THE SOLDIER’S GUIDE

FEBRUARY 2004

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HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
FOREWORD

The Soldier is the ultimate guardian of America's freedom. In over 120 countries around the world, Soldiers like you are protecting our Nation's freedom and working to provide a better life for oppressed or impoverished peoples. It is no accident our Army succeeds everywhere we are called to serve—the loyalty and selfless service of the American Soldier guarantee it.

Today our Army is fighting directly for the American people. This global war on terrorism is about our future. It's about ensuring our children and grandchildren enjoy the same liberties we cherish. While difficult tasks remain, victory is certain. The efforts and sacrifices of the American Soldier will assure it.

Although our technology has changed, the core of our success remains the American Soldier. Whether equipped with a bayonet or an Apache helicopter, the American Soldier is the most lethal weapon in the world. Regardless of MOS or location on the battlefield, the American Soldier will accomplish the mission—and will destroy any enemy interference with that mission.

This Soldier's Guide applies to every soldier in the Army—active, reserve, and National Guard—in every rank and MOS. It condenses important information from a number of Army Regulations, Field Manuals, DA Pamphlets and other publications. This manual describes your role in the Army, your obligations, and what you can expect from your leaders. Other subject areas are Army history, training, and professional development. This manual also describes standards in appearance and conduct and selected individual combat tasks that are important for every Soldier to master.

This manual gives you a good reference to find answers for many questions. It helps clarify and reinforce standards and helps prepare you to assume leadership positions. Read it thoroughly and continue to do the great work American Soldiers have done for almost 230 years.

JACK L. TILLEY
Sergeant Major of the Army

PETER J. SCHOOMAKER
General, US Army
Chief of Staff
# The Soldier's Guide

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Preface

This Field Manual is dedicated to the men and women of the United States Army in the active component, the Army National Guard and the US Army Reserve—altogether America’s finest fighting machine. You are the soldiers that fight and win the Nation’s wars. Be proud.

FM 7-21.13, The Soldier’s Guide, is a pocket reference for subjects in which all soldiers must maintain proficiency, regardless of rank, component or military occupational specialty (MOS). It condenses information from other field manuals, training circulars, soldier training publications, Army regulations, and other sources. It addresses both general subjects and selected combat tasks. While not all-inclusive or intended as a stand-alone document, the guide offers soldiers a ready reference in many subjects.

FM 7-21.13 is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 1 describes the importance of Army Values and the obligations of every soldier. Chapter 2 provides a short history of the Army and examines the environment in which it operates. Chapter 3 addresses the duties, responsibilities and authority of the soldier, how to present a military appearance, and an introduction to the Uniform Code of Military Justice. The importance of customs, courtesies, and traditions is in Chapter 4. The soldier’s role in training and a brief description of training management are in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 discusses the importance of counseling and professional development. The benefits of serving in the Army are described in Chapter 7. The appendices contain specific combat tasks that are important to every soldier and information on programs the Army offers to assist soldiers and their family members.

The Soldier’s Guide provides information critical to the success of soldiers in the operational environment. Reading this manual will help prepare soldiers for full spectrum operations and is a tool in building the Future Force soldier. This book will be useful to every soldier who reads it.

The proponent for the publication is Headquarters, US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). Send comments and recommendations on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) to Commandant, US Army Sergeants Major Academy, ATTN: ATSS-D, Fort Bliss, TX 79918-8002 or through the Sergeants Major Academy website at usasma.bliss.army.mil.

Unless stated otherwise, masculine nouns or pronouns do not refer exclusively to men.

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Introduction

Since the events of 11 September 2001, it is more evident than ever that every American has the duty to contribute to the well being of our Nation and its people; military service is one form of contribution. It is a privilege to bear arms as a soldier in the defense of a free people. This privilege is afforded only to individuals of good standing and of good reputation. What you do with this opportunity is up to you. You took an oath that binds you to this organization called the Army. Taking that oath meant that you would defend our Constitution and comply with all the orders, regulations and directions given by superiors. Always remember this commitment.

Although being a soldier is a dangerous profession, it can be the greatest and most rewarding adventure of your life. The friends you make while in the service will be your friends for life. This is especially true if you serve with them in combat. If you stay in the Army you may serve with them again in various jobs and locations. Where the Army takes you depends on your personal and professional goals. When I was drafted in May of 1966, I planned to serve only two years, but given all the opportunities the Army afforded me, I spent a total of 24 years in the service. Many of those opportunities are available to you; it is up to you to place yourself in the position to take advantage of them.

This manual is a general guide that gives you a wealth of information about the United States Army. Throughout your military service you have many questions. Even if this guide does not have every answer you need, it should give you the source to find the answer. I remember reading my Soldier’s Guide (the 1961 version) during basic training and advanced individual training as a medical corpsman. While it answered some questions and was helpful in refreshing my memory, its main purpose was to help us adjust to Army life because the more we knew about the Army, the quicker the adjustment would be. This manual you have today applies to every soldier in the Army. Still, it’s a guide. You may have to look in other Army publications for more detailed answers. Form the habit of using it whenever a question about the Army comes to mind or in discussion with your fellow soldiers.

Chapter 1 describes the individual soldier’s obligations to the Army and leaders’ obligations to soldiers. You will find a discussion of Army values, those qualities that make the Army the elite organization it has become. Although you already know Army values, this chapter will help explain why they are important. This chapter tells you about team building and its importance in the successful completion of the mission. Some day you will be ready to assume a leadership position. When you demonstrate the qualities highlighted in this chapter, you will have to accept the responsibility to lead. In 1968, I was a staff sergeant responsible for 100 soldiers going through medical training. My leaders saw something in me and I also thought I could contribute even more to the Army, and so I
applied for a direct commission. The teaching, coaching, and mentoring of
my leaders and my own assessment of my leadership skills allowed me to
assume positions of greater responsibility. It is the nature of military
service for soldiers to become leaders.

Chapter 2 contains a short history of the Army and it describes the
environment in which the Army operates. You can also refresh your
knowledge of how our government is organized and the Army’s place within
the government. The history of our Army goes back over 300 years, and you
are part of a page in that history. I didn’t imagine when I came in the Army
that I would receive the Medal of Honor, much less among a group that, for
the first time ever, was composed of all four branches of the service. As you
are reading do your very best to understand where you fit in the larger
picture. As a member of the military you might serve in any number of
locations so be prepared to meet an ever widening set of situations. You are
a soldier but you could perform a variety of duties in the completion of your
service. Because you support and defend the Constitution, it is important to
understand how the government works and how it affects you.

Chapter 3 details the duties, responsibilities, and authority of soldiers. You
will learn the sources of military authority and the reasons why authority
exists. This chapter also provides a guide on appearance and uniform
standards of the Army and answers most questions you may have about the
Uniform Code of Military Justice and the Army’s standards of conduct.
These are basic requirements of all soldiers.

Chapter 4 addresses the customs, courtesies, and traditions of the Army.
Any organization that has been in existence as long as the Army has many
customs and traditions. They help make the Army and each unit unique. It
may be the motto or greeting that sets you apart as a member of a specific
unit, or it can even be the simple act of standing at parade rest, but our
customs and traditions are important to the spirit and morale of soldiers.
Take the time to learn these customs and traditions and what they mean,
always remembering that someone like you may have been the one that
started that tradition.

Chapter 5 contains information on training and how it will impact you. For
a person to be proficient in any skill, they must first have a good
understanding of what is to be accomplished. The knowledge needed may
come from classroom instruction, demonstrations, or field exercises. Keep in
mind that your training teaches you to shoot, move, communicate, and
survive so your unit can succeed in combat. The more you know the better
your chances for success. As a combat medic with an infantry company
during the Vietnam War, I trained on a number of skills that were not
normally expected of a medic. Our company required each soldier to be able
to adjust artillery, operate a radio, and many other tasks that, at the time, I
did not consider necessary. But a short time later I had to perform all those
tasks together, along with my basic medical training, and it made a
difference. During your training you must trust the knowledge and
experience of your leaders and learn all that is asked of you. Skills that you
consider unnecessary now may turn out to be important later.
Chapter 6 is about counseling and professional development. Here is how the Army lets you know how you are doing and what you need to improve. The service has a set path along which you can advance but you are responsible for achieving your full potential. Your self-improvement program is up to you. My experience over a period of 24 years shows how a person can plan and advance in the service. Even though I had planned to serve only two years when I was drafted, I discovered that I enjoyed soldiering and wanted to continue being a soldier. I took advantage of opportunities the Army offers every soldier who has the ability, discipline, and desire to succeed and improve. I was able to have what was a rewarding and successful career.

In Chapter 7 you'll find detailed information on the benefits of serving in the Army and in the appendices, the various programs the Army has to help soldiers and their families. It is good information that will answer many of the questions you have throughout your career.

I wish I could give you the secret of success, but I don’t have it. All I can say is that your success in the Army is a direct reflection of your effort. Work each day to improve yourself. Make a commitment to make your unit better by being a productive, proactive member of that unit. Try to learn something new each day because the Army is a fast moving organization and you must never stop learning. Treat your fellow soldiers as if they were part of your family. They are. In all things, do your best; what you make of yourself is your responsibility. And one last thing—be proud of being a soldier. You are defending our Nation, our people, and our way of life. There is no more honorable profession. Even after you leave the service you can be proud to say, “I am a soldier.”

Charles C. Hagemeister
LTC, US Army (Retired), MOH
1 September 2003
Lieutenant Colonel Charles Chris Hagemeister (US Army, Retired) has
served the Nation in both the enlisted and commissioned ranks. He has
been both a reserve and regular Army officer. His assignments include
tactical and training units, in peacetime and in combat.

He was drafted into the United States Army in March 1966 and entered
service in May 1966 at Lincoln, Nebraska. He went through basic training
at Fort Polk, Louisiana, and completed advanced individual training as a
combat medic at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, in November 1966.

LTC Hagemeister was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry of the 1st
Cavalry Division in the Republic of Vietnam. He was a Specialist 4 (SPC) at
the time, supporting a platoon in A Company in Binh Dinh Province on 20
March 1967 during the Vietnam War. SPC Hagemeister's platoon suddenly
came under heavy attack from three sides by an enemy force occupying well
concealed, fortified positions and supported by machineguns and mortars.

After SPC Hagemeister saw two of his comrades seriously wounded in the
initial action, he unhesitatingly and with total disregard for his safety raced
through the deadly hail of enemy fire to provide them medical aid. SPC
Hagemeister learned that the platoon leader and several other soldiers also
had been wounded. He continued to brave the withering enemy fire and
crawled forward to render lifesaving treatment and to offer words of
encouragement. While attempting to evacuate the seriously wounded
soldiers, SPC Hagemeister was taken under fire at close range by an enemy
sniper. Realizing that the lives of his fellow soldiers depended on his
actions, SPC Hagemeister seized a rifle from a fallen comrade and killed
the sniper and three other enemy soldiers who were attempting to encircle
his position. He then silenced an enemy machinegun that covered the area
with deadly fire.

Unable to remove the wounded to a less exposed location and aware of the
enemy's efforts to isolate his unit, he dashed through the heavy fire to
secure help from a nearby platoon. Returning with help, he placed men in
positions to cover his advance as he moved to evacuate the wounded
forward of his location. These efforts successfully completed, he then moved
to the other flank and evacuated additional wounded men, despite the fact
that his every move drew fire from the enemy. SPC Hagemeister's repeated
heroic and selfless actions at the risk of his life saved the lives of many of
his comrades and inspired their actions in repelling the enemy assault. SPC
Hagemeister received the Medal of Honor on 14 May 1968.

After his service in Vietnam, LTC Hagemeister (then Specialist 5) served at
McDonald Army Hospital in Fort Eustis, Virginia, and then as a medical
platoon sergeant in C Company, 1st Battalion, US Army Medical Training
Center at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

LTC Hagemeister received a direct commission in the US Army Reserve as
an armor officer. After training at Fort Knox, Kentucky he was assigned to
Fort Hood, Texas where he served as a platoon leader, cavalry troop
executive officer, and squadron liaison officer. In 1970 LTC Hagemeister
grew to Schweinfurt, Germany where he commanded Headquarters and
Headquarters Troop, 3d Squadron, 7th Cavalry of the 3d Infantry Division
where he was also the Squadron Intelligence Officer.

After attending the Armor Officer Advanced Course and the Data
Processing Course LTC Hagemeister went back to Fort Hood in September
1977. There he served in the Communications Research and Development
Command as the Tactical Operations System Controller. In 1980 he
returned to Fort Knox and served as the Chief of Armor Test Development
branch and later became the Chief of Platoon, Company, and Troop
Training. LTC Hagemeister became a Regular Army officer on 15 December
1981 and was later promoted to Major. Following this promotion, LTC
Hagemeister became the executive officer for the 1st Battalion, 1st Training
Brigade at Fort Knox. He then attended the US Army Command and
General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He remained at Fort
Leavenworth as the Director of the Division Commander's Course and then
as the Author/Instruction for Corps Operations, Center for Army Tactics in
the Command and General Staff College.

LTC Hagemeister retired from the Army in June 1990 but continued to
serve the Nation as a contractor supporting the Battle Command Training
Program (BCTP) as a Maneuver and Fire Support Workstation Controller
with the World Class Opposing Forces (WCOPFOR).
Chapter 1

The Individual Soldier's Role in the Army

Soldiers are the Army’s most important resource. Trained, fit, and determined soldiers, strengthened by the warrior ethos, win America’s wars. This chapter describes the importance of the Army values in developing and maintaining the warrior ethos—the will to win. The importance of the team and the soldier’s role in it is in this chapter, too. Here also are some of the basics of leadership—decision making, ethical reasoning and what leaders must BE, KNOW, and DO.

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For more information on Army values, teambuilding, leadership, and ethical reasoning, see FM 6-22 (22-100), Army Leadership and the Army Leadership website at www.leadership.army.mil.