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## Microsoft to Make Augmented Reality Headsets for US Army

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Microsoft has announced a contract with the U.S. Army worth almost \$22 billion to produce augmented reality **headsets**.

Augmented reality, or AR, is a technology that uses glasses to **project** computer-created pictures and information that add to what users see in the real, physical world.

The deal was announced Wednesday. Microsoft would supply at least 120,000 troops with the devices.

Military officials said the technology will improve soldiers' ability to see their surroundings and identify targets and danger. The technology is based on Microsoft's HoloLens headsets, which were first designed for video games.

The Army said the headsets could be used for both training and in battle. The army said the AR system could help troops gain an upper hand during battle. Soldiers first tested the **gadgets** last year.

The contract is worth up to \$21.88 billion for up to 10 years, Microsoft said. The agreement goes for five years and could be extended for an additional five.

Microsoft President Brad Smith spoke about the technology to the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee in February. He said soldiers could use the system to see at night and for facial recognition on the battlefield. He also described how it could help in hostage situations by creating an electronic representation of a building, what he called a "**digital twin**."

Several technology companies have sought to use augmented reality for video games. Those efforts have largely been unsuccessful. But Microsoft's HoloLens 2 will be used by the Army. The company also wants the devices to be used to help doctors during medical operations, factory crews and others. Users can often control what they see on the device by using hand movements or voice commands.

The headset deal is part of Microsoft's work as a defense **contractor**. The military also awarded Microsoft a \$10 billion cloud computing contract in September.

I'm Mario Ritter, Jr.

*Matt O'Brien reported this story for The Associated Press. Dan Novak adapted it for VOA Learning English. Mario Ritter Jr. was the editor.*

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## Words in This Story

**headset**- *n.* (augmented reality) a device worn on the head that uses computer technology to produce images and information that add to what the wearer can see in the real world

**project**- *v.* to cause (light, a picture, a movie, etc.) to appear on a surface

**gadget**- *n.* a small, useful device

**digital**- *adj.* using or characterized by computer technology

**twin**- *n.* either one of two similar things that form a pair

**contractor**- *n.* a person who is hired to perform work or to provide goods at a certain price or within a certain time

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