

CHAPTER 5

Squad Drill

The [soldiers] must learn to keep their ranks, to obey words of command, and signals by drum and trumpet, and to observe good order, whether they halt, advance, retreat, are upon a march, or engaged with an enemy.

Niccolo Machiavelli *Arte della Guerra*, 1520

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Section I

FORMATIONS AND MOVEMENTS

5-1. General

- a. Individual drill movements and the manual of arms are executed (as previously prescribed) while performing as a squad member.
- b. The squad has two prescribed formations--line and column. However, the squad may be formed into a column of twos from a column formation.
- c. When the squad is in line, squad members are numbered from right to left; when in column, from front to rear.
- d. The squad normally *marches* in column, but for short distances it may *march* in line.

e. When the squad drills as a separate unit, the squad leader carries his weapon at *sling arms*. When the squad is in a line formation, the squad leader assumes a post three steps in front of and centered on the squad; when in a column or a column of twos, three steps to the left and centered on the squad.

f. When the squad drills as part of a larger unit, the squad leader occupies the number one (base) position of the squad. He carries his weapon in the same manner as prescribed for other riflemen in the squad.

5-2. Forming the Squad

a. The squad normally forms in a line formation; however, it may *re-form* in column when each member can identify his exact position (equipment grounded) in the formation (figure 5-1).

(1) To form at *normal interval*, the squad leader comes to the position of *attention* and commands **FALL IN**. On the command **FALL IN**, the following actions occur simultaneously:

(a) Each member *double times* to his position in the formation.

(b) The right flank man positions himself so that when the squad is formed it is three steps in front of and centered on the squad leader.

(c) The right flank man comes to the position of *attention* and raises his left arm laterally at shoulder level, elbow locked, fingers and thumb extended and joined, and palm facing down. He ensures that the left arm is in line with the body.

(d) The man to the immediate left of the right flank man comes to the position of *attention*, turns his head and eyes to the right, and raises his left arm in the same manner as the right flank man. He obtains proper alignment by taking short steps forward or backward until he is on line with the right flank man. He then obtains *exact interval* by taking short steps left or right until his shoulder touches the extended fingertips of the right flank man. As soon as the man to the left has obtained *normal interval*, each man individually lowers his arm to his side, sharply turns his head and eyes to the front and assumes the position of *attention*.

(e) The right flank man then sharply returns to the position of *attention*.

(f) All other members of the squad form in the same manner except that the left flank man does not raise his left arm.

NOTE: The right flank man raises his arm and looks straight to the front unless the squad is to align on an element to its right.

(2) To form at *close interval*, the formation is completed in the manner prescribed for *normal interval*, except that the command is **At close interval, FALL IN**. Squad members obtain *close interval* by placing the heel of the left hand on the left hip even with the waist, fingers and thumb joined and extended downward, and with the elbow in line with the body and touching the arm of the man to the left.

(3) To form *in column*, the squad leader *faces* the proposed flank of the column and commands **In column, FALL IN**. On the command of execution **FALL IN**, squad members *double time* to their original positions (grounded equipment) in formation and *cover* on the man to their front.

b. When armed, members *fall in* at *order arms* or *sling arms*. For safety, the commands **Inspection, ARMS; Ready, Port, ARMS;** and **Order (Sling), ARMS** are commanded at the initial formation of the day or when the last command is **DISMISSED** (Figure 5-1).

5-3. Counting Off

- a. The squad may *count off* in line or column formation. The command is **Count, OFF**.
- b. When the squad is in a line formation, the counting is executed from right to left. On the command of execution **OFF**, each member, except the right flank man, turns his head and eyes to the right, and the right flank man counts off "**ONE**." After the man on the right counts off his number, the man to his left counts off with the next higher number and simultaneously turns his head and eyes to the front. All the other members execute *count off* in the same manner until the entire squad has counted off.
- c. When the squad is in column formation, the counting is executed from front to rear. On the command of execution **OFF**, the cadet at the head of the column turns his head and eyes to the right and counts over his shoulder, "**ONE**." After counting off his number, he immediately comes to the position of **attention**. All other members count their numbers in sequence in the same manner as the number one man; the last man in the file does not turn his head and eyes to the right.

5-4. Changing Interval While in Line

NOTE: To ensure that each member understands the number of steps to take, the squad leader should command **Count, OFF** before giving any commands that cause the squad to change interval. Members do not raise their arms when changing interval.

- a. To obtain *close interval* from *normal interval*, the command is **Close Interval, MARCH**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the right flank man (number one man) stands fast. All men to the left of the number one man execute *right step march*, take one step less than their number (for example, number five man takes four steps), and *halt*.

NOTE: The squad leader takes the correct number of steps to maintain his position of three steps in front of and centered on the squad.

- b. To obtain *normal interval* from *close interval*, the command is **Normal interval, MARCH**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the right flank man *stands fast*. All men to the left of number one man execute *left step march*, take one step less than their number (for example, number nine man takes eight steps), and *halt*.
- c. To obtain *double interval* from *normal interval*, the command is **Double interval, MARCH**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the right flank man *stands fast*. All men to the left of number one man *face to the left as in marching*, take one 30-inch step less than their number (for example, number seven man takes six steps), *halt*, and execute *right face*.
- d. To obtain *normal interval* from *double interval*, the command is **Normal interval, MARCH**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the right flank man *stands fast*. All men to the left of the number one man *face to the right as in marching*, take one 30-inch step less than their number (for example, number three man takes two steps), *halt*, and execute *left face*.

5-5. Aligning the Squad

NOTE: The squad leader commands the squad to the appropriate interval prior to giving the command for alignment.

- a. To align the squad at *normal interval*, the commands are **Dress right, DRESS** and **Ready, FRONT**. These commands are given only when armed cadets are at *order arms* or *sling arms*. On the command of execution **DRESS**, the right flank man *stands fast*. Each member, except the right flank man, turns his head and eyes to the right and *aligns* himself with the man on his right. Each member, except the left flank man, extends his left arm laterally at shoulder level, elbow locked, fingers and thumb extended and joined, palm facing down. He ensures his left arm is in line with his body and positions himself by short steps right or left until his right shoulder touches the fingertips of the man on his right. On the command of execution **FRONT**, each member returns sharply to the position of *attention* (Figure 5-2).

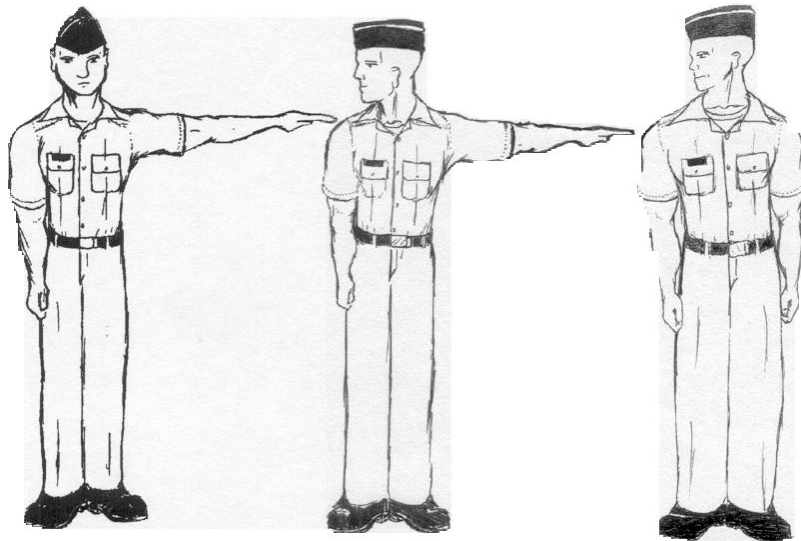


Figure 5-2. Alignment (Normal Interval)

NOTE: If the squad leader wants exact alignment, on the command of execution **DRESS**, he *faces to the half left in marching* and *marches* by the most direct route to a position on line with the squad, *halts* one step from the right flank man, and *faces* down the line. From his position, he verifies the alignment of the squad, directing the men to move forward or backward, as necessary, calling them by name or number: "**Private Jones, Forward two inches; Number Eight, Backward four inches.**" The squad leader remains at *attention*, taking short steps to the right or left as necessary to see down the squad. Having aligned the squad, he centers himself on the right flank man by taking short steps left or right. He then *faces to the half right in marching*, returns to his position (center of the squad), *halts* perpendicular to the formation, *faces* to the left, and commands **Ready, FRONT**. These procedures also apply when aligning the squad at *close* or *double interval*.

b. To align the squad at *close interval*, the commands are **At close interval, Dress right, DRESS** and **Ready, FRONT**. The movement is executed in the same manner prescribed for alignment at *normal interval* except that the squad members obtain *close interval* (Figure 5-3).

c. To align the squad at *double interval*, the commands are **At double interval, Dress right, DRESS** and **Ready, FRONT**. These commands are given only when the troops are unarmed or at sling arms. On the command of execution **DRESS**, each member (except the right flank man) turns his head and eyes to the right and aligns himself on the man on his right. At the same time, each member (except the right and left flank men) extends both arms and positions himself by short steps right or left until his fingertips are touching the fingertips of the members on his right and left. (The right flank man raises his left arm; the left flank man raises his right arm.)

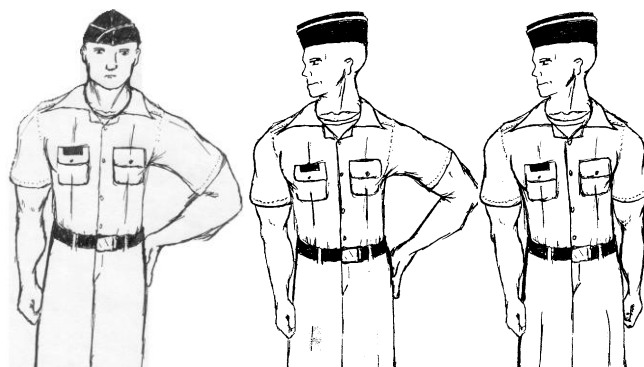


Figure 5-3. Alignment (Close Interval)

d. To align the squad in column, the commands are **COVER** and **RECOVER**. On the command **COVER**, each member (except the number one man) raises his left arm to a horizontal position, elbow locked, fingers and thumb extended and joined, palm facing down, and obtains an arm's length plus about 6 inches (from the fingertips) to the back of the man to his front. At the same time, each man aligns himself directly behind the man to his front. To resume the position of *attention*, the command **RECOVER** is given. On this command, each member sharply returns to the position of *attention*.

5-6. Marching the Squad

a. For short distances only, the squad may be *marched* forward while in a line formation.

b. When *marching* long distances, the squad is *marched* in column.

c. To form a column formation from a line formation, the command is **Right, FACE**.

d. When a column formation is originated from a line formation at *close interval*, the squad may be *marched* for short distances at the *half step* with less than correct distance. To obtain correct distance while marching with less than correct distance, the command is **Extend, MARCH**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the number one man take one more 15-inch step and then steps off with a 30-inch step. Each squad member begins *marching* with a 30-inch step at the approximate point where the number one man stepped off, or as soon as correct distance has been obtained.

5-7. Changing the Direction of a Column

a. From the *halt*, the command to start the squad in motion and simultaneously change the direction of *march* 90 or 45 degrees is **Column right (left), MARCH** or **Column half right (left), MARCH**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the lead man *faces* in the commanded direction and *steps off*, as in *marching*. All other members *march* forward and pivot on the ball of the lead foot in the commanded direction and *step off* with the trailing foot. As the members approach the pivot point, they shorten or lengthen their steps as necessary to pivot at the approximate point that the lead man pivoted.

b. To change the direction of march 90 or 45 degrees when *marching*, the preparatory command **Column right (left) or Column half right (half left)** is given as the foot in the desired direction strikes the marching surface. The command of execution **MARCH** is given the next time the foot in the desired direction strikes the marching surface. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the lead man takes one additional step, pivots in the commanded direction as the pivot foot strikes the marching surface, and continues to *march* in the new direction. Other members continue to *march* forward and execute the pivot as prescribed from the *halt*.

c. To *march* in the opposite direction, the command is **Rear, MARCH**. The preparatory command **Rear** is given as the right foot strikes the marching surface. The command of execution **MARCH** is given the next time the right foot strikes the marching surface. On the command of execution, all members take one more step with their left foot, pivot on the balls of both feet, turn 180 degrees to the right, and *step off* in the new direction. The arms are not allowed to swing outward while turning.

d. To avoid an obstacle in the line of march, the squad leader directs, **INCLINE AROUND** _____. The lead man *inclines around* the obstacle and resumes the original direction. All other members follow the lead man.

5-8. Marching to the Flank

a. The squad may be *marched* to the flank (for short distances only) when *marching* in column.

b. The command for this movement is **Right (Left) flank, MARCH**. The preparatory command is given as the foot in the desired direction strikes the marching surface, and the command of execution is given the next time the foot in the desired direction strikes the marching surface. On the command of execution **MARCH**, all members take one more step, pivot 90 degrees in the commanded direction on the ball of the lead foot, and step off in the new direction with the trailing foot. As the members begin to *march* in the new direction, they glance out of the corner of the right eye and dress to the right.

5-9. Forming a Column of Twos and Re-forming

a. Forming a column of twos from a file is executed only from the *halt*. The command is **Column of twos to the right (left), MARCH**. On the preparatory command, the lead team leader commands **STANDS FAST**. The trailing team leader commands **Column half right (left)**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the trailing team leader executes a *column half right (left)*, *inclines to the left or right* when the correct interval is obtained, and commands **Mark time, MARCH** and **Team, HALT** so as to halt abreast of the lead team leader.

b. Forming a file from a column of twos is executed only from the *halt*. The command is **File from the left (right), MARCH**. On the preparatory command, the lead team leader commands **Forward**. The trailing team leader commands **Stand fast**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the lead team marches forward. The trailing team leader commands **Column half left (right)** when the second man from the rear of the lead team is abreast. He gives the command **MARCH** when the last man of the lead team is abreast of him and his right foot strikes the marching surface. He then *inclines right or left* to follow the lead team at the correct distance.

5-10. Resting the Squad

a. The squad members in formation execute the rest positions in the same manner as prescribed in Chapter 3.

b. When the situation warrants a greater degree of relaxation than the rest positions, the squad leader may command **FALL OUT**. Squad members may leave their position in formation, but they remain in the immediate area. The command **FALL OUT** will not be used to terminate a formation .

5-11. Dismissing the Squad

a. The squad is dismissed with the members at *attention*.

b. With armed troops, the commands are **Inspection, ARMS; Ready, Port, ARMS; Order (Sling), ARMS;** and **DISMISSED**.

c. With unarmed troops, the command is **DISMISSED**.

d. Unless otherwise stated (by the person in charge in his instructions prior to the command *dismissed*), the command *dismissed* terminates only the formation, not the duty day.