

# INFANTRY RIFLE PLATOON AND SQUAD

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## **PREFACE**

This manual provides doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures on how infantry rifle platoons and squads fight. Infantry rifle platoons and squads include infantry, airborne, air assault, ranger, and light infantry platoons and squads. This manual supersedes FM 7-8, Infantry Platoon and Squad dated April 1981, as well as FM 7-70, The Light Infantry platoon and Squad dated September 1986, and is aligned with the Army's AirLand Battle doctrine. It is not intended to be a stand-alone publication. An understanding of FM 7-10, The Infantry Rifle Company, and FM 7-20, The Infantry Battalion, is essential.

The primary audiences for this manual are the infantry rifle platoon leader platoon sergeant, and squad and fire team leaders; instructors in TRADOC schools; and writers of infantry training literature. Secondary audiences include other infantry leaders and staff officers, service schools, and ROTC and military academy instructors.

This manual is organized with separate chapters covering doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures, and includes a tactical standing operating procedure. This manual is designed to fit in the cargo pocket of the leader's Battle Dress Uniform. It should be used in the field as a guide to training and combat operations. It is written with a heavy bias toward the tactics, techniques, and procedures that make infantry soldiers successful in battle. Leaders must use the tactics, techniques, and procedures, but they must not lose sight of the simple doctrinal principles outlined in Chapter 1, Doctrine. Additionally, infantry leaders should use this manual in developing an estimate of the situation and an analysis of mission, enemy, terrain, and troops and time available. This analysis leads to an effective plan and to successful execution of the assigned mission.

Tough, realistic training is the key to successful execution. The specifics of how to train the infantry platoon and squad are explained in ARTEP 7-8-MTP. This manual provides the tasks, conditions, and standards for training, and outline how to integrate individual, leader, and soldier tasks. Use these manuals to train.

The terms **doctrine, tactics, techniques, procedures, drills, and tactical standing operating procedure** have come to be used almost interchangeably over the years. This manual is written in closer adherence to the established Army definition of these important terms:

**Doctrine.** The fundamental PRINCIPLES by which military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgement in application. (JOINT Pub 1-02.)

**Tactics.** 1. The EMPLOYMENT of units in combat. 2. The ordered ARRANGEMENT and MANEUVER of units in relation to each other and/or to the enemy in order to utilize their full potential. (JOINT Pub 1-02.)

**Techniques.** The general and detailed METHODS used by troops or commanders to perform assigned missions and functions, specifically, the methods of using equipment and personnel. Techniques describe A WAY, not the only way. (AR 310-25, The Army Dictionary)

**Procedures.** A standard detailed COURSE OF ACTION that describes how to perform a task. Procedures prescribe THE WAY of accomplishing tasks. (TRADOC Reg 11-7, Armywide Doctrinal and Training Literature Program)

**Drills.** Drills provide small units standard procedures essential for building strong, aggressive units. They provide standardized actions that link soldier and collective tasks at platoon level and below. There are two types of drills that apply to all type units—battle drills and crew drills.

**Battle Drill.** A collective action rapidly executed without applying a deliberate decision-making process. Battle drills are further defined in Chapter 4.

**Crew Drill.** A collective action that the crew of a weapon or piece of equipment must perform to use the weapon or equipment. This manual does not discuss crew drills. (FM 25-101.)

**Tactical SOP.** A set of instructions covering those features of operations which lend themselves to a DEFINITE or STANDARDIZED PROCEDURE without loss of effectiveness. The procedure is applicable unless ordered otherwise. (JOINT Pub 1-02.)

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This publication implements the following international agreement:  
**STANAG 2003, Patrol Reports.**

Unless this publication states otherwise, masculine nouns and pronouns do not refer exclusively to men.

## CHAPTER 1

# DOCTRINE

*The US Army's basic fighting doctrine is called AirLand Battle. It reflects time proven fundamentals, the structure of modern warfare, and the experience of combat. AirLand Battle doctrine provides a specific mission for infantry forces.*

### Section I. FUNDAMENTALS

Among the infantry's basic fundamentals are the principles of war, the elements of combat power, and the tenets of AirLand Battle. These fundamentals have application at the platoon and squad level. This section provides the mission of the infantry and the doctrine principles basic to the infantry rifle platoon and squad. These principles form the basis for platoon and squad tactics, techniques, procedures, and drills. This section also discusses the elements of combat power and the skills required of leaders and soldiers at the small-unit level.

#### 1-1. MISSION

The mission of the infantry is to close with the enemy by means of fire and maneuver to defeat or capture him, or to repel his assault by fire, close combat, and counterattack.

a. Despite any technological advantages that our armed forces might have over an enemy, only close combat between ground forces gains the decision in battle. Infantry rifle forces (infantry, airborne, air assault, light, and ranger) have a key role in close combat situations. They—

- Attack over approaches that are not feasible for heavy forces.
- Make initial penetrations in difficult terrain for exploitations by armor and mechanized infantry.
- Retain existing obstacles and difficult terrain as pivots for operational and tactical maneuver.
- Seize or secure forested and built-up areas.
- Control restrictive routes for use by other forces.