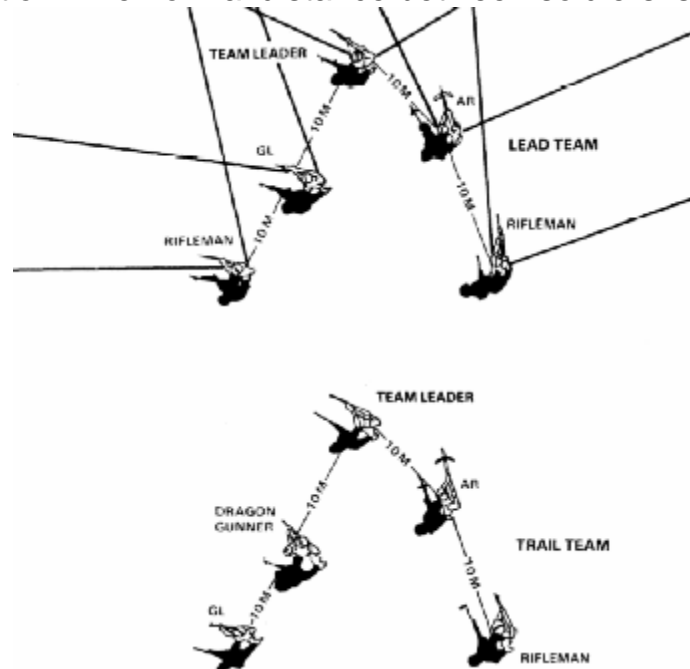


CHAPTER 25

MOVEMENT FORMATIONS AND TECHNIQUES

GENERAL

You will usually move as a member of a team. Small teams, such as infantry fire teams normally move in a formation. Each soldier in the team has a set position in the formation, determined by the type weapon he carries. That position, however, may be changed by the team leader to meet the situation. The normal distance between soldiers is 10 meters.



FIRE AND MOVEMENT

When a unit makes contact with the enemy, it normally starts firing at and moving toward the enemy. Sometimes the unit may move away from the enemy. That technique is called fire and movement. It is conducted either to close with and destroy the enemy, or to move away from the enemy so as to break contact with him.

The firing and moving take place at the same time. There is a fire element and a movement element. These elements may be single soldiers, buddy teams, fire teams, or squads. Regardless of the size of the elements, the action is still fire and movement.

The fire element covers the move of the movement element by firing at the enemy. This helps keep the enemy from firing back at the movement element. The movement element moves either to close with the enemy or to reach a better position from which to fire at him. The movement element should not move until the fire element is firing.

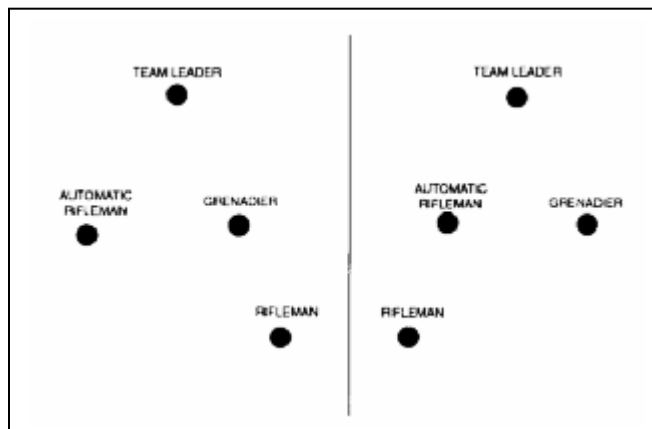
Depending on the distance to the enemy position and on the available cover, the fire element and the movement element switch roles as needed to keep moving.

Before the movement element moves beyond the supporting range of the fire element (the distance within which the weapons of the fire element can fire and support the movement element), it should take a position from which it can fire at the enemy. The movement element then becomes the next fire element and the fire element becomes the next movement element. If your team makes contact, your team leader should tell you to fire or to move. He should also tell you where to fire from, what to fire at, or where to move. When moving, use the low crawl, high crawl, or rush.

FIRE TEAM FORMATIONS

Formations are arrangements of elements and soldiers in relation to each other. Squads use formations for control flexibility and security. Leaders choose formations based on their analysis of the factors of METT-T. Leaders are up front in formations. This allows the fire team leader to lead by example, "Follow me and do as I do." All soldiers in the team must be able to see their leader.

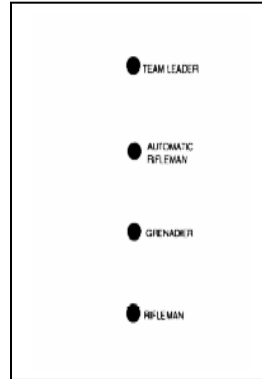
a. **Wedge.** The wedge is the basic formation for the fire team. The interval between soldiers in the wedge formation is normally 10 meters. The wedge expands and contracts depending on the terrain. When rough terrain, poor visibility, or other factors make control of the wedge difficult, fire teams modify the wedge. The normal interval is reduced



so that all team members can still see their team leader and the team leaders can still their squad leader. The sides of the wedge can contract to the point where the wedge resembles a single file. When moving in less

rugged terrain, where control is easier, soldiers expand or resume their original positions.

b. **File.** When the terrain precludes use of the wedge, fire teams use the file formation

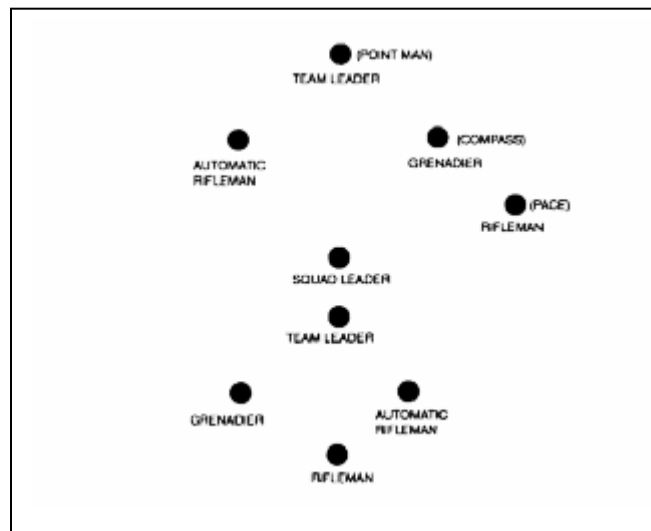


MOVEMENT FORMATION	WHEN NORMALLY USED	CHARACTERISTICS			
		CONTROL	FLEXIBILITY	FIRE CAPABILITIES/ RESTRICTIONS	SECURITY
FIRE TEAM WEDGE	BASIC FIRE TEAM FORMATION	EASY	GOOD	ALLOWS IMMEDIATE FIRES IN ALL DIRECTIONS	GOOD
FIRE TEAM FILE	CLOSE TERRAIN	EASIEST	LESS FLEXIBLE THAN THE WEDGE	ALLOWS IMMEDIATE FIRES TO THE FLANKS, MASK MOST FIRES TO THE REAR	LEAST

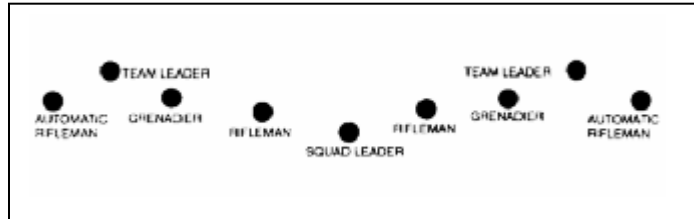
SQUAD FORMATIONS

Squad formations describe the relationships between fire teams in the squad. They include the squad column and squad line.

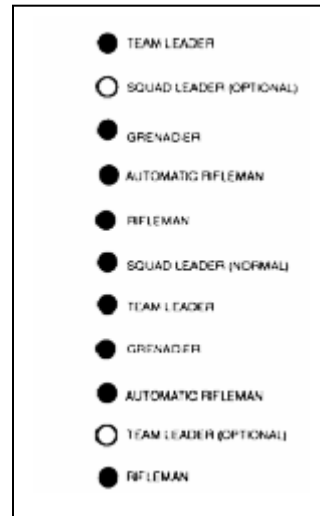
a. **Squad Column.** The squad column is the squad's most common formation. It provides good dispersion laterally and in depth without sacrificing control, and facilitates maneuver. The lead fire team is the base fire team. When the squad moves independently or as the rear element of the platoon, the rifleman in the (rail fire team provides rear security



b. **Squad Line.** The squad line provides maximum firepower to the front. When a squad is acting as the base squad, the fire team on the right is the base fire team.



c. **Squad File.** When not traveling in a column or line, squads travel in file. The squad file has the same characteristics as the fire team file. If the squad leader desires to increase his control over the formation, exert greater morale presence by leading from the front, and be immediately available to make key decisions, he will move forward to the first or second position. Additional control over the rear of the formation can be provided by moving a team leader to the last position.



MOVEMENT FORMATION	WHEN NORMALLY USED	CHARACTERISTICS			
		CONTROL	FLEXIBILITY	FIRE CAPABILITIES/ RESTRICTIONS	SECURITY
SQUAD COLUMN	SQUAD PRIMARY FORMATION	GOOD	FACILITATES MANEUVER, GOOD DISPERSION Laterally AND IN DEPTH	ALLOWS LARGE VOLUME OF FIRE TO THE FLANKS, LIMITED VOLUME TO THE FRONT	ALL AROUND
SQUAD LINE	WHEN MAXIMUM FIREPOWER IS RERUIRED TO THE FRONT	NOT AS GOOD AS SQUAD COLUMN	LIMITED MANEUVER CAPABILITY	ALLOWS IMMEDIATE FIRES TO THE FLANKS, MASK MOST FIRES TO THE REAR	GOOD TO THE FRONT, LITTLE TO THE FLANKS AND REAR
SQUAD FILE	CLOSE TERRAIN	EASIEST	MOST DIFICULT FROM WHICH TO MANEUVER	ALLOWS IMMEDIATE FIRES TO THE FLANKS, MASK MOST FIRES TO THE REAR	LEAST

MOVEMENT TECHNIQUES

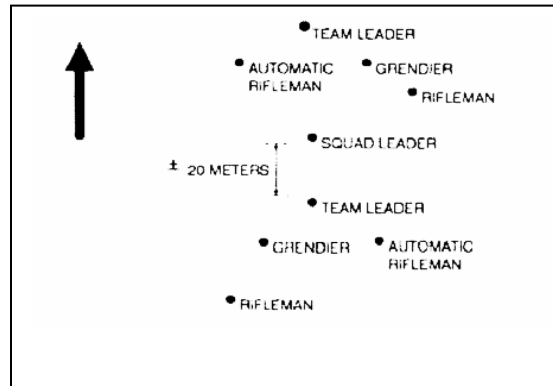
A movement technique is the manner a platoon uses to traverse terrain. There are three movement techniques: traveling, traveling overwatch, and bounding overwatch. The selection of a movement technique is based on the likelihood of enemy contact and the need for speed. Factors to consider for each technique are control, dispersion, speed, and security. Movement techniques are not fixed formations. They refer to the distances between soldiers, teams, and squads that vary based on mission, enemy, terrain, visibility, and any other factor that affects control. Soldiers must be able to see their fire team leader. The squad leader must be able to see his fire team leaders. The platoon leader should be able to see his lead squad leader. Leaders control movement with arm-and-hand signals. They use radios only when needed. Any of the three movement techniques (traveling, traveling overwatch, bounding overwatch) can be used with any formation.

MOVEMENT TECHNIQUE	WHEN NORMALLY USED	CHARACTERISTICS			
		CONTROL	DISPERSION	SPEED	SECURITY
TRAVELING	CONTACT NOT LIKELY	MORE	LESS	FASTEST	LEAST
TRAVELING OWERWATCH	CONTACT POSSIBLE	LESS	MORE	SLOWER	MORE
BOUNDING OVERWATCH	CONTACT EXPECTED	MOST	MOST	SLOWEST	MOST

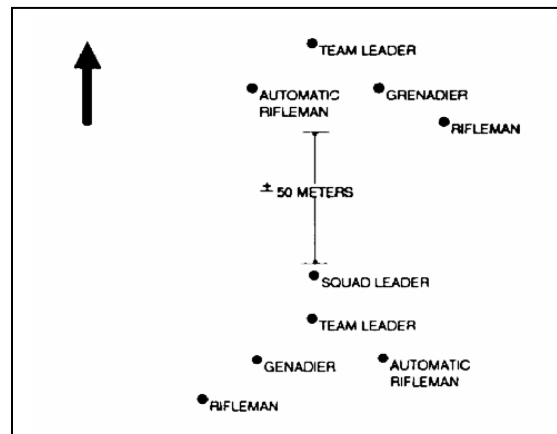
Techniques of Squad Movement.

The platoon leader determines and directs which movement technique the squad will use.

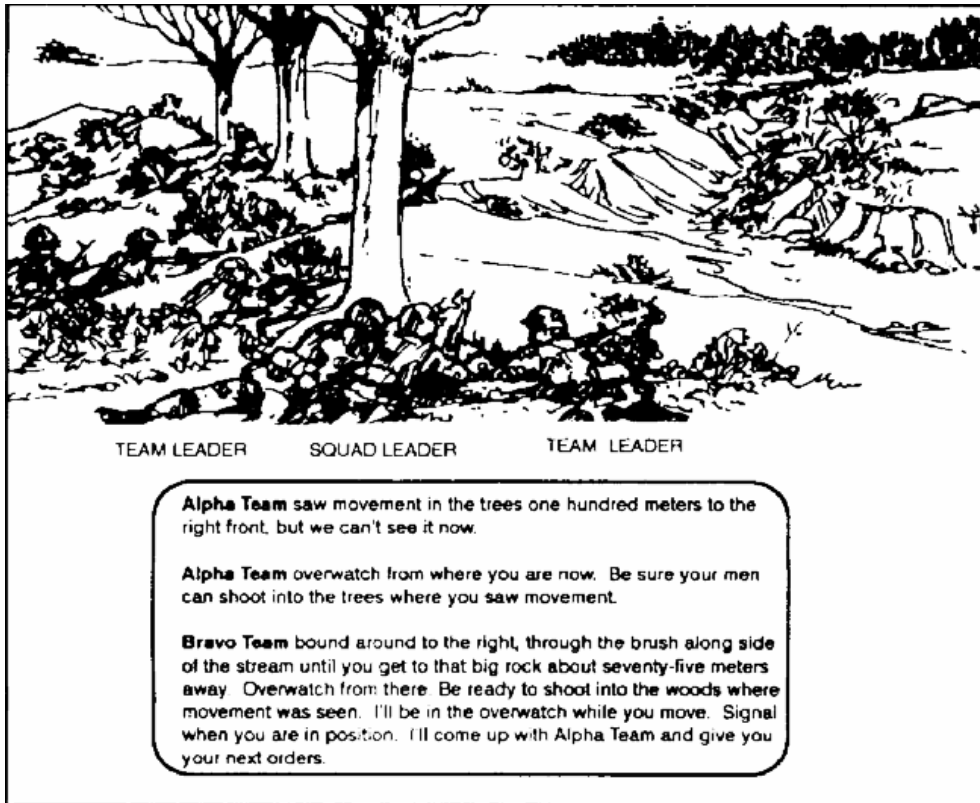
a. **Traveling.** Traveling is used when contact with the enemy is not likely and speed is needed



b. **Traveling overwatch.** Traveling overwatch is used when contact is possible. Attached weapons move near the squad leader and under his control so he can employ them quickly.



c. **Bounding overwatch.** Bounding overwatch is used when contact is expected, when the squad leader feels the enemy is near (movement, noise, reflection, trash, fresh tracks, or even a hunch), or when a large open danger area must be crossed.



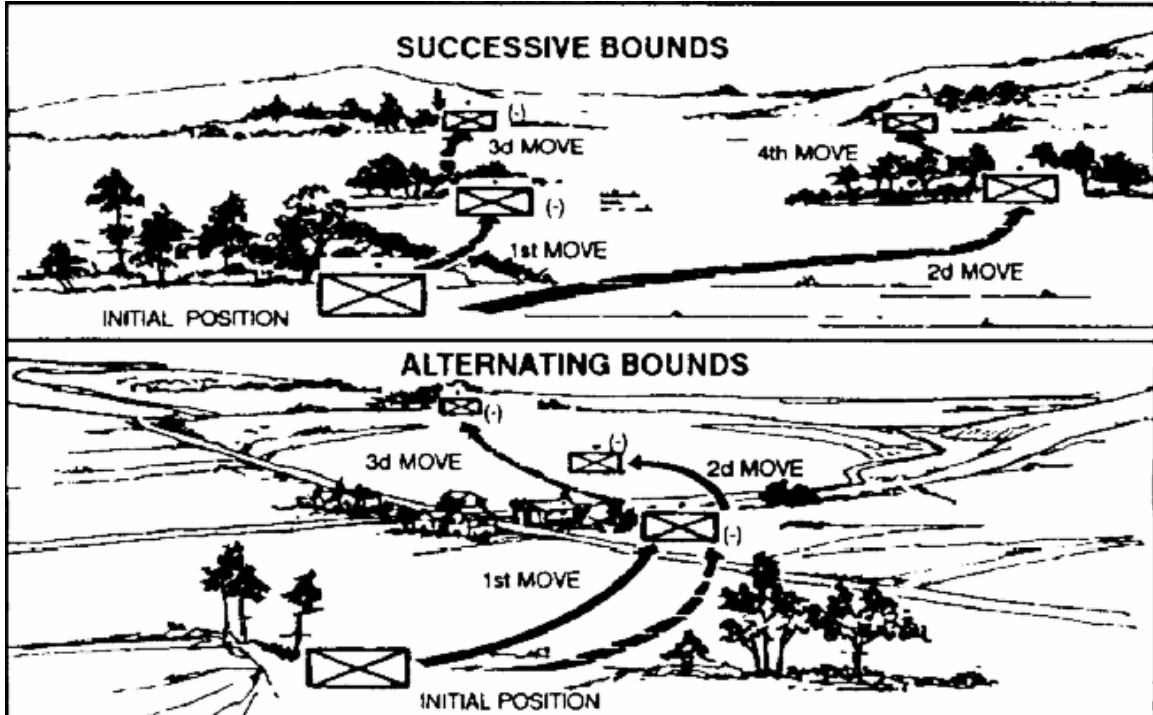
(1) The lead fire team overwatches first. Soldiers scan for enemy positions. The squad leader usually stays with the overwatch team.

(2) The trail fire team bounds and signals the squad leader when his team completes its bound and is prepared to overwatch the movement of the other team.

(3) Both team leaders must know if successive or alternate bounds will be used and which team the squad leader will be with. The overwatching team leader must know the route and destination of the bounding team. The bounding team leader must know his team's destination and route, possible enemy locations, and actions to take when he arrives there. He must also know where the overwatching team will be, and how he will receive his instructions.

The cover and concealment on the bounding team's route dictates how its soldiers move.

(4) Teams can bound successively or alternately. Successive bounds are easier to control; alternate bounds can be faster.



ACTIONS AT DANGER AREAS

A danger area is any place on a route where the leader's estimate process tells him that his platoon might be exposed to enemy observation, fire, or both. Platoons try to avoid danger areas. If a platoon must cross a danger area, it does so with great caution and as quickly as possible.

Types of Danger Areas. The following are some examples of danger areas and crossing procedures.

(1) **Open areas.** Conceal the platoon on the nearside and observe the area. Post security to give early warning. Send an element across to clear the far side. When cleared, cross the remainder of the platoon at the shortest exposed distance and as quickly as possible.

(2) **Roads and trails.** Cross roads or trails at or near a bend, a narrow spot, or on low ground.

(3) **Villages.** Pass villages on the downwind side and well away from them. Avoid animals, especially dogs, which might reveal the presence of the platoon.

(4) **Enemy positions.** Pass on the downwind side (the enemy might have scout dogs). Be alert for trip wires and warning devices.

(5) **Minefields.** Bypass minefields if at all possible—even if it requires changing the route by a great distance. Clear a path through minefields only if necessary.

(6) **Streams.** Select a narrow spot in the stream that offers concealment on both banks. Observe the far side carefully. Emplace near and far-side security for early warning. Clear the far side, then cross rapidly but quietly.

(7) **Wire obstacles.** Avoid wire obstacles (the enemy covers obstacles with observation and fire).

Crossing of Danger Areas

When the platoon crosses a danger area independently or as the lead element of a larger force, it must—

- Designate near- and far-side rally points.
- Secure the near side (right, left flanks, and rear security).
- Reconnoiter and secure the far side.
- Execute crossing the danger area.

(1) The platoon leader or squad leader decides how the unit will cross based on the time he has, the size of the unit, the size of the danger area, the fields of fire into the area, and the amount of security he can post. A small unit may cross all at once, in buddy teams, or one soldier at a time. A large unit normally crosses its elements one at a time. As each element crosses, it moves to an overwatch position or to the far-side rally point until told to continue movement.

(2) To maintain momentum, trailing platoons normally cross the danger area without conducting their own reconnaissance or establishing far-side security. The lead platoon conducts reconnaissance and maintains far-side security for the whole force.