

## OPORD Format Reference

Detailed formatting standards for Army Operation Orders (OPORDs) and Warning Orders (WARNORDs).

### DOCUMENT FORMAT STANDARDS

#### GitHub Flavored Markdown (GFM) Requirements

- Write all Army orders in GitHub Flavored Markdown (GFM) format
- Use proper heading hierarchies: #, ##, ###, etc.
- Use **bold** for emphasis with double asterisks \*\*bold text\*\*
- Use *italic* for less emphasis with single asterisks \*italic text\*
- Use proper list formatting: - or \* for bullet lists, 1., 2., 3. for numbered lists
- Use tables with pipe syntax | Header | Header | for structured information
- Use three backticks for code blocks or preformatted text when needed

#### Document Structure Requirements

##### 1. Classification and Header

- Begin and end documents with classification markings (e.g., "UNCLASSIFIED") centered and in ALL CAPS
- Include document identifier left-aligned at top
- Include page numbers right-aligned

##### 2. Document Identification Block

- Right-aligned: "Copy \_\_ of \_\_ copies"
- Left-aligned headquarters (e.g., "HQ, 2/116th FA")
- Left-aligned location (e.g., "CBJTC, FL")
- Left-aligned date-time group in military format (e.g., "131200APR18")
- Left-aligned document type and title in ALL CAPS

##### 3. Time Zone Declaration

- Include "(U) Time Zone Used Throughout the OPORD: ROMEO (Local)" after title

##### 4. Task Organization

- List participating units separated by commas

### CONTENT STRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

#### 1. Situation Section

1. (U) SITUATION.
  - a. (U) Area of Interest. [Geographic area]

b. (U) Area of Operation. [Specific location]

(1) (U) Terrain. [Terrain description]

(2) (U) Weather. [Weather data - use markdown tables for structured format]

c. (U) Enemy Forces. [Description or N/A]

d. (U) Attachments. [Units attached or "None"]

## 2. Mission Section

2. (U) MISSION. [Unit] conducts [operations] at [location] from [start date] to [end date] IOT [purpose].

## 3. Execution Section

3. (U) EXECUTION.

a. (U) Commander's Intent.

Purpose: [Why this mission matters to the higher plan – one sentence]

Key Tasks: (1) [Condition for success] (2) [Condition] (3) [Condition]

End State: [Observable conditions: enemy / friendly / civil]

b. (U) Concept of Operations. [Overview – see guidance below]

c. (U) Scheme of Fires. [Fire support plan]

d. (U) Tasks to Subordinate Units.

(1) [Unit (Role – Decisive/Shaping)]

TASK: [Specific instructions with grids, triggers, actions]

PURPOSE: [Why this squad's task matters to the platoon plan]

e. (U) Coordinating Instructions.

[ROE, PIR, CCIR, Reporting – items applicable to two or more units]

### Execution Paragraph Writing Guidance

**Each sub-paragraph contains unique information. Do not restate content across sections.**

**a. Commander's Intent** — The "why" and conditions for success.

- **Purpose:** One sentence explaining why the mission matters to the higher commander's plan. Not a restatement of the mission statement.
- **Key Tasks:** 2-3 conditions that must be met for mission success, stated as outcomes (not squad assignments). These are things the PL cannot deviate from even if the plan falls apart.
- **End State:** Observable conditions on the ground when the mission is complete, described through the lenses of enemy, friendly forces, and civil considerations.
- The entire Intent should be brief enough for every squad leader to memorize.

**b. Concept of Operations** — The big picture of how the platoon fights as a whole.

- Describe the operation by phases (with transition criteria) or by decisive/shaping/sustaining framework.

- Identify the main effort and when/if it shifts.
- Use functional roles (assault element, support element, security element) rather than squad numbers where possible. The mapping of squad-to-role belongs in Tasks.
- Keep to 75-100 words. If it exceeds that, detail is leaking in that belongs in Tasks.
- **Does NOT contain:** grid coordinates, squad-by-squad movement sequences, or specific positions. Those belong in Tasks to Subordinate Units.

**c. Scheme of Fires** — Priority of fires, fire support assets, restrictions. Unique information only.

**d. Tasks to Subordinate Units** — The ONE place with squad-specific detail.

- **TASK:** The squad's complete instructions — where to go (with grid coordinates), what to do, triggers/signals, on-order actions, and actions on contact. This is the only place in the OPORD where this detail appears.
- **PURPOSE:** Why THIS SQUAD's task matters to the platoon plan specifically. Test: "If this squad fails, what specifically breaks?" Do not restate the Commander's Intent. A good purpose connects the squad's task to the next phase or another element's success.
- Include the element's role (Assault, Support, Security, Reserve) and whether it is the decisive or shaping operation in the header.

**e. Coordinating Instructions** — Cross-cutting guidance that applies to two or more units. ROE, PIR, CCIR, reporting requirements, time hacks, restrictions.

**Note on Scheme of Movement and Maneuver:** This is NOT a separate sub-paragraph for most platoon operations. The phased overview belongs in the Concept of Operations; squad-specific positions and grids belong in Tasks. For movement-centric operations (tactical road march, convoy operations) where movement IS the operation, a Scheme of Movement sub-paragraph may be included between Concept and Fires, but it contains ONLY formation, technique, order of march, route, and speed/intervals — not element tasks.

#### **4. Sustainment Section**

##### 4. (U) SUSTAINMENT.

- a. Material and Services
  - (1) Supply
    - (a) Class I [Food/water details]
    - (b) Class III [Fuel details]
    - (c) Class V [Ammunition details]
    - (d) Class VIII [Medical supplies]
  - (2) Maintenance: [Maintenance support details]

#### **5. Command and Control Section**

##### 5. (U) COMMAND AND CONTROL.

- (a) (U) Signal.
  - (1) Frequency and Call signs.
  - (2) PACE.
    - (a) P – [Primary]
    - (b) A – [Alternate]
    - (c) C – [Contingency]
    - (d) E – [Emergency]
  - (b) (U) Command.
    - (1) Location. [Command locations]
    - (2) Succession of Cmd. [Chain of command]

## **DOCUMENT CLOSING REQUIREMENTS**

### **ACKNOWLEDGE:**

[COMMANDER'S LAST NAME]

[RANK]

### **OFFICIAL:**

[STAFF OFFICER]

[POSITION]

### **ANNEXES:**

[List of annexes, appendices, and tabs]

### **DISTRIBUTION:**

[List of units receiving the order]

## **FORMATTING RULES**

### **Outline Hierarchy**

- Main paragraphs: 1., 2., 3., etc.
- First sub-level: a., b., c., etc.
- Second sub-level: (1), (2), (3), etc.
- Third sub-level: (a), (b), (c), etc.
- Fourth sub-level (if needed): 1, 2, 3, etc.

### **Classification Markings**

- Include "(U)" before each paragraph title to indicate unclassified information

### **Date-Time Groups**

- Use military format: DDHHMMMMONYR (e.g., 131200APR18)
- For date spans: DDMONYY format (e.g., 31MAY18 to 03JUN18)

### **Military Grid References**

- Format as "MP XXX YYY" for grid coordinates
- Include "vic." (vicinity) before grid references

### **Time References**

- Use 24-hour military time format (e.g., 1500 for 3:00 PM)
- Include time zone identifier when appropriate

## **DOCUMENT TYPE DIFFERENCES**

### **WARNORD (Warning Order)**

- Issued earlier with preliminary information
- Contains tentative information (marked as TBP - To Be Published)
- Less detailed execution information
- Titled as "WARNORD # TO OPORD [number]"

### **OPORD (Operation Order)**

- Detailed and finalized information
  - Complete task organizations and execution details
  - Fully developed annexes and appendices
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**ACKNOWLEDGE:**

MATTHEW WAGNER  
CPT, FA  
FLORIDA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

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**OFFICIAL:**

CPT COTTO  
SENIOR TAC

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**DISTRIBUTION:**

CDR, 211 RTI  
S3, 211 RTI  
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