLO’s (Be On the Look Out)
  - Missing persons/animals
  - Crime suspects
  - Stolen vehicles

Office Norms
Prior to hitting the streets, a police officer typically performs routine tasks such as checking email, voicemail, making copies, obtaining routine forms they may need for the day and returning phone calls.

Prioritizing
Responding to calls for service is a police officer’s first priority. However, when there are no calls, an officer will usually write reports. Once caught up on paperwork, the streets may beckon. This is where the thrill or excitement of the job comes into play and unfortunately, often leads to danger. It’s no secret that many police officers have lost their lives in the line of duty and it’s a risk that should be seriously considered before making the decision to pursue a career in law enforcement.

Honoring the Heroes
With great risk comes great reward, which is why NYPD police officers have earned several badges of honor for their heroic actions, especially in response to the tragic terrorist attacks that took place on 9/11. And while pop culture often sensationalizes the work of a police officer or downplays the job to sipping coffee and munching on donuts, the reality is these people put their own life in harm’s way every day to save ordinary citizens like you and me!