



MCRP 3-01B

Pistol Marksmanship



U.S. Marine Corps

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A:

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To Readers

Unless otherwise stated, whenever the masculine gender is used, both men and women are included.

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY:

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FOREWORD:

Marines must have the versatility, flexibility, and skills to deal with any situation at any level of intensity across the entire range of military operations. Whenever the situation warrants the application of deadly force, a Marine must be able to deliver well-aimed shots to eliminate the threat. A Marine who is proficient in pistol marksmanship handles this challenge without escalating the level of violence or causing unnecessary collateral damage. It is not enough to simply provide Marines with the best available firearms; we must also ensure that their training prepares them to deliver accurate fire against the enemy under the most adverse conditions without hesitancy, fear, or uncertainty of action. A well-trained Marine is confident that he can protect himself, accomplish the mission, and protect his fellow Marines. To be combat ready, a Marine must be skilled in the tactics, techniques, and procedures of pistol marksmanship and diligent in the proper care and maintenance of the M9, 9-mm service pistol.

Marine Corps Reference Publication (MCRP) 3-01B, *Pistol Marksmanship*, is the source document for pistol marksmanship and provides the doctrinal basis for Marine Corps pistol marksmanship training. This publication provides all Marines armed with a pistol with the tactics, techniques, and procedures for range and field firing the M9, 9-mm service pistol.

MCRP 3-01B supersedes the discussion of pistol marksmanship in Fleet Marine Force Manual (FMFM) 0-8, *Basic Marksmanship*.

Reviewed and approved this date.

BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

EDWARD HANLON, JR. Lieutenant General, U.S. Marine Corps Commanding General Marine Corps Combat Development Command

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CHAPTER 1

THE M9 SERVICE PISTOL

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Chapter 1. The M9 Service Pistol

The Marine Corps' uses the M9 service pistol as a defensive weapon. It is a semiautomatic, magazine-fed, recoil-operated, double-action pistol. The M9 service pistol's magazine holds 15 rounds and is chambered with a 9-mm ball (NATO M882 round). The M9 service pistol has a maximum effective range of 50 meters (54.7 yards).

Note: The procedures in this chapter are written for right-handed Marines; left-handed Marines reverse instructions as necessary.

Functional Capabilities

When the M9 service pistol's safety lever is moved to the firing position, it can be fired in either a single-action or double-action mode. It is designed to fire one round each time the trigger is pulled. When the last round is fired, the slide automatically locks to the rear.

Single-Action Mode

The single-action mode allows the pistol to be fired when the hammer is cocked; single action requires the hammer to be cocked to the rear before the trigger is pulled. The hammer can be manually cocked or mechanically cocked. The hammer is mechanically cocked after the first shot is fired. See figure 1-1.



Figure 1-1. Single-Action Mode.

Double-Action Mode

The double-action mode causes the hammer to move to the rear as the trigger is being pulled. See figure 1-2.



Figure 1-2. Double-Action Mode.

Nomenclature

See figure 1-3 below.

Major Components

The M9's major components consist of the slide assembly, barrel assembly, and receiver. See

figure 1-4 on page 1-3.

Slide Assembly

The slide assembly houses the firing pin, firing pin block, striker, extractor, and loaded chamber indicator, and it cocks the hammer during recoil.

Extractor

The extractor pulls the brass from the chamber after the round is fired.

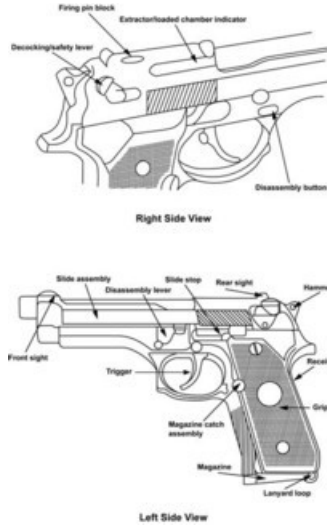


Figure 1-3. M9 Service Pistol.

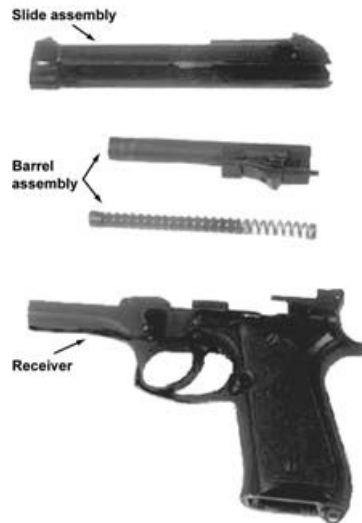


Figure 1-4. Major Components.

Loaded Chamber Indicator

When a round is in the chamber, the upper surface of the loaded chamber indicator protrudes from the right side of the slide. This protrusion can be felt with the finger, verifying that there is a round in the chamber.

Barrel Assembly

The barrel assembly houses the round for firing, directs the projectile, and locks the barrel in position during firing.

Receiver

The receiver supports the major components, controls the functioning of the pistol, and holds the magazine in place. The front and back straps of the grip are grooved vertically to ensure that the hand does not slip while firing. The receiver consists of the assembly button, slide stop, and magazine catch assembly.

Disassembly Button

The disassembly button permits quick disassembly of the pistol.

Slide Stop

The slide stop holds the slide to the rear after the last round is fired. It can also be manually operated to lock the slide to the rear or release the slide.

Magazine Catch Assembly (Magazine Release Button)

The magazine catch assembly secures the magazine in place when loading, and it releases the magazine from the pistol when unloading. The magazine catch assembly is designed for both right- and left-handed Marines.

Note: Reversal of the magazine catch assembly for left-handed Marines can be performed by a qualified armorer.

Safety Features

The safety features of the M9 service pistol include the decocking/safety lever, firing pin block, and half-cock notch.

Decocking/Safety Lever

The decocking/safety lever, commonly referred to as the safety, permits safe operation of the pistol by both right- and left-handed Marines. As the safety is moved to the safe (down) position, the firing pin striker moves out of alignment with the firing pin. This movement prevents the pistol from firing as the hammer moves forward.

Note: In the fire (up) position, a red dot is visible, indicating that the pistol is ready to fire.

Firing Pin Block

The firing pin block rests in the firing pin notch and prevents movement of the firing pin until the trigger is pulled. As the trigger is pulled, the firing pin block moves up and out of the firing pin notch. This movement allows a round to be fired when the hammer strikes the firing pin.

Half-Cock Notch

The half-cock notch stops the forward movement of the hammer during a mechanical failure.

Cycle of Operation

There are eight steps in the cycle of operation for the M9 service pistol.

Firing

Once the safety is off and the trigger is pulled to the rear, the hammer falls on the firing pin, which strikes the primer and ignites the round. See figure 1-5.



Figure 1-5. Firing.

Unlocking

As the slide assembly moves to the rear, the locking block rotates out of the notches in the slide. See figure 1-6.



Figure 1-6. Unlocking.

Extracting

As the slide moves rearward, the extractor with draws the cartridge case out of the chamber. See figure 1-7.



Figure 1-7. Extracting.

Ejecting

As the face of the slide passes over the ejector, the case strikes the ejector and it is knocked upward and outward through the ejection port. See figure 1-8.



Figure 1-8. Ejecting.

Cocking

As the slide moves rearward, the hammer is pushed back, allowing the sear to engage the hammer hooks, cock the hammer to the rear, and place the pistol in the single-action mode. See figure 1-9.



Figure 1-9. Cocking.

Feeding

The slide starts forward, pushed by the recoil spring. The face of the slide makes contact with the cartridge at the top of the magazine, stripping it from the magazine and pushing it toward the chamber. See figure 1-10.



Figure 1-10. Feeding.

Chambering

As the slide continues forward, it pushes the cartridge into the chamber. See figure 1-11.



Figure 1-11. Chambering.

Locking

As the slide assembly continues to move forward, the locking block lugs move into the locking block recesses on the right and left sides of the slide. See figure 1-12 on page 1-6.



Figure 1-12. Locking.

Ammunition

The only ammunition authorized for the M9 service pistol is the NATO M882 9-mm ball. Dummy ammunition can be used during training (a dummy round has a hole drilled in its side and contains no primer). See figure 1-13.



Figure 1-13. M9 Service Pistol Ammunition.

Do not open ammunition containers until the ammunition is to be used. Ammunition must be maintained in a high state of readiness. To care for ammunition—

Keep ammunition dry and clean. If ammunition gets wet or dirty, wipe it off with a clean dry cloth.

Wipe off light corrosion as soon as it is discovered. Never use ammunition that is heavily corroded, dented, or has the projectile pushed in.

Do not expose ammunition to direct sunlight for long periods of time.

Do not oil or grease ammunition. Dust or other abrasives can collect on greasy ammunition and may cause damage to the operating parts of the pistol. Oiled cartridges also produce excessive chamber pressure.

Wearing of the M9 Service Pistol's Gear

The proper placement of pistol gear helps ensure safety and aids the Marine in effectively handling and employing the pistol.

M12 Holster

The M12 holster consists of the holster, removable holster flap, and metal retaining clip. To check for proper placement of the holster, allow the right arm to hang freely. The holster should be slightly in front of the arm to permit easy access to the pistol upon presentation from the holster. See figure 1-14.

Note: In most cases, the holster is issued with the holster flap installed for a righthanded Marine. To convert the holster for a left-handed Marine, remove the metal retaining clip and install the clip on the opposite side of the holster.



Figure 1-14.
The M12 Holster and M1 Ammunition Pocket.

M1 Ammunition Pocket

The ammunition pocket attaches to the cartridge belt on the side opposite the holster in a position that best permits ready access for reloads. The magazine is stored in the ammunition pocket with the rounds down and pointed inboard.

M7 Shoulder Holster

The M7 shoulder holster consists of a holster with a thumb snap closure, shoulder strap, chest strap, and a belt retaining loop. The holster is positioned on the left side of the chest to provide easy and quick access with the right hand. See figure 1-15. The M7 holster comes fully assembled and has adjustable straps to accommodate each Marine's body size. The holster is available for right-handed Marines only, therefore, a left-handed Marine has to withdraw the pistol from the holster with the right hand and then transfer the pistol to the left hand before firing. (See chap. 8 for

transferring the pistol from one hand to the other.) When the shoulder holster is worn properly—

The shoulder strap lays flat across the left shoulder with the shoulder pad directly on top of the shoulder.

The chest strap attaches to the D-ring at the top of the holster and runs diagonally across the chest, underneath the right arm, and around the back where it attaches to the end of the shoulder strap.

The belt retaining loop is at the bottom of the holster and attaches to the belt to stabilize the holster's position.

The ammunition pocket attaches to the chest strap directly underneath the right arm.



Figure 1-15. M7 Shoulder Holster.

Assault Holster

Some Marines (i.e., Marine security force, direct action platoon, and military police) are required to carry the assault holster. This holster has a retention strap that fastens over the top of the holster to retain the pistol. This type of holster generally has a thumb break on the retention strap that is disengaged to access the pistol. See figure 1-16.



Figure 1-16. Assault Holster.

Concealed Pistol Holster

Some Marines are required to carry a concealed pistol as part of their official duties. The primary consideration for placement of a concealed pistol holster is to ensure the pistol cannot be seen; therefore, the Marine must consider the type of clothing to be worn. A secondary consideration is to place the holster so the pistol can be presented easily. Typically, the best position for a concealed holster is just behind the strong side hip. This position best conceals the pistol while allowing it to be presented quickly. Another placement choice is in a shoulder holster, placing the pistol just under the weak side arm. See figures 1-17 through 1-20 below.



Figure 1-17. Wearing of the Concealed Pistol Holster—Utilities.



Figure 1-18. Wearing of the Concealed Pistol—Sweater.



Figure 1-19. Wearing of the Concealed Pistol Holster—Jacket.



Figure 1-20. Wearing of the Concealed Pistol Holster—Civilian Attire.

Lanyard

The lanyard aids in pistol retention. It is issued in three sizes and is adjustable. The lanyard consists of a fabric cord, two cylindrical slip rings, and a metal clip that attaches the lanyard to the pistol's lanyard loop. See figure 1-21.



Figure 1-21. M9 Service Pistol (With Lanyard).

To don the lanyard—

Adjust the slip rings so they are positioned flush with the lanyard's base (clip end).

Place the right arm through the loop and place the loop over the head, resting on the left shoulder.

Attach metal clip to the pistol's lanyard loop.

Place the pistol in the holster.

Use the left hand to hold the bottom slip ring against the base of the lanyard. Use the right hand to slide the top slip ring upward to position the loop of the lanyard under the arm. The lanyard should fit snugly against the body, but not restrict the Marine's movements.

Tuck any excess cord behind the holster.

Ensure that the lanyard is adjusted properly by removing the pistol from the holster and fully extending the right arm. The lanyard should be taut. Adjust as necessary.

Note: Re-adjust the lanyard if any equipment changes are made (e.g., flak jacket).

Firing the M9 Service Pistol While Wearing Gloves

Not all combat engagements occur during ideal weather conditions. During cold weather, the Marine may find it necessary to wear gloves to protect the fingers from frostbite and help prevent stiffening of the hands. Gloves may also be worn in mission-oriented protective posture conditions. Gloves provide protection to the hands, however, they also may interfere with the Marine's ability to engage targets effectively. The added bulk of the gloves may affect the Marine's ability to manipulate the safety, magazine release button, magazine, hammer, and slide stop/release. For example, the Marine may need to exert more pressure to engage the magazine release or slide release buttons to compensate for the thickness of the gloves.

The principles of target engagement (see chap. 7) do not change while wearing gloves, however, the specific ability to manipulate and control the trigger is greatly affected by the thickness of the gloves around the fingers. Wearing gloves reduce the Marine's ability to feel, which makes it difficult to apply trigger control when firing. The Marine may find that more pressure than normal must be applied with the trigger finger just to establish initial contact with the trigger. Once the Marine can "feel" the trigger through the gloves, then the pressure required to fire a shot can be applied. This action may increase the chances of firing the pistol prematurely due to excessive pressure on the trigger. Dry firing while wearing gloves allows the Marine to learn how to apply trigger control consistently and determines how much pressure is needed to effectively fire a shot. While wearing gloves, the Marine may find it difficult to fire the pistol in the double-action mode due to the position of the trigger and the limited amount of space between the trigger and the trigger guard. Therefore, if the situation permits, the Marine may wish to thumbcock the pistol to fire in single-action mode. In single-action mode, there is more space between the trigger guard and the trigger, making it easier to position the finger on the trigger. However, the Marine's ability to thumbcock the pistol may also be hindered by the gloves' bulk. Therefore, to thumbcock the pistol while wearing gloves, the Marine may perform one of the following methods:

For method one, loop a section of 550 cord (approximately 2 inches) through the loop located on the top rear portion of the hammer. The length of the cord should not interfere with the pistol's cycle of operation or with the Marine's ability to establish sight alignment. Once the cord is attached to the hammer, take the pistol off safe and pull downward on the cord to cock the hammer. See figure 1-22.



Figure 1-22. Cocking the Pistol with 550 Cord.

For method two, take the pistol off safe, rotate the pistol inboard, and place the top of the hammer against a secure surface (e.g., cartridge belt, table top, heel of boot). Apply pressure on the pistol to keep the hammer in place and push downward on the pistol in one continuous motion to cock the hammer. See figure 1-23.

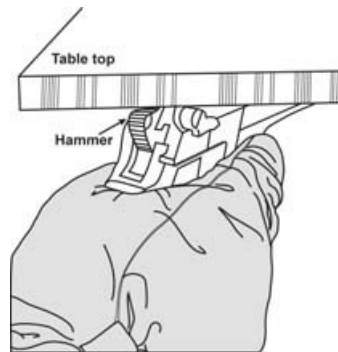


Figure 1-23. Cocking the Pistol on a Secure Surface.

Preventive Maintenance

If the M9 service pistol is to be effective, it must be maintained in a state of operational readiness at all times; therefore, maintenance of the M9 service pistol is a continuous effort. A clean, properly lubricated, well-maintained pistol will fire when needed.

Pistol Disassembly

Before disassembling the M9 service pistol, ensure that the pistol is in Condition 4. The pistol is in Condition 4 when the magazine is removed, the chamber is empty, the slide is forward, and the safety is on. To disassemble the pistol, perform the following steps in sequence:

Hold the pistol in the right hand with the muzzle slightly elevated. Reach over the slide with the left hand and place the left index finger on the disassembly button and the left thumb on the disassembly lever. Press the disassembly button and hold it in place while rotating the disassembly lever downward until it stops.

Note: A left-handed Marine places the right thumb on the disassembly button and the right index finger on the disassembly lever.

Pull the slide and barrel assembly forward and remove it while wrapping the fingers around the slide to hold the recoil spring and recoil spring guide in place.

Turn the slide assembly over in the left hand until the recoil spring and recoil spring guide face up. Place the right thumb on the end of the recoil spring guide next to the locking block and compress the recoil spring and spring guide while lifting and removing them from the slide and barrel assembly. See figure 1-24. Allow the recoil spring to decompress slowly.

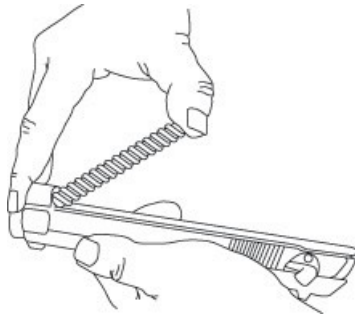


Figure 1-24. Removing the Recoil Spring and Recoil Spring Guide.

Separate the recoil spring from the recoil spring guide.

Push in on the locking block plunger with the right index finger while pushing the barrel forward slightly. Lift and remove the locking block and barrel assembly from the slide.

A Marine is not authorized to disassemble the pistol any further than the preceding steps. Any further disassembly must be performed by ordnance personnel. See figure 1-25.



Figure 1-25. Disassembled M9 Service Pistol.

Disassembly of the Magazine

To disassembly the magazine, perform the following steps:

Grip the magazine firmly in the left hand with the floorplate up and the thumb resting against the flat end of the floorplate.

Release the floorplate by pushing down (with a blunt object; e.g., an ink pen) on the floorplate retainer stud in the center of the floorplate. At the same time, slide the floorplate a short distance forward with the thumb.

Maintain the magazine spring pressure with the thumb and remove the floorplate from the magazine.

Remove the floorplate retainer and magazine spring and follower from the magazine tube. See figure 1-26.



Figure 1-26. Disassembled Magazine.

Inspection of the Pistol

Once the pistol has been disassembled, it must be thoroughly inspected to ensure it is in a serviceable condition. Pistol inspection is continuous during the pistol's cleaning and reassembly:

Slide Assembly

Check for free movement of the safety. Ensure the rear sight is secure.

Barrel Assembly

Inspect the bore and chamber for pitting or obstructions.

Check the locking block plunger for free movement of the locking block.

Inspect the locking lugs for cracks and burrs.

Recoil Spring and Recoil Spring Guide

Check the recoil spring for damage.

Check that it is not bent.

Check the recoil spring guide for straightness and smoothness.

Check to be sure it is free of cracks and burrs.

Receiver Assembly

Check for bends, chips, and cracks.

Check for free movement of the slide stop and magazine catch assembly.

Check the guide rails for excessive wear, burrs, cracks, or chips.

Magazine Assembly

Check the spring and follower for damage.

Ensure the lips of the magazine are not excessively bent and are free of cracks and burrs. The magazine tube should not be bent or dirty.

Cleaning and Lubricating the Pistol

Only authorized cleaning materials should be used to clean and lubricate the pistol. If these items are not issued with the pistol, they may be obtained from the armory. The following procedures are used to clean and lubricate the pistol—

Slide Assembly

Clean the slide assembly with a cloth. A general purpose brush and cleaning lubricant protectant (CLP) can also assist in the removal of excess dirt and carbon buildup.

Ensure the safety, bolt face, slide guides, and extractor are free of dirt and residue.

Wipe dry with a cloth and apply a light coat of CLP.

Barrel Assembly

Insert a bore brush with CLP into the chamber end of the barrel, ensuring that it completely clears the muzzle before it is pulled back through the bore.

Caution

Insert the bore brush through the chamber to prevent damage to the crown of the barrel.

Repeat several times to loosen carbon deposits.

Dry the barrel by pushing a swab through the bore.

Repeat until a clean swab can be observed.

Clean the locking block with a general purpose brush.

Use the barrel brush to apply a light coat of CLP to the bore and chamber area and lubricate the exterior surfaces of the barrel and locking block.

Recoil Spring and Recoil Spring Guide

Clean the recoil spring and recoil spring guide using CLP and a general purpose brush or cloth.

Apply a light coat of CLP after wiping the recoil spring and recoil spring guide clean.

Receiver

Wipe the receiver assembly clean with a cloth.

Use a general purpose brush for areas that are hard to reach, paying special attention to the disassembly lever, trigger, slide stop, hammer, and magazine release button.

Apply a light coat of CLP.

Caution

Do not allow the hammer to fall with full force by pulling the trigger when the slide is removed. This can damage the receiver and hammer.

Magazine

Clean the magazine tube and follower with CLP and a general purpose brush.

the magazine spring, floorplate retainer, and floorplate clean with a cloth.

Apply a light coat of CLP.

Pistol Re-assembly

After the M9 service pistol has been cleaned and lubricated, it must be properly re-assembled to ensure its serviceability. To re-assemble the M9 service pistol—

Use the left hand to grasp the slide with the bottom facing up and the muzzle pointing toward the body. Use the right hand to grasp the barrel assembly with the locking block facing up. Use the index finger to push in the locking block plunger while placing the thumb on the base of the locking block.

Insert the muzzle of the barrel assembly into the forward open end of the slide. At the same time, lower the rear of the barrel assembly by slightly moving the barrel downward. The locking block should fall into the notches of the slide assembly.

Slip the recoil spring guide into the recoil spring.

Insert the end of the recoil spring and recoil spring guide into the slide recoil spring housing. At the same time, compress the recoil spring and lower the spring guide until it is fully seated onto the locking block cutaway.

Use the left hand to grasp the slide and barrel assembly, sights up, and wrap the fingers around the slide assembly to hold the recoil spring and guide in place. Align the slide assembly guide rails onto the receiver assembly guide rails.

Push the slide rearward while pushing up on the slide stop with the thumb. Lock the slide to the rear while maintaining upward pressure on the slide stop. Rotate the disassembly lever upward. Listen for a click, an audible click indicates a positive lock.

Pistol Magazine Re-assembly

To re-assemble the magazine—

Grip the magazine firmly in the left hand with the floorplate end up and the counting holes facing the Marine. Insert the follower into the magazine so the flat end of the follower is against the flat end of the magazine.

Ensure the floorplate retainer is attached to the first curve of the bottom coil.

Hold the spring upright with the right hand and insert the spring into the magazine tube so that the

flat end of the floorplate retainer is against the flat end of the magazine.

Push the magazine spring and floorplate retainer down with the right hand and hold it in place with the thumb of the left hand. Use the right hand to slide the floorplate over the side walls of the magazine until fully seated, which is indicated by an audible click.

Safety/Function Check

A safety/function check is performed after reassembling the M9 service pistol. Perform the following steps to ensure the pistol is operational:

Ensure there is no ammunition in the chamber of the pistol.

Ensure that the safety is in the safe position, then depress the slide stop, allowing the slide to return fully forward. At the same time, the hammer should fall to the full forward position.

Pull and release the trigger. The firing pin block should move up and down but the hammer should not move.

Place the safety in the fire position.

Pull the trigger to check the double action. The hammer should cock and fall.

Pull the trigger again and hold it to the rear. Use the fingers and thumb of the left hand to grasp the serrated sides of the slide just forward of the safety. Pull the slide to its rearmost position and release it while holding the trigger to the rear. Release the trigger, a click should be heard and the hammer should not fall.

Pull the trigger to check the single action. The hammer should fall. Place the safety in the safe position.

If the safety/function check does not indicate an operational pistol, the Marine takes the pistol to organizational maintenance or the next authorized repair level.

User Serviceability Inspection

The Marine is responsible for performing a user serviceability inspection on the pistol prior to live fire. The user serviceability inspection ensures the pistol is in an acceptable operating condition. This inspection is not intended to replace the detailed pistol components inspection following disassembly or the limited technical inspection or pre-fire inspection conducted by a qualified armorer. To conduct a user serviceability inspection on the pistol, perform the following steps:

Ensure the magazine release button is on the left side of the pistol for a right-handed Marine, the right side of the pistol for a left-handed Marine.

Ensure the magazine seats into the magazine well when it is inserted and that it cannot be pulled out.

Ensure the slide stays locked to the rear when the slide is pulled rearward with an empty magazine in the pistol.

Ensure the magazine falls out freely when the magazine release button is depressed.

Repeat the preceding four steps with the second magazine.

Ensure the slide is locked to the rear before lubricating the spring guide, the top of the barrel just forward of the front sight, and the guide rails of the slide assembly behind the safety. With the muzzle pointed downward, work the slide several times and release.

Inspect the pistol's external parts visually to ensure that there are no cracks or excessive wear.

Perform a safety/function check of the pistol.

Pistol Maintenance in Adverse Conditions

Combat situations can place Marines in a variety of adverse conditions. Therefore, the M9 service pistol must be maintained properly to ensure its continued operation.

Extreme Cold

In extreme cold conditions, ensure that the following maintenance is performed:

Clean and lubricate the pistol inside at room temperature, if possible.

Apply a light coat of lubricant, arctic weather (LAW) to all functional parts.

Always keep the pistol dry.

Keep the pistol covered when moving from a warm to a cold area. This permit gradual cooling of the pistol and prevents freezing.

Ensure that a hot pistol is not placed in snow or on ice.

Keep snow out of the bore of the barrel. If snow should enter the bore, use a swab and cleaning rod to clean the bore before firing.

Hot, Wet Climates

Maintenance in hot, wet climates must be performed more frequently:

Inspect hidden surfaces for corrosion. If corrosion is found, clean and lubricate.

Remove handprints with a clean cloth in order to prevent corrosion.

Dry the pistol with a cloth and lubricate it with CLP.

Check ammunition and magazines frequently for corrosion. Disassemble and clean the magazines with CLP and wipe dry with a clean cloth. If necessary, clean ammunition with a dry cloth.

Hot, Dry Climates

In a hot, dry climate, dust and sand can cause stoppages and excessive wear on component contact surfaces during firing; therefore, keep the pistol covered whenever possible.

Corrosion is less likely to form on metal parts in a dry climate. Therefore, lightly lubricate internal working surfaces with CLP. Do not lubricate external parts of the pistol. Wipe excess lubricant from

exposed surfaces. Do not lubricate internal components of the magazine.

Heavy Rain and Fording Operations

The following maintenance procedures are followed during periods of heavy rains or during fording operations:

Always attempt to keep the pistol dry.

Drain any water from the barrel prior to firing.

Dry the bore with a swab and cleaning rod.

Generously lubricate internal and external surfaces of the pistol with CLP.

Amphibious Conditions

If the pistol comes into contact with salt water, clean the pistol as soon as possible. If time does not permit cleaning in accordance with Technical Manual (TM) 1005A-10/1, *Operator's Manual, Pistol Semiautomatic, 9mm, M9*, then wash the pistol with fresh water.

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CHAPTER 2

WEAPONS HANDLING

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Chapter 2. Weapons Handling

Weapons handling is a method of providing consistent and standardized procedures for handling, operating, and employing the M9 service pistol. Understanding and applying the principles of weapons handling are critical to developing safe and consistent weapons skills. Strict adherence to training and diligent practice will make weapons handling instinctive. Mission accomplishment and survival during combat depend on a Marine's ability to react instinctively and with confidence.

Note: The procedures in this chapter are written for right-handed Marines; left-handed Marines should reverse directions as needed.

Safety Rules

The following safety rules are the foundation for responsible weapons handling. They must be observed at all times, both in training and combat.

Rule 1: Treat every weapon as if it were loaded.

This rule is intended to prevent unintentional injury to personnel or damage to property from handling or transferring possession of a weapon.

Rule 2: Never point a weapon at anything you do not intend to shoot.

This rule enforces the importance of muzzle awareness and reinforces positive identification of the target.

Rule 3: Keep your finger straight and off the trigger until you are ready to fire.

This rule is intended to minimize the risk of firing the weapon negligently (when not firing, the trigger finger is straight along the receiver, outside of the trigger guard). This rule also reinforces positive identification of the target.

Rule 4: Keep weapon on safe until you intend to fire.

This rule enforces the use of the weapon's own safety feature and reinforces positive identification of the target.

Weapons Conditions

The M9 service pistol's level of readiness is defined by three specific conditions. The steps in the loading and unloading process take the pistol through the specific conditions that indicate the pistol's readiness for live fire. The Marine must understand and know the condition of his pistol at all times.

Condition 1. Magazine inserted, round in chamber, slide forward, and safety on.

Condition 2. Not applicable to the M9 service pistol.

Condition 3. Magazine inserted, chamber empty, slide forward, and safety on.

Condition 4. Magazine removed, chamber empty, slide forward, and safety on.

Determining a Weapon's Condition

There are two methods for determining the pistol's condition: checking the round indicator on the right side of the pistol and conducting a chamber check.

Checking the Round Indicator

When there is a round in the chamber, the upper surface of the extractor protrudes from the right side of the slide. The protrusion can be felt by sliding either the thumb or the index finger of the left hand over the top of the slide and across the extractor. See figure 2-1.

Conducting a Chamber Check

To conduct a chamber check—

Point the pistol in a safe direction and grasp the pistol grip with the right hand.



Figure 2-1. Checking the Round Indicator.

Place the trigger guard in the palm of the left hand. Use the thumb and index finger to grasp the forward end of the slide at the indentations under the front sight, behind the muzzle. See figure 2-2.



Figure 2-2. Placement of the Left Hand.

Caution

Ensure the muzzle does not cover the hand or fingers.

Keep thumb in place around the pistol's back strap and rotate fingers of the right hand over the top of the slide in front of the rear sight.

Pull the slide to the rear by pushing forward with the right thumb and pulling back on the rear sight with the fingers. Use the left hand to steady the pistol and to assist in pulling the slide to the rear.

Use the right hand to hold the slide to the rear (just enough to visually inspect the chamber for a round). Physically check for a round by inserting a finger of the right hand into the chamber area. See figure 2-3 .



Figure 2-3. Chamber Check.

Note: At night or in low light conditions, the Marine's visibility is reduced; therefore, the Marine will have to rely on the physical check with the finger to determine if a round is in the chamber.

Caution

Pulling the slide too far to the rear while inspecting the chamber may cause a double feed or the ejection of a round.

Remove the finger from the chamber and release tension on both hands to allow the slide to go forward. Ensure that the slide is all the way forward.

Weapons Commands

Weapons commands direct the Marine to safely load, unload, and employ the M9 service pistol. Six commands are used in weapons handling:

“ Load”

This command is used to take a weapon from Condition 4 to Condition 3.

“ Make Ready”

This command is used to take a weapon from Condition 3 to Condition 1.

“Fire”

This command is used to engage targets.

“ Cease Fire”

This command is used to cease target engagement.

“ Unload”

This command is used to take a weapon from any condition to Condition 4.

“ Unload, Show Clear”

This command is used to require a second individual to check the weapon to verify that no ammunition is present before the weapon is put into Condition 4.

Loading the Pistol

Perform the following steps to load the pistol (take the pistol from Condition 4 to Condition 3):

Ensure the pistol is on safe.

Use the right hand to grip the pistol grip firmly. Ensure that the pistol is pointed in a safe direction, bring the trigger guard to the right of eye level and cant the pistol so the magazine well faces inboard at approximately a 45-degree angle to the deck. Draw the right elbow in to facilitate control of the pistol.



Use the left hand to remove a filled magazine from the ammunition pocket. Index the magazine by sliding the index finger along the forward edge of the magazine. See figure 2-4.



Figure 2-4. Indexing the Magazine.

Insert the filled magazine into the magazine well by guiding it with the index finger and, with the fingers extended, pushing it in with the heel of the hand until it is fully seated. Do not relinquish contact with the magazine until it is fully seated. See figure 2-5.



Figure 2-5. Seating the Magazine.

Making the Pistol Ready

Perform the following steps to take the pistol from Condition 3 to Condition 1:

Firmly grip the pistol grip with the right hand. Ensure that the pistol is pointed in a safe direction and the slide is in its forward position.

Rotate the magazine well outboard to facilitate pulling the slide to the rear. With the fingers and thumb of the left hand, grasp the serrated sides of the slide just forward of the safety. See figure 2-6.



Caution

Ensure the muzzle does not cover the hand or fingers.

Pull the slide to its rearmost position by pushing forward with the right hand while pulling back on the slide with the left hand.



Figure 2-6. Grasping the Slide to Make Ready.

Release the slide, this strips a round from the magazine and chambers it as the slide moves forward.

Ensure the pistol remains on safe.

Conduct a chamber check to ensure a round is in the chamber.

Note: A chamber check may be conducted at any time to check the pistol's condition.

Fire

Perform the following steps to fire the pistol:

Keep trigger finger straight and use the right thumb to take the pistol off safe.

Place the trigger finger on the trigger and apply pressure to the trigger until the shot is fired.

Cease Fire

Perform the following steps to execute a cease fire of the pistol:

Remove the finger from the trigger and place it straight along the receiver.

Place the pistol on safe without breaking the grip of the right hand.

Assume a carry or transport position.

Unloading the Pistol

Perform the following steps to take the pistol from any condition to Condition 4:

Use the right hand to grip the pistol firmly. Ensure that the pistol is on safe.

Rotate the pistol so the magazine well is pointed inboard and angled down.

Note: The angle of the magazine well must allow the magazine to fall freely from the well once the magazine release button is engaged.

Depress the magazine release button to remove the magazine from the pistol. Catch the magazine with the left hand and retain it.

Push upward on the slide stop with the right thumb and maintain pressure. Rotate the weapon so the chamber is outboard.



Side View

Note: A left-handed Marine pushes upward on the slide stop with the left index finger.

Reach over the top of the pistol with the left hand and grasp the slide serrations with the thumb and index finger. The left hand should partially cover the ejection port so it is positioned to catch an ejected round.

Point the pistol in a safe direction and fully retract the slide and lock it to the rear. At the same time, catch the ejected round with the left hand. See figure 2-7.



Figure 2-7. Catching the Ejected Round.

Rotate the pistol so the inside of the chamber can be seen. Visually inspect the chamber to ensure it is empty.

Press the slide stop to release the slide and observe it going forward on an empty chamber.

Unloading and Showing the Pistol Clear

Perform the following steps to take the pistol from any condition to Condition 4. See figure 2-8.



Figure 2-8. Unload, Show Clear.

Use the right hand to grip the pistol firmly. Ensure that the pistol is on safe.

Rotate the pistol so the magazine well is pointed inboard and angled down.

Note: The angle of the magazine well must allow the magazine to fall freely from the well once the magazine release button is engaged.

Depress the magazine release button to remove the magazine from the pistol. Catch the magazine with the left hand and retain it.

Push upward on the slide stop with the right thumb and maintain pressure. Rotate the weapon so the chamber is outboard.

Note: A left-handed Marine pushes upward on the slide stop with the left index finger.

Reach over the top of the pistol with the left hand and grasp the slide serrations with the thumb and index finger. The left hand should partially cover the ejection port so it is positioned to catch an ejected round.

Point the pistol in a safe direction and fully retract slide and lock it to the rear. At the same time, catch the ejected round with the left hand.

Rotate the pistol so the inside of the chamber can be seen. Visually inspect the chamber to ensure it is empty.

Bring the pistol to the administrative transport and have another Marine visually inspect the chamber to ensure that—

The chamber is empty, no ammunition is present, and the magazine is removed.

The pistol is on safe.

Acknowledge that the pistol is clear.

Press the slide stop to release the slide and observe it going forward on an empty chamber.

Emptying the Magazine

Once the pistol is unloaded, the pistol magazine can be emptied of ammunition. To empty the magazine, perform the following steps:

Hold the magazine upright with the back of the magazine tube against the palm of the hand.

Push the top round forward with the thumb and catch it with the other hand as it is removed.

Repeat until the magazine is empty.

Filling the Magazine

Prior to loading the pistol, the pistol magazine must be filled with the prescribed number of rounds of ammunition. See figure 2-9. To fill the magazine, perform the following steps:



Figure 2-9. Filling the Magazine.

Hold the magazine with the back of the magazine against the palm of the hand and the follower up.

Use the other hand to place a round (primer end first) on the follower in front of the magazine lips.

Press down on the round and slide the round completely back under the lips. The thumb or finger may push down on the back of the round to assist movement. The base of the round should be flush with the back of the magazine.

Repeat this procedure until the magazine is filled with the appropriate number of rounds. Holes on the back of the magazine allow the visual counting of rounds in five-round increments.

Reloading the Pistol

The Marine's ability to reload the pistol quickly improves his chance for success on the battlefield.

Dry Reload

A dry reload is conducted when the pistol runs out of ammunition during engagement and the slide locks to the rear. See figure 2-10. Perform the following steps to conduct a dry reload with the slide locked to the rear:

Note: The pistol is not placed on safe during a dry reload; the trigger finger is taken out of the trigger guard and placed straight along the side of the receiver.



Figure 2-10. Pistol Ran Dry of Ammunition.

Seek cover if the situation permits.

Retain the firing grip with the right hand and pull the pistol in close to the body to facilitate control. Bring the trigger guard to the right of eye level and cant the pistol so the magazine well is facing

inboard at approximately a 45degree angle to the deck. See figure 2-11.



Figure 2-11. Bring the Pistol Toward the Body.

Press the magazine release button and let the empty magazine fall to the deck. At the same time, unfasten the ammunition pocket to withdraw a filled magazine. See figure 2-12.

Note: The primary objective during a dry reload is to get the pistol back in action as quickly as possible. Following engagement, retrieve the magazine before moving.



Figure 2-12. Release Magazine and Unfasten Ammunition Pocket.

Grasp the magazine by curling the middle finger and thumb of the left hand around the base of the magazine, with the index finger straight along the ammunition pocket. See figure 2-13.



Figure 2-13. Grasping the Magazine.

Index the magazine: as the magazine is being withdrawn from the pocket, the index finger should be along the front of the magazine. See figure 2-14.



Figure 2-14. Indexing the Magazine.

Rotate the hand up so the magazine is aligned with the magazine well.

Glance quickly at the magazine well, insert the magazine into the magazine well (see fig. 2-15).



Figure 2-15. Glance at the Magazine Well.

Bring the eyes back on target at the same time as the heel of the left hand seats the magazine, do not relinquish contact with the magazine. See figure 2-16.



Figure 2-16. Seating the Magazine.

Roll both hands inward to establish a two handed grip and press the slide release with the left thumb to allow the slide to move forward, chambering the first round, and present the pistol to the

target. See figure 2-17.

Note: A left-handed Marine presses the slide release with his trigger finger.



Figure 2-17. Present Pistol Back to Target.

Condition 1 Reload

In a Condition 1 reload, a partially-filled magazine is removed from the pistol and replaced with a fully filled magazine. A Condition 1 reload is performed when there is a lull in the action or whenever deemed necessary by the Marine. To perform a Condition 1 reload—

Retain the firing grip with the right hand and pull the pistol in close to the body to facilitate control. Keep the pistol pointed in the direction of the likely threat. See figure 2-18.



Figure 2-18. Facilitating Control of Pistol.

Withdraw a filled magazine from the ammunition pocket with the left hand. Index the magazine and bring it up to the left of eye level. See figure 2-19.



Figure 2-19. Withdrawing and Indexing a Filled Magazine.

Slide the index finger to the side of the magazine to grasp the magazine between the index and middle fingers. See figure 2-20.



Figure 2-20. Grasping a Filled Magazine.

Raise the pistol and bring the trigger guard to the right of eye level and cant the pistol so that the magazine well is facing inboard at approximately a 45-degree angle to the deck.

Note: The angle of the magazine well must allow the magazine to fall freely from the well once the magazine release button is engaged.

Press the magazine release button with the right thumb to eject the partially-filled magazine from the magazine well. Grasp the magazine between the index finger and thumb. See figure 2-21.



Figure 2-21. Removing a Partially-Filled Magazine.

Insert the filled magazine into the magazine well (see fig. 2-22).



Figure 2-22. Inserting a Filled Magazine.

Use the heel of the hand to ensure it is fully seated (see fig. 2-23).



Figure 2-23. Seating a Filled Magazine.

Lower the pistol and point it in the direction of the likely threat.

If time permits, examine the partially-filled magazine to determine the number of rounds remaining. Stow the partially-filled magazine in the ammunition pocket for later use.

Reloading Considerations

If possible, take cover before reloading. Always reload before leaving cover to take advantage of the protection.

When reloading, the first priority is to reload the pistol quickly so that it is ready to fire. During a reload, the Marine focuses on reloading only— not on the enemy.

The next priority is for the Marine to retain the magazine during the reload. However, the combat situation may dictate dropping the magazine to the deck when performing a reload (i.e., dry reload). If time permits (i.e., Condition 1 reload), the Marine picks the magazine up or secures the magazine (e.g., ammunition pocket, flak jacket) before moving to another location.

Remedial Action

The M9 service pistol is an effective and extremely reliable weapon. Proper care and preventive maintenance usually ensures the pistol's serviceability. However, stoppages, while infrequent, do occur. To keep the pistol in action, stoppages must be cleared as quickly as possible through remedial action. A malfunction cannot be corrected through remedial action by the Marine.

Stoppage

A stoppage is an unintentional interruption in the cycle of operation; e.g., the slide not moving forward completely. A stoppage is normally discovered when the pistol will not fire. Most stoppages

can be prevented by proper care, cleaning, and lubrication of the pistol.

Many stoppages of the M9 service pistol are caused by shooter error. The Marine must be aware of shooter-induced stoppages in order to avoid them or to quickly identify and correct the stoppage and return the pistol to action. In a shooter-induced stoppage, the Marine—

Fails to make ready.

Fails to take the pistol off safe prior to firing.

Engages safety while firing.

Engages magazine release button while firing.

Engages slide stop while firing (particularly prevalent when firing with an Isosceles grip).

Fails to reset the trigger.

Fails to recognize the pistol has run dry and the slide has locked to the rear.

Malfunction

A malfunction is a failure of the pistol to fire satisfactorily or to perform as designed (e.g., a broken front sight that does not affect the functioning of the pistol). A malfunction does not necessarily cause an interruption in the cycle of operation. When a malfunction occurs, the pistol must be repaired by an armorer.

Remedial Action

There is no one set of procedures (i.e., immediate action) that can be performed to clear all or even most of the stoppages that can occur with the M9 service pistol. Therefore, remedial action requires investigating the cause of the stoppage, clearing the stoppage, and returning the pistol to operation. When performing remedial action, the Marine should seek cover if the tactical situation permits. Once a pistol ceases to fire, the Marine must visually or physically observe the pistol to identify the problem before it can be cleared:

Note: The steps taken to clear the pistol are based on what is observed.

Remove the finger from the trigger and place it straight along the receiver.

Bring the pistol in close to the body and in a position to observe the chamber.

Pull the slide to the rear while observing the chamber area to identify the stoppage. See figure 2-24 on page 2-14.

Note: Ensure the pistol does not move to safe when pulling the slide to the rear.



Figure 2-24. Observing Chamber.

Correct the stoppage:

If there is a round in the magazine but not in the chamber (see fig. 2-25), the slide is released and a round is observed being chambered.



Figure 2-25. Round in Magazine but Not in Chamber.

If a round being chambered is not observed, the bottom of the magazine is tapped to seat it properly, and the slide is racked to the rear. See figure 2-26.

If there is no round in the magazine or chamber, a reload is conducted. See figure 2-27.



Figure 2-26. Round Not Being Chambered.



Figure 2-27. No Round in Magazine or Chamber.

Fire the pistol.

Audible Pop or Reduced Recoil

WARNING

When an audible pop or reduced recoil is experienced, the Marine DOES NOT perform remedial action unless he is in a combat environment. An audible pop occurs when only a portion of the propellant is ignited. It is normally identifiable by reduced recoil and the pistol will not cycle. Sometimes, it is accompanied by excessive smoke escaping from the chamber area.

Training Environment

If an audible pop or reduced recoil is experienced during firing, cease fire immediately. Do not apply remedial action; instead, perform the following steps:

Remove the finger from the trigger and place it straight along the receiver.

Point the pistol down range.

Place the pistol on safe.

Raise a hand to receive assistance from available range personnel.

Combat Environment

The tactical situation may dictate correction of an audible pop or reduced recoil. To clear the pistol, perform the following steps:

Remove the finger from the trigger and place it straight along the receiver.

Seek cover if the tactical situation permits.

Unload the pistol, but leave the slide locked to the rear.

Insert something into the bore and clear the obstruction.

Observe the barrel for cracks or bulges.

Reload the pistol.

Weapons Carries

As the threat level increases, so should the Marine's readiness for engagement. Weapons carries are designed to place the Marine in a state of increased readiness as the threat level increases. There are two carries with the pistol: the Alert and the Ready. The carries permit quick engagement when necessary.

Alert

The Alert is used when enemy contact is likely (probable). See figure 2-28. The Marine performs the following steps to assume the Alert:



Figure 2-28. Alert.

Ensure the pistol is on safe.

Grasp the pistol grip firmly with two hands. The trigger finger is straight and the right thumb is on the safety and in a position to operate it.

Extend the arms down at approximately a 45-degree angle to the body or bend the elbows. See figure 2-29.

The muzzle of the pistol is pointed in the likely direction of the threat.



Figure 2-29. Alert—Close Quarters.

Ready

The Ready is used when there is no target, but contact with the enemy is imminent. The Marine performs the following steps to assume the Ready (see fig. 2-30):

Ensure the pistol is on safe.

Grasp the pistol firmly with two hands. The trigger finger is straight and the right thumb is on the safety and in a position to operate it.

Extend arms and raise the pistol to just below eye level so a clear field of view is maintained.

Point the muzzle of the pistol in the direction of enemy contact.



Figure 2-30. Ready.

Weapons Transports

The M9 service pistol is transported in either the holster transport or the administrative transport.

Holster Transport

The holster transport is the most common method of carrying the pistol because it can be transported safely in the holster. This transport is used when there is no immediate threat (enemy contact is remote). See figure 2-31. To transport the pistol in the holster:

Point the pistol in a safe direction.

WARNING

Ensure the pistol is pointed in a safe direction at all times and does not cover any part of the body while holstering.



Figure 2-31. Holster Transport.

Ensure that the safety is on, the slide is forward, and the trigger finger is straight.

Use the right hand to firmly grip the pistol grip and place the pistol in the holster:

Lift the flap of the holster with the left hand.

Look down at the holster, bring the pistol back to a position above the holster, and rotate the muzzle down into the holster.

Push the pistol snugly into the holster and fasten the flap with the right hand.

Administrative Transport

The administrative transport is used to transport the pistol when the Marine does not have a holster. See figure 2-32. The Marine performs the following steps to assume the administrative transport:

Establish a firm grip around the pistol grip with the right hand.



Figure 2-32. Administrative Transport.

Ensure the pistol is on safe, the magazine is removed, the slide is locked to the rear, and the trigger finger is straight along the receiver.

Bend the elbow to approximately a 45-degree angle so the pistol is positioned near shoulder level. The wrist should be straight so the pistol's muzzle points up.

Combat Mindset

In a combat environment, the Marine must be constantly prepared to engage targets. When a target presents itself, there may be little time to react. The target must be engaged quickly and accurately. It is not enough to simply know marksmanship techniques, the Marine must be able to react instinctively.

The development of a combat mindset can be associated with the carries and holster transport for the pistol. The use of each carry/transport is dictated by the perceived level of threat. Each carry and transport should signify a stage of mental and physical preparedness for combat. The intensity of the Marine's mental and physical preparation depends on the likelihood of enemy contact.

Physical and Mental Preparation

Physical Preparation

In combat, targets can present themselves without warning. Therefore, it is essential for the Marine to maintain proper balance and control of the pistol at all times so that the pistol can be presented quickly and the target engaged accurately.

Speed alone does not equate to effective target engagement. The Marine should fire only as fast as he can fire accurately, never exceeding his physical ability to apply the fundamentals of marksmanship. To be effective in combat, the Marine must train to perfect the physical skills of shooting so they become second nature. The more physical skills that can be performed automatically, the more concentration that can be given to the mental side of target engagement.

Mental Preparation

While combat is unpredictable and constantly changing, the Marine can prepare mentally for the contingencies of the operational setting and confrontation with a threat. The stress of combat, coupled with the limited time available to engage targets, requires concentration on the mental aspects of target engagement; e.g., identification of targets, shoot/no-shoot decision making, and the selection and use of cover. Minimizing stress and maximizing the limited time available to engage targets can be accomplished by—

Knowing the combat environment and being constantly aware of the surroundings (e.g., terrain, available cover, possible threats) enables the Marine to quickly present the pistol and accurately engage targets.

Identifying and evaluating possible courses of action and developing potential plans for target engagement that will be appropriate to the combat situation.

Instilling confidence in a Marine's ability to fire well-aimed shots in the stress of a combat situation. A key factor in a Marine's level of confidence is the degree to which he has mastered the tactics, techniques, and procedures of pistol marksmanship.

Threat Levels

No Immediate Threat

When there is no immediate threat, the Marine assumes the holster transport. The pistol should be in Condition 1. This is the lowest level of awareness for the Marine in a combat environment, but the Marine must stay alert and aware of any nearby activity. To prepare for target engagement at this level, the Marine must—

Be aware of likely areas of enemy contact.

Be aware of the condition of his pistol.

Establish a plan or course of action to present the pistol to a target should a target appear.

Mentally review appropriate actions such as reloading and remedial action.

Contact Likely (Probable)

If enemy contact is likely (probable), the Marine assumes the Alert. When enemy contact is likely, the Marine should—

Expect enemy contact and be constantly prepared to present the pistol.

Search the entire area for indications of enemy targets and for suitable terrain features that offer cover and concealment. The Marine should avoid restricting the search to a single terrain feature because this hinders awareness to a sector of the battlefield and to approach by the enemy.

Be mentally prepared for contact. Plan a course of action for immediate response to a target. Modify the plan of action as needed.

Be physically prepared to fire. Maintain proper balance at all times. Avoid self-induced physical fatigue. For example, do not grip the pistol so tightly that fingers, hands, and arms tire from carrying the pistol.

Contact Imminent

When contact with an enemy target is imminent, assume the Ready. In this carry, the Marine is at the highest level of awareness and is constantly searching for and expecting a target. To fire well aimed shots upon target detection, the Marine must be at the peak of his mental preparation, all distractions must be eliminated, and his focus must be on firing an accurate shot. In the Ready, the Marine must—

Keep the pistol oriented in the general direction of observation (eyes, muzzle, target).

Maintain a clear field of view above the pistol sights until the target is detected.

Be mentally and physically prepared to engage the target. The Marine must be ready to:

Identify the target.

Sweep the safety.

Apply the fundamentals of marksmanship.

Move only as fast as he is capable of delivering well-aimed shots, ensuring that speed of engagement does not exceed his physical abilities.

Search the entire area for indications of enemy targets, lowering the pistol enough to observe a clear field of view of the area.

Transferring the Pistol

The Marine's ability to transfer a pistol to another Marine is critical to safe weapons handling. There are two methods for transferring the pistol from one Marine to another: show clear transfer and condition unknown transfer. Each transfer is performed based on the operational environment/combat situation.

Show Clear Transfer

To transfer the pistol—

Grasp the pistol firmly in the right hand while ensuring that the pistol is on safe.

Remove and retain the magazine.

Lock the slide to the rear and catch the round if there is a round in the chamber.

Inspect the chamber visually to ensure it is empty and leave the slide locked to the rear. To transfer the pistol—

If the receiving Marine is to the right: Cradle the trigger guard in the palm of the left hand and wrap the fingers around the top of the pistol. Release the firing grip.

If the receiving Marine is to the left: With the left hand, grasp the slide of the pistol with the thumb over the slide and the fingers underneath. Release the firing grip.

Ensure that the muzzle points up at a 45-degree angle in a safe direction and the chamber exposed. Hand the pistol to the other Marine, grip first. See figure 2-33.



Figure 2-33. Show Clear Transfer.

The receiving Marine—

Grasps the pistol grip with the trigger finger straight along the receiver.

Inspects the chamber visually to ensure it is empty.

Ensures the pistol is on safe.

Condition Unknown Transfer

To transfer the pistol—

Grasp the pistol firmly in the right hand while ensuring that the pistol is on safe. To transfer the pistol—

If the receiving Marine is to the right: Cradle the trigger guard in the palm of the left hand and wrap the fingers around the top of the pistol. Release the firing grip. See figure 2-34.



Figure 2-34. Condition Unknown Transfer to the Right.

If the receiving Marine is to the left: With the left hand, grasp the slide of the pistol with the thumb over the slide and the fingers underneath. Release the firing grip. See figure 2-35.



Figure 2-35. Condition Unknown Transfer to the Left.

Ensure that the muzzle points up at a 45-degree angle in a safe direction. Hand the pistol to the receiving Marine, grip first.

The receiving Marine—

Grasps the pistol grip with the trigger finger straight along the receiver.

Ensures the pistol is on safe.

Conducts a chamber check to determine the condition of the pistol.

Remove the magazine and count the number of rounds in the magazine by using the counting holes, if time permits. Re-insert the magazine into the magazine well ensuring it is fully seated.

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CHAPTER 3

FUNDAMENTALS OF PISTOL MARKSMANSHIP

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Chapter 3. Fundamentals of Pistol Marksmanship

The fundamentals of pistol marksmanship are aiming, trigger control, and breath control. Understanding and applying the basic pistol marksmanship fundamentals ensures the Marine's effectiveness in target engagement. The fundamentals must be continually studied and practiced because they are the means by which accurate shots are placed on target. A Marine with a solid foundation in the fundamentals of marksmanship will be successful in the application of these fundamentals during combat.

Aiming

Maintaining the correct relationship between the pistol sights is essential for accurate target engagement. Because of the short distance between the pistol sights, a small error in their alignment causes a considerable error at the target.

Sight Alignment

Sight alignment is the relationship between the front sight and rear sight with respect to the aiming eye. Correct sight alignment is the front sight centered in the rear sight notch with the top edge of the front sight level **aligned** with the top edge of the rear sight. There should be equal space on either side of the front sight. See figure 3-1.



Figure 3-1. Sight Alignment / Sight Picture.

Establishing Sight Alignment

The pistol is fired without benefit of bone support; therefore, the pistol is in constant motion. The Marine must understand this, yet continually strive to align the sights. To fire accurately, the sights must be aligned when the shot breaks.

Grip

The grip is key to acquiring sight alignment. If the grip is correct, the front and rear sights should align naturally. Dry fire during presentation of the M9 service pistol aids in obtaining a grip that allows sight alignment to be acquired consistently.

Controlled Muscular Tension

There must be enough controlled muscular tension in the grip, wrists, and forearms to hold the pistol steady and level the barrel to maintain sight alignment. Consistent tension stabilizes the sights and maintains sight alignment.

Sight Picture

Sight picture is the placement of the front sight in relation to the target while maintaining sight alignment. See figure 3-2 below.

Because the pistol is constantly moving, sight picture is acquired within an aiming area that is located center mass on the target. The aiming area allows for movement of the sights on the target

while maintaining sight alignment. Each Marine defines an acceptable aiming area within his own ability to stabilize the sights. Time, distance to the target, and personal ability affect dictate the aiming area. As the Marine becomes more proficient with the pistol, the aiming area becomes more precise.



Figure 3-2. Sight Picture.

The aiming area is determined by the Marine's stability of hold. The proper grip stabilizes the sights so sight alignment can be maintained, but the sights move continuously within the aiming area of the target. The Marine understands the pistol's movement and learns to apply trigger control as he is obtaining sight alignment/sight picture within the aiming area so the shot breaks the moment sight picture is established.

Relationship Between the Eye and the Sights

The human eye can focus clearly on only one object at a time. The Marine must focus on the top edge of the front sight and fire the shot while maintaining the relationship between the front and rear sights within the aiming area. Focusing on the top edge of the front sight rather than the target keeps the front sight clear and distinct, which allows the Marine to detect minor variations in sight alignment. Secondary vision allows the Marine to see the target (although slightly blurred) and maintain sight picture within his aiming area.

Trigger Control

Trigger control is the Marine's skillful manipulation of the trigger that causes the pistol to fire while maintaining sight alignment and sight picture. Proper trigger control aids in maintaining sight alignment while the shot is fired.

Sight Alignment and Trigger Control

Aiming and trigger control are mutually support ive—one cannot be performed without the other. Sight alignment and trigger control must be performed simultaneously to fire an accurate shot. As pressure is applied to the trigger, the sights may move, causing them to be misaligned. To fire accurate shots, the sights must be aligned when the shot breaks. Trigger control can actually assist in aligning the sights. With proper trigger finger placement and consistent muscular tension applied to the grip, the sights can be controlled as the trigger is moved to the rear. If the sights move extensively while pressing the trigger, this can indicate an improper grip or inconsistency in the muscular tension being applied to the grip.

Grip

A firm grip is essential for good trigger control. The grip is established before applying trigger control and is maintained throughout the firing process. To establish the grip, the hand is placed around the pistol grip in a location that allows the trigger finger to move the trigger straight to the rear while maintaining sight alignment. Once the grip is established, it should be firm enough to allow manipulation of the trigger while maintaining sight alignment. The pressure applied to the grip must be equal to or more than the pressure required to move the trigger to the rear. If the pressure is not applied correctly, the sights move as the trigger is pressed to the rear and sight alignment is disturbed.

Trigger Finger Placement

Once the grip is established, the finger is placed on the trigger. Placement of the finger should be natural and allow free movement of the trigger finger. A natural trigger finger placement allows the trigger to be moved straight to the rear while maintaining sight alignment. If the finger presses the trigger to the side, it can cause an error in sight alignment and shot placement.

Each Marine must experiment with finger placement in order to determine effective placement on the trigger. Once established, effective trigger finger placement allows the trigger to be consistently moved straight to the rear while maintaining sight alignment.

Types of Trigger Control

Uninterrupted Trigger Control

During uninterrupted trigger control, the Marine applies a steady, unchanging pressure to the trigger until the shot is fired. Uninterrupted trigger control is particularly effective at close range, when the target area is large, and when stability of hold is not critical for accuracy. To apply uninterrupted trigger control, apply pressure on the trigger while maintaining focus on the top edge of the front sight. Continue pressure on the trigger to begin moving the trigger straight to the rear while obtaining sight alignment and sight picture. Move the trigger straight to the rear in a single, smooth motion with no hesitation.

Interrupted Trigger Control

Interrupted trigger control is particularly effective at longer ranges, when the target is small, and when stability of hold is critical to maintaining sight picture in the aiming area. This method is also used if the pistol sights move outside the aiming area when applying trigger control. If the sight picture is outside the aiming area, the Marine stops and holds the rearward movement on the trigger until sight picture is re-established. When sight picture is re-established, the rearward movement of the trigger is continued until the shot is fired.

Breath Control

Breathing causes movement of the chest, abdomen, and shoulders, which causes the pistol sights to move vertically while attempting to aim and fire. Therefore, it is necessary to stop breathing for a period of time while firing a shot or a series of shots.

The object of breath control is to stop breathing just long enough to fire the shot while maintaining sight alignment, stabilizing the sights, and establishing the sight picture. To be consistent, the breath should be held at the same point in the breathing cycle; i.e., the natural respiratory pause.

Breathing should not be stopped for too long because it has adverse visual and physical effects. Holding the breath longer than is comfortable results in a lack of oxygen that causes vision to

deteriorate and then affects the ability to focus on the sights.

Application of Marksmanship Fundamentals in Field Firing

Compression of the Fundamentals

Pistol engagements typically occur over close distances and are short in duration. Because an immediate response to the threat is required, the application of the fundamentals must be a conditioned response that is executable in a compressed time. The goal of successful, quick target engagement is the application of the fundamentals of marksmanship while firing the shot the moment weapon presentation is complete.

The time required to move the trigger to the rear while acquiring and maintaining sight alignment and sight picture is unique to each Marine and is based on his capabilities. Each Marine should know his abilities and fire only as quickly as he is capable of firing accurately. The Marine must not exceed his shooting skills in an effort to get rounds off quickly.

Aiming

In field firing, the fundamentals are applied in a compressed time so sight alignment and sight picture are achieved as the shot is fired. Although the target must be quickly engaged in combat, sight alignment is still the first priority: strive for a clear front sight. Distance to the target and the size of the target affects sight alignment as follows:

As the distance to the target increases and the size of the target decreases, sight alignment becomes more critical to target engagement. Accurate sight picture/sight alignment cannot be compromised for speed.

Sight alignment is critical to the effective engagement of smaller targets such as partially exposed targets.

As the distance to the target decreases, perfect sight alignment is not as critical, but there must be a relationship between the sights and their placement on the target within the aiming area to ensure accuracy.

Trigger Control

Proper trigger control aids in maintaining sight alignment while the shot is fired. As pressure is applied to the trigger, the sights may move, causing them to be misaligned. Therefore, the Marine is constantly re-aligning the sights as pressure is applied to the trigger. Sight alignment and trigger control must be performed simultaneously to fire an accurate shot.

Breath Control

During combat, the Marine's breathing and heart rate often increase due to physical exertion or the stress of battle. The key to breath control in field firing is to stop breathing just long enough to fire an accurate shot or a series of shots.

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CHAPTER 4

PISTOL FIRING POSITIONS AND GRIP

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This whole e-book is available via www.pointshooting.com for under \$5.00 Dollars US.