

# SPECIAL TEXT

## BASIC HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT



UNITED STATES ARMY INFANTRY SCHOOL  
FORT BENNING, GEORGIA

OCTOBER 1964

HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT INSTRUCTION (BASIC PART)

(Special Text)

	<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>Paragraph</u>	<u>Page</u>
CHAPTER ONE	INTRODUCTION TO REVISED HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT		
Section I.	Introduction . . . . .	1-3	1
II.	Preparation for Instruction . . . . .	4-8	1
CHAPTER TWO	BASIC HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT		
Section I.	Introduction . . . . .	9-11	3
II.	Fundamentals . . . . .	12-17	3
III.	Vulnerable Points . . . . .	18-19	4
IV.	Skills . . . . .	20-25	5
V.	Advice to Instructors . . . . .	26-31	39
CHAPTER THREE	LESSON PLANS FOR BCT		41
ANNEX A	End of Cycle Proficiency Test		59
ANNEX B	Schematic Diagram of Test Area		61

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION TO REVISED HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT

#### Section I. Introduction

1. GENERAL: A new system of hand-to-hand combat has been developed and tested. This system proved to be superior to the current systems as specified in the training literature. This temporary publication has been prepared to disseminate the skills in the basic part of the revised system for use in Army Training Centers during BCT.

2. THREE PART SYSTEM: The three parts of the new system are: basic hand-to-hand combat, which is applicable only to beginning instruction during basic combat training; advanced hand-to-hand combat, which is to be taught when instructional time is available beyond basic combat training (This part will be patterned after the methods currently in use); and specialized hand-to-hand combat containing complicated skills requiring much practice or consisting of skills which are taught on a need-to-know basis. This division of skills will better fit the realities of the time available for hand-to-hand combat instruction within army training programs.

3. APPLICATION OF BASIC HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT: This basic portion of hand-to-hand combat is designed for the basic combat trainee or for the soldier who has received no previous hand-to-hand combat instruction. (Initially this will also apply to those personnel who have received instruction in this subject on previous occasions, but who have not been instructed in the skills which constitute the new basic method.)

#### Section II. Preparation for Instruction

1. PREPARATION OF INSTRUCTORS: Instructors who teach the basic skills in ATC's should be well versed in the new skills which make up the basic portion of the system. It is suggested that an instructor's clinic be conducted to present the new method prior to implementing instruction for trainees.

5. LESSON PLANS: Until the total system is implemented and the lesson plans can be incorporated in army subject schedules, the lesson plans as contained in Chapter Three will be used.

6. SCHEDULING: For the instruction to be effective and to insure satisfactory retention of the basic skills, periods of hand-to-hand combat should not exceed two hours in duration. Periods in excess of two hours do not provide sufficient time lapse between instructional increments for the soldier to identify and establish the required skill patterns. Excessive fatigue also results from periods of instruction which are longer than two hours in duration, and this too is not conducive to retention of the knowledge and skills which constitute proficiency.

7. TRAINING AREA: In addition to training pits, any large grass or sand covered area is suitable for use in presenting the basic portion of the system.

8. PROFICIENCY TESTING: The proficiency test to be administered at the end of the BCT cycle is included in this publication as Annex A. The test area and required equipment for testing is described in Annex B.

## CHAPTER TWO

### BASIC HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT

#### Section I. Introduction

9. **PURPOSE:** This chapter outlines the simple, aggressive techniques of basic hand-to-hand combat with which to subdue an opponent. It describes the various blows, takedowns, counters and other maneuvers used to disable or kill an opponent in hand-to-hand fighting.

10. **NECESSITY FOR TRAINING:** The average soldier, if trained only in the use of his basic weapon, loses his effectiveness if his weapon fails to fire or if he should lose or break it. With a knowledge of hand-to-hand combat and the confidence and aggressiveness to fight hand-to-hand, the soldier is able to attack and dispose of his opponent. Training in hand-to-hand combat is advantageous for several reasons. It builds a spirit of aggressiveness in the individual soldier and instills the will to fight. It instills confidence in his ability and that of his fellow soldier. Hand-to-hand combat teaches the techniques of fighting or defending when unarmed and confronted with an armed or unarmed opponent. It is valuable for night patrols and other occasions when silent attack is required. Because of the threat of airborne attack, guerrilla warfare or infiltration, this type fighting is taught to soldiers in rear areas, as well as those in front line units. It is also an excellent physical conditioner and body toughener.

#### 11. PHILOSOPHY:

a. This portion of hand-to-hand combat was derived from the same ancient Chinese system that Karate, Jiu-jitsu, and most of the other Oriental systems of deadly hand-to-hand combat were originally drawn. It is a method whose sole purpose is to kill or disable an opponent.

b. The basic skills of this portion are simple to learn and proficiency can be maintained with a minimum of practice. Because the basic skills are few in number and are simple in nature, this method lends itself to the abbreviated training schedule allowances for hand-to-hand combat instruction in basic combat training. At the same time it gives the soldier an effective means of defending himself if he is caught on the battlefield without his weapon.

c. The method is based on the premise that the most dangerous natural weapons a man possesses are his feet. Kicks form the basis of the attack and the defense. Other skills are taught to be used when the kicks fail. Every attempt is made to maintain kicking distance in any encounter with the enemy. If the opponent is allowed to close and grapple as in judo or wrestling, the larger or stronger of the opponents will have the advantage. For this reason there are no throws taught in this portion of the system.

d. Protection of the most vulnerable portions of the male anatomy was the foremost consideration in adopting the standing and sitting guard positions. The side of the body will be presented to the enemy whenever possible, while maintaining a good kicking posture.

#### Section II. Fundamentals

12. **GENERAL:** Five fundamentals are used as a guide in learning hand-to-hand combat. The fundamentals are: making full use of any available weapon; aggressively attacking your opponent's most vulnerable points; maintaining your balance while knocking your opponent off balance; using an opponent's momentum to your advantage; and learning each phase of all the movements precisely and accurately and then attaining speed through constant practice.

13. USING AVAILABLE WEAPONS:

a. When fighting hand-to-hand, your life is always at stake; therefore, you use any available object as a weapon to help subdue your opponent. You can make your opponent duck or turn aside by throwing sand or dirt in his face or by striking at him with an entrenching tool, a steel helmet or a web belt. When objects are not available, just the pretense of throwing something may cause an opponent to flinch and cover up. Take advantage of his distraction and aggressively attack with one purpose in mind - to kill.

b. If objects are not available to use as a weapon, you must use your natural weapons. These are:

- (1) Fingers.
- (2) Closed Fist.
- (3) Elbow.
- (4) Foot.

14. MAXIMUM STRENGTH AGAINST VULNERABLE POINTS: In every situation, some vulnerable area of your opponent is open to attack. By aggressively assaulting these vulnerable areas, using the maximum strength offered by your position, you can gain a quick victory. Attacking rather than defending is the keynote of hand-to-hand combat because only through the use of offensive tactics can you dispose of your opponent.

15. BALANCE: Keeping your balance, while causing your opponent to lose his, is an important essential of successful fighting. Assume the guard position for all-round protection when engaging your opponent (para 20). Try to disrupt your opponent's mental balance by growling and yelling as you strike at him. You will improve your sense of balance and learn to knock your opponent off balance by practicing the maneuvers presented in this manual.

16. MOMENTUM: Using your opponent's momentum to your own advantage is another fundamental. Always assume that your opponent is stronger than you and never oppose him directly in a test of strength. Instead, utilize his momentum to overcome him.

17. TRAINING: You will have little time to think when engaging in hand-to-hand combat; therefore, your actions must be automatic. At the beginning, learn each movement accurately, stressing precision. As you progress, work for speed through constant practice. Speed is essential to the successful employment of the skills outlined in this manual.

Section III. Vulnerable Points

18. GENERAL:

a. Vulnerable points are areas of the body that are particularly susceptible to attack. Knowledge of these points and how to attack them, plus aggressiveness and confidence, will enable you to attack and quickly disable or kill an opponent in hand-to-hand combat.

b. When you are attacking an opponent, your first reaction is to strike him with your fist. This is one of the poorest ways to fight. The feet are much more effective weapons. Attack by kicking the vulnerable parts of the body. These actions must be performed aggressively and without hesitation.

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19. BODY REGIONS: The body is divided into three regions: the head and neck, the trunk, and the limbs. The major vulnerable points of each region are listed below:

<u>Head and Neck</u>	<u>Trunk</u>	<u>Limbs</u>
Eyes	Solar Plexus or Stomach	Arm Pit
Neck	Groin	
Nose	Kidneys	

Section IV. Skills

20. GUARDS:

a. Standing Guard Position: The standing guard position may be assumed to the right or to the left. To assume the right guard position, the right side of the body is facing your opponent. Stand relaxed with the feet approximately shoulder width apart, weight on the left foot. Toes are pointing to the front of the body. Knees are flexed slightly, body erect. Arms are flexed, with the forearms in a near vertical position. Right arm is leading. Left arm is in front of the body. Fingers are extended and joined. Head and eyes are facing your opponent (fig. 1a and 1b). The left guard position is assumed by pivoting on the left foot, turning the body to the rear, reversing the position of the arms, head and upper body, simultaneously shifting the weight to the right foot (fig. 1c).

If your opponent is already in a guard position, you should assume a corresponding guard position. (If he is in the right guard position, you should also assume the right guard position so that you are not open to an immediate pivot kick by your opponent.)



Figure 1a. Standing Guard Position - Side View.



Figure 1b. Standing Guard Position - Front View.

b. Rear Guard Position: To assume the rear guard position, reverse the position of the arms, head, and upper body. The weight of the body is shifted to the rear foot. This is a brisk movement.

c. Sitting Guard Position: To assume the sitting guard position, sit down, flexing the left leg at the knee, placing the leg flat on the ground, heel in near the buttocks. The right leg is placed over the left leg, knee flexed, sole flat on the ground. The elbow of the right arm is placed on the right knee, with the forearm in a near vertical position, fingers extended and joined. The left hand is placed flat on the ground near the buttocks for support (fig. 2a, 2b, and 2c). This position will be used only when you find yourself on the ground without time to rise to the standing guard position.

d. Glide: The glide is a movement used to gain distance from your opponent. Take a long stride away from the direction of attack, with the foot farthest from your opponent, sliding the other foot up, assuming the appropriate guard position. (If you are in the right guard position and the attack is from your front, glide with the left foot remaining in the right guard position. If the attack is from the rear, glide away from the attack with the right foot and assume the left guard position.) The movement is not a hop, but is a glide done briskly.

e. Standing Guard from the Sitting Guard Position: (Fig 3a) Push with the left hand and raise the weight of the body over the bent left leg, keeping the lower portion of the left leg flat on the ground (Fig 3b). Keep the left foot fully extended so that a straight line is formed from the toes to the knee. This facilitates raising the weight up over the leg. Immediately rise to the standing guard position by taking a long glide to the rear with the left foot (Fig 3c and 3d).



Figure 1c. Standing Guard Position - Left Guard - Side View



Figure 2a. Sitting Guard - Right Side





Figure 2b. Sitting Guard - Front



Figure 2c. Sitting Guard - Side View.



Figure 3a. Rising From the Sitting Guard Position - Sitting Guard



Figure 3b. Rising From the Sitting Guard Position - Raise weight over left leg.



Figure 3c. Rising From the Sitting Guard Position - Take long glide to rear



Figure 3d. Rising From the Sitting Guard Position - Assume standing guard

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f. Rear Fall: A fall to the rear is taught to minimize the danger of an individual injuring himself if he falls backward.

(1) As you begin to fall backwards, bend forward at the waist and sit down (fig. 4a). Pull the chin close to the chest to keep the head from hitting the ground. Keep the arms in front of the body. Roll onto the back, keeping the body in a tucked position. As you roll onto the back, bring the left leg underneath the right as in the sitting guard position (fig. 4b). Immediately roll forward into the sitting guard position (fig. 4c).

(2) The rear fall is taught in conjunction with the sitting guard position to emphasize the fact that any time you are on the ground, the sitting guard will be assumed. As you become more proficient in getting into the sitting guard from the rear fall, practice going through the sitting guard to the standing guard, as this is the most desirable position and will be assumed if possible.

## 21. KICKS:

a. Side Kick: The side kick may be executed from either the right or left guard position (fig. 5a). The kick should be directed at your opponent's groin region. In executing this kick the knee is pulled up in a flexed position, toes turned toward your opponent (fig. 5b). The kick is delivered forcefully by fully extending the knee and ankle in a rapid movement (fig. 5c). Return immediately to the guard position. The leg should return as quickly as it went out and should travel through the same path (fig. 5d). Speed of return is important to prevent your opponent from catching your foot.



Figure 4a. Rear Fall. Bend forward at waist and sit down



Figure 4c. Rear Fall. Roll up to sitting guard



Figure 5a. Side Kick. From Guard Position



Figure 5b. Side Kick. Leg in cocked position



Figure 5c. Side Kick. Kick fully extended into groin



Figure 5d. Side Kick. Kick returning thru same path

b. Pivot Kick: The pivot kick may be executed from either guard position. The target for the kick will be the groin region or the kidneys. It is a more powerful kick than the side kick and can be executed from a greater distance from your opponent.

(1) To execute this kick from the right guard position (fig. 6a), pivot sharply to the right on the right foot, at the same time drawing the lower portion of the left leg up until it is in approximately the same horizontal plane as the left knee (fig. 6b). The kick is delivered through a horizontal plane into your opponent's groin. The striking surface is the toe of the boot (fig. 6c).



Figure 6a. Pivot Kick - From the guard position

(2) It is important that the foot be withdrawn quickly to prevent your opponent from catching your foot. After kicking from the right guard position, recover to a left guard position (fig 6d). During the entire movement the hands are held rigidly in front of the groin region for protection and balance. If your foot is caught, lunge forward and place all the weight on that foot. Follow through with finger jab to eyes.



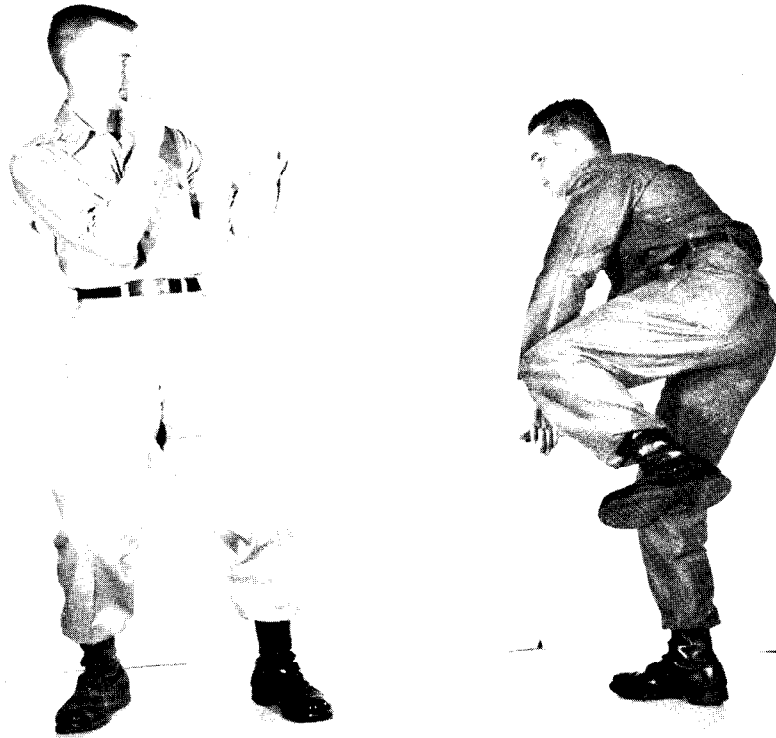


Figure 6b. Pivot Kick - Pivot on right foot, cocking left

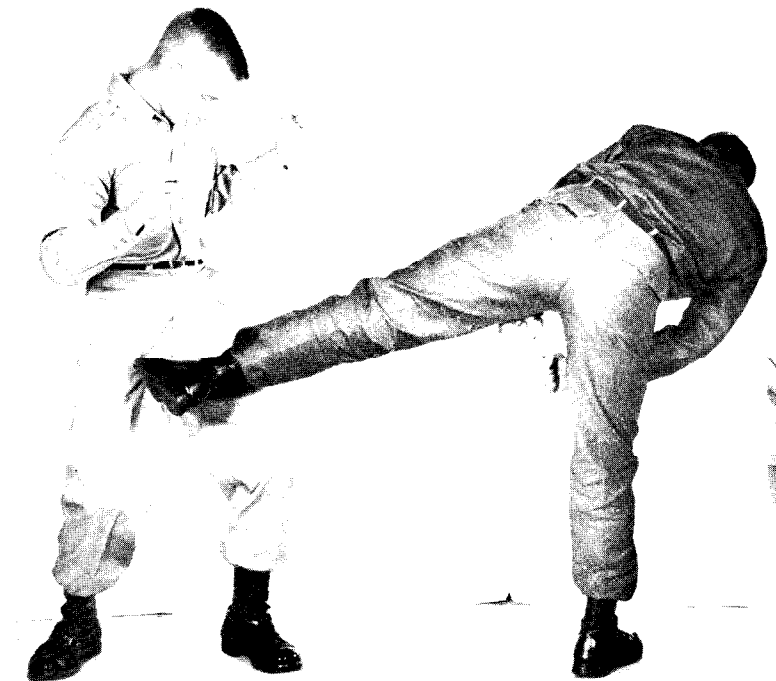


Figure 6c. Pivot Kick - Impact of kick to groin



Figure 6d. Pivot Kick - Returning to guard position

c. Heel Stomp: The heel stomp is best used on an opponent lying flat on the ground. To execute this kick you must be standing over the portion of his body you wish to stomp. Pull the knee up and flex the ankle as much as possible (fig. 7a). To stomp, straighten out the knee forcefully, striking your opponent with the back edge of the heel of the boot (fig. 7b). Attempt to drive the heel into the ground to insure that the full force of the kick is delivered to your opponent. Recover quickly.

## 22. TAKEDOWNS:

a. Rear Takedown and Strangle: If the opportunity arises to surprise your opponent by coming up behind him, grasp his collar with your left hand, pulling down and to the rear, driving your right boot into the back of his right knee (fig. 8a). Simultaneously, encircle his neck with your right arm driving the sharp, thumb-side edge of the wrist into his Adam's apple. After jerking him into a sitting position, place your right foot against his buttocks and your right leg in the middle of his back (fig. 8b). Clasp the hands with the palms together, left hand on the bottom, and apply pressure to his throat by pulling to the rear. Your head should be against the left side of his head pressing it into the crook of your right elbow (fig. 8c).

b. Head Twist Takedown: Any time your opponent attempts to grapple with you, turn the side of your lower body toward your opponent to protect your groin (fig. 9a). The head twist takedown is used when you find that you cannot break close contact with an opponent by the use of the finger jab or blows to the groin. Grasp your opponent's jaw between your thumb and fingers. Grasp the back of his head with your other hand (fig. 9b) and twist sharply forcing the opponent down (fig. 9c).



Figure 7a. Heel Stomp. Position of heel.



Figure 7b. Heel Stomp - Impact to head.



Figure 8a. Rear Takedown and Strangle -- Initial actions



Figure 8b. Rear Takedown and Strangle - Pull to sitting position



Figure 8c. Rear Takedown and Strangle. Front view - note head & arm position



Figure 9a. Head Twist Takedown - Opponent in tight - front body hold



Figure 9b. Head Twist Takedown - Hand grip on head



Figure 9c. Head Twist Takedown. Twist applied - opponent halfway down

23. COUNTERS TO KICKS: To deflect a side or pivot kick by your opponent, swing your leading arm downward and back, striking his lower leg a sharp blow with the back of your fist or forearm (fig. 10). When executing this counter, form the hand into a fist to protect your fingers.

If your opponent attempts to kick you with a conventional kick, raise your nearest foot and meet this kick with the instep of your boot across his shin (fig. 11). Immediately follow through with a side kick to his groin. As another means of blocking your opponent's kick, block with your forearm and sweep upward with your other arm catching his leg. The blocking arm is bent at the elbow and is held rigidly at chest height to protect your head from his kick (fig. 12a). Immediately execute a kick to the groin (fig. 12b).



Figure 10.

#### 24. COUNTERS TO HOLDS:

a. Check Blows: A check blow is a blow used to counter your opponent's action if he attempts to seize you. They are vigorous blows delivered with the hands and elbows to the opponent's vulnerable points.

(1) Arms Pinned: If you are grasped from the rear with a body hold in which your arms are pinned (fig. 13a), immediately flex the knees, thrusting your arms straight forward from the shoulders and your buttocks to the rear (fig. 13b). Shift your hips to the left and rotate your body to the right, moving your right foot behind the left. Keeping the right elbow locked, swing the back of your fist into your opponent's groin (fig. 13c). This is a vigorous blow delivered from the shoulder. As you swing, look at your target. The check blow may also be delivered by driving the elbow into the solar plexus.

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Figure 11. Block of Kick With Edge of Boot



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Figure 12a. Catch with Pivot Kick Follow Through - Execution of Catch





Figure 12b. Catch with Pivot Kick Follow Through - Pivot Kick to Groin

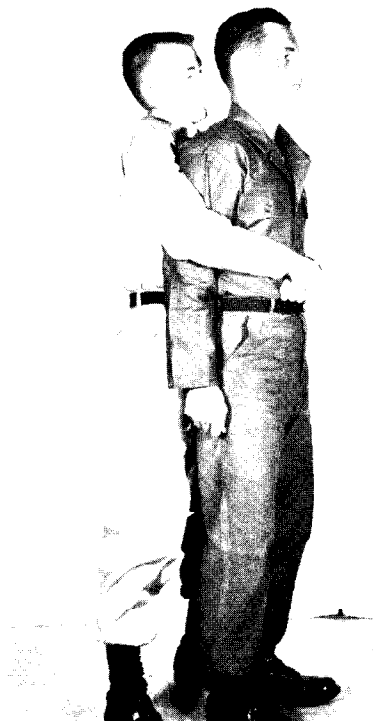


Figure 13a. Check Blow to Groin - Arms Pinned. Opponent pinning arms from rear



Figure 13b. Check Blow to Groin - Arms Pinned - Straighten arms forward - flex knees



Figure 13c. Check Blow to Groin - Arms Pinned - impact

(2) Arms Free: If the opponent takes a rear body hold leaving your arms free (fig. 14a), immediately grasp your opponent's right hand with your left, rotating your body to the left, cocking your right elbow (fig. 14b). With a vigorous movement, rotate your body to the right, smashing your right elbow to his head (fig. 14c). The direction of the blow follows the line of your opponent's right arm. This movement may be executed to the right or left. It is executed to the side of the hand your opponent has on top.

(3) Rear Strangle: If opponent attempts to apply a rear strangle hold (fig. 15a), immediately grasp his right arm with your left hand and bend deeply at the knees, twisting your body to the left (fig. 15b). Drive your right elbow vigorously into his armpit, breaking his strangle hold (fig. 15c). You will always deliver this blow towards the arm encircling your neck. If opponent is strangling you with his left arm the above movements would be reversed.

b. Finger Jab: The finger jab to the eyes is used to break contact with an opponent when he attempts to seize you from the front or when he is too close to kick. In forming the hand for the finger jab, the fingers are extended and joined, thumb along the index finger. The wrist is locked. The jab is a sharp movement made from the elbow and shoulder directed at the eyes of your opponent (fig. 16).

#### 25. PARRIES OF BAYONET:

a. Parries: Parries are always executed toward the same side on which the opponent is carrying his weapon to prevent his following up the attack with a butt stroke.



Figure 14a. Elbow Check Blow to Head - Arms Free - Opponent holding from rear

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Figure 14b. Elbow Check Blow to Head Arms Free Body cocked



Figure 14c. Elbow Check Blow to Head - Arms Free - Impact of elbow to head



Figure 15a. Defense against Rear Strangle - Opponent applying rear strangle



Figure 15b. Defense against Rear Strangle - Grasp opponent's arm & bend at knees



Figure 15c. Defense against Rear Strangle - Drive elbow into armpit



Figure 16. Finger Jab - Impact of Fingers to Eyes



Figure 17a. High Parry - From front position



Figure 17b. High Parry - Parry being executed

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(1) High Parry: The high parry is used when the opponent thrusts at the upper portion of your body. To execute the high parry, stand facing your opponent, with your feet a comfortable distance apart (fig. 17a). As your opponent thrusts, pivot on the ball of the right foot, bringing the left foot back on line with the right. Simultaneously, parry the weapon to the left, using the inside portion of the right forearm from the elbow to the fingers. Keep the palm forward (fig. 17b). If the weapon is carried on the left side of your opponent's body, the actions would be reversed.

(2) Low Parry: To parry a thrust at the lower portion of the body, shift your body out of the way in the same manner as in the high parry. Parry the weapon with the arm fully extended, palm forward, fingers pointing downward (fig. 18).

(3) Sitting Parry: From the sitting guard position (fig. 19a), parry the weapon in a manner similar to the high parry (fig. 19b). It remains important that you parry the weapon to the side on which the weapon is being carried to prevent your opponent following through with a butt stroke.

b. Follow-Up Actions to Bayonet Parries:

(1) High Parry: After you have executed a high parry (fig. 20a), immediately raise the elbow of the arm with which you parried the weapon to shoulder level and deliver a smashing blow with the elbow to his face (fig. 20b).



Figure 18. Low Parry - Low parry being executed



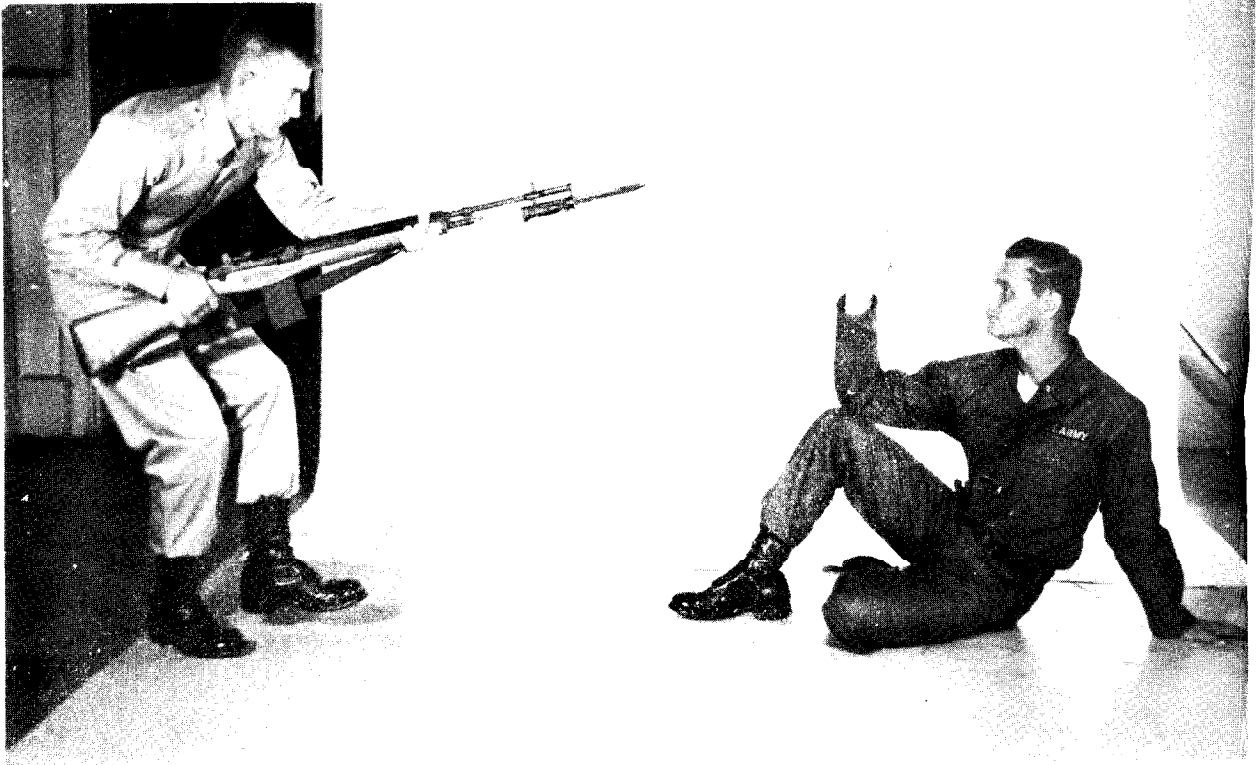


Figure 19a. Sitting Parry - From sitting guard

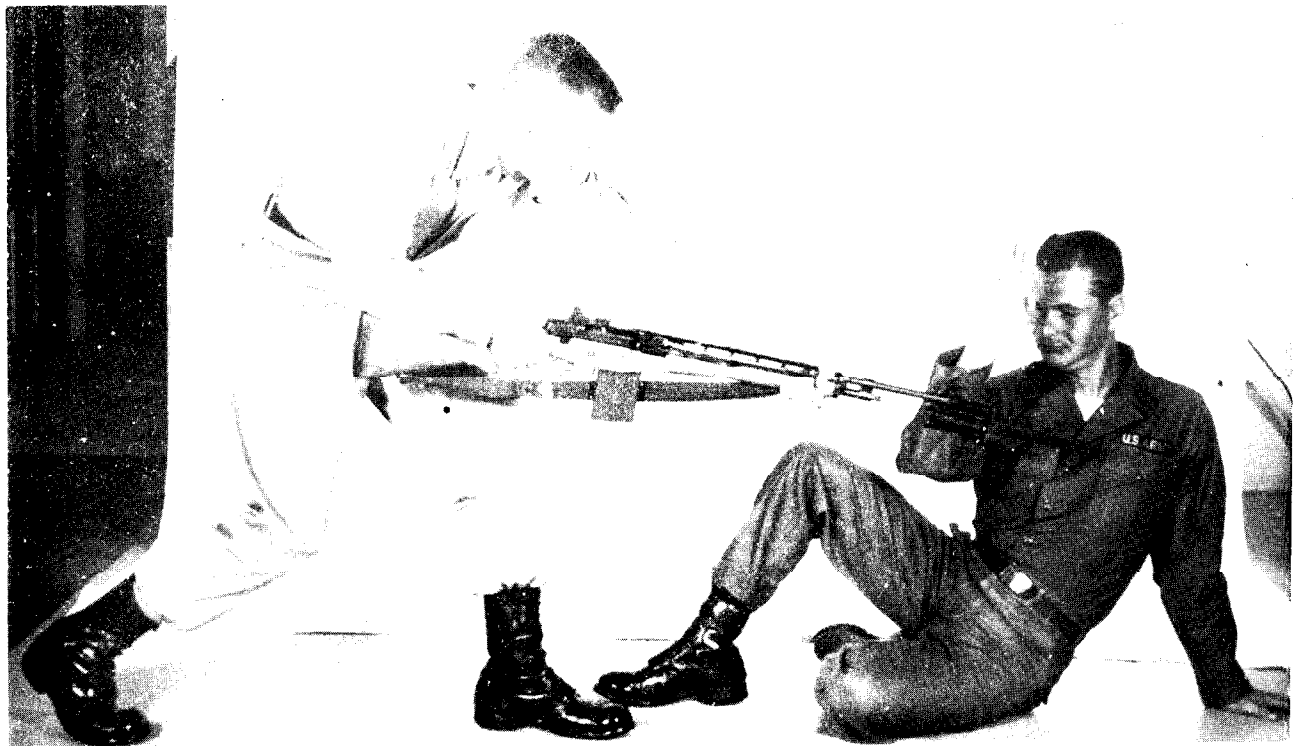


Figure 19b. Sitting Parry - Parry being executed



Figure 20a. Parry with Elbow Check Blow - Parry



Figure 20b. Parry with Elbow Check Blow - Follow thru with elbow check blow to head

(2) Low Parry: After executing a low parry (fig. 21a), immediately grasp the forward portion of the weapon with your left hand (fig. 21b), and execute a pivot kick to his groin region (fig. 21c). When grasping the weapon, it is important that you immediately pull and hold the weapon in tight against your hip. This makes it difficult for your opponent to pull the weapon away from you as you deliver the pivot kick.

(3) Sitting Parry: After parrying from the sitting guard position (fig. 22a and 22b), grasp the forward portion of the weapon with the left hand, at the same time grasp your opponent's arm just above the elbow with the right hand (fig. 22c). Pull and hold the weapon in tight against your left hip. When he attempts to withdraw the weapon, use this motion to pull you to your feet (fig. 22d). To gain the initiative, step as far as possible behind his feet with your left foot. Shift your right hand from his arm to his near shoulder (fig. 22e) and forcefully pull him to the right, across your left leg, throwing him to the ground. Maintain your hold on the weapon throughout. Follow through with a heel stomp.

(4) If your opponent initiates his attack from the high port position, you must evade his initial movements by the use of the glide. As soon as he commits himself to a thrusting movement, immediately execute one of the skills described above.



Figure 21a. Parry With Kick to Groin - Parry



Figure 21b. Parry With Kick to Groin - Grip weapon with left hand on top



Figure 21c. Parry With Kick to Groin - Pivot kick to groin

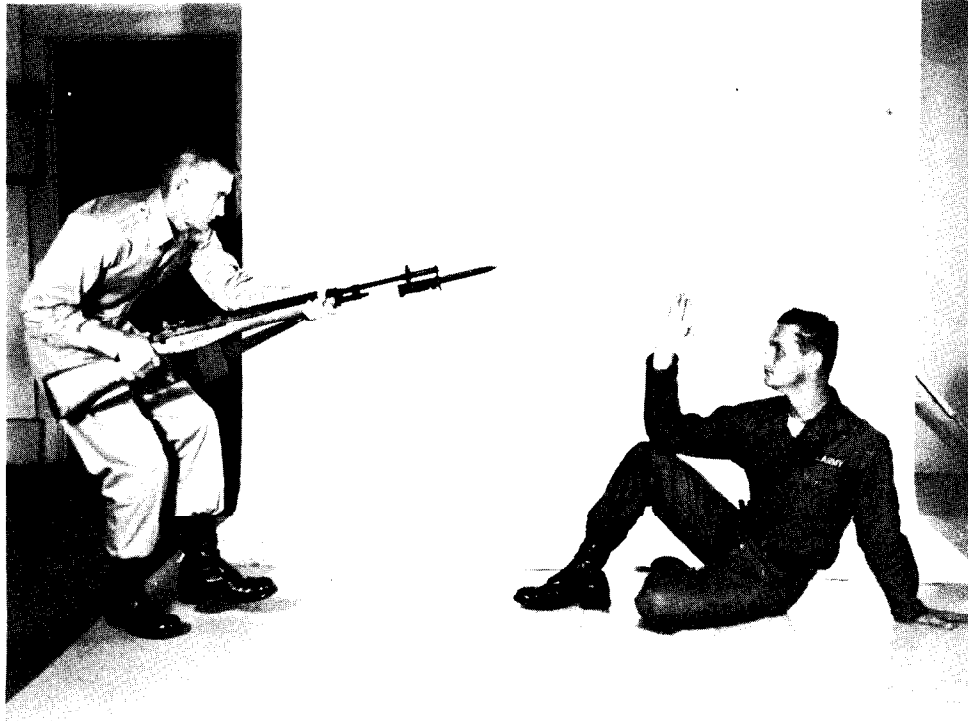


Figure 22a. Follow Up Movement to Sitting Parry



Figure 22b. Follow Up Movement to Sitting Parry - Sitting parry



Figure 22c. Follow Up Movement to Sitting Parry - Grasp top of weapon and opponent's left arm



Figure 22d. Follow Up Movement to Sitting Parry - As opponent withdraws, rise



Figure 22e. Follow Up Movement to Sitting Parry - Step by with left foot  
throwing him to the ground