

## Chapter 6

# BATTLE DRILLS

Infantry battle drills describe how platoons and squads apply fire and maneuver to commonly encountered situations. They require leaders to make decisions rapidly and to issue brief oral orders quickly.

### Section I. INTRODUCTION

This section defines and describes the format for battle drills.

6-1. **DEFINITION.** FM 7-1 defines a battle drill as “*a collective action rapidly executed without applying a deliberate decision-making process.*”

a. Characteristics of a battle drill are—

- They require minimal leader orders to accomplish and are standard throughout the Army.
- Sequential actions are vital to success in combat or critical to preserving life.
- They apply to platoon or smaller units.
- They are trained responses to enemy actions or leader's orders.
- They represent mental steps followed for offensive and defensive actions in training and combat.

b. A unit's ability to accomplish its mission often depends on Soldiers and leaders to execute key actions quickly. All Soldiers and their leaders must know their immediate reaction to enemy contact, as well as follow-up actions. Drills are limited to situations requiring instantaneous response; therefore, Soldiers must execute drills instinctively. This results from continual practice. Drills provide small units with standard procedures essential for building strength and aggressiveness.

(1) They identify key actions that leaders and Soldiers must perform quickly.

(2) They provide for a smooth transition from one activity to another; for example, from movement to offensive action to defensive action.

(3) They provide standardized actions that link Soldier and collective tasks at platoon level and below. (Soldiers perform individual tasks to CTT or SDT standard.)

(4) They require the full understanding of each individual and leader, and continual practice.

6-2. **FORMAT.** Drills include a *title*, a *situation* to cue the unit or leader to start the drill, the *required actions* in sequence, and supporting illustrations. Where applicable, drills are cross-referenced with material in other chapters, or other drills, or both. Training standards for battle drills are in the mission training plan (MTP).

### Section II. DRILLS

This section provides the battle drills for small units.

#### BATTLE DRILL 1 REACT TO CONTACT

**SITUATION:** A squad or platoon receives fires from enemy individual or crew-served weapons.

**REQUIRED ACTIONS:** See Figure 6-1.

1. Soldiers immediately assume the nearest covered positions.
2. Soldiers return fire immediately on reaching the covered positions.
3. Squad/team leaders locate and engage known or suspected enemy positions with well-aimed fire, and they pass information to the platoon/squad leader.
4. Fire team leaders control the fire of their Soldiers by using standard fire commands (initial and supplemental) containing the following elements:
  - Alert
  - Direction
  - Description of target
  - Range
  - Method of fire (manipulation and rate of fire)
  - Command to commence firing

5. Soldiers maintain contact (visual or oral) with the Soldiers on their left and right.
6. Soldiers maintain contact with their team leaders and indicate the location of enemy positions.
7. The leaders (visual or oral) check the status of their personnel.
8. The squad/team leaders maintain visual contact with the platoon/squad leader.
9. The platoon/squad leader moves up to the squad/fire team in contact and links up with its leader.
  - a. The platoon leader brings his RTO, platoon FO, the nearest squad's squad leader, and one machine gun team.
  - b. The squad leader of the trail squad moves to the front of his lead fire team.
  - c. The PSG also moves forward with the second machine gun team and links up with the platoon leader, ready to assume control of the base-of-fire element.
10. The platoon/squad leader determines whether or not his unit must move out of an EA.
11. The platoon/squad leader determines whether his unit can gain and maintain suppressive fires with the element already in contact (based on the volume and accuracy of enemy fires against the element in contact). The platoon/squad leader assesses the situation. He identifies—
  - The location of the enemy position and obstacles.
  - The size of the enemy force engaging the unit in contact. The number of enemy automatic weapons, the presence of any vehicles, and the employment of indirect fires are indicators of the enemy strength.
  - Vulnerable flanks.
  - Covered and concealed flanking routes to the enemy position.
12. The platoon/squad leader determines the next COA, such as fire and movement, assault, breach, knock out bunker, enter and clear a building or trench.
13. The platoon/squad leader reports the situation to the company commander/platoon leader and begins to maneuver his unit.
14. Platoon leader directs platoon FO to call for and adjust indirect fires (mortars or artillery). Squad leaders relay requests through the platoon leader. The platoon/squad leader in conjunction with the platoon FO maintains accurate battle tracking of all friendly elements to facilitate quick clearance of fires.
15. Leaders relay all commands and signals from the platoon chain of command.
16. The PSG positions the base of fire element to observe and to provide supporting fires.

**Note:** Once the platoon has executed the React to Contact drill, the platoon leader quickly assesses the situation, for example, enemy size and location. He picks a COA. The platoon leader reports the situation to the company commander.

Figure 6-1. REACT TO CONTACT

