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**UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS**  
WEAPONS TRAINING BATTALION  
MARINE CORPS COMBAT DEVELOPMENT COMMAND  
QUANTICO, VIRGINIA 22134-5040

**DETAILED INSTRUCTOR GUIDE**

LESSON TITLE

PISTOL KNEELING POSITIONS

COURSE TITLE

DIVISION MATCH COURSE



**UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS**  
Weapons Training Battalion  
Marine Corps Combat Development Command  
Quantico, Virginia 22134-5040

**DETAILED OUTLINE**

**PISTOL KNEELING POSITIONS**

INTRODUCTION

(3 MIN)

1. GAIN ATTENTION. In combat, a Marine must choose a firing position based on the combat situation, observation of the enemy, the need for mobility, and individual body configuration. Above all, the position chosen must provide stability for accurate shooting. The more stable the firing position, the easier it is to steady the pistol and control the trigger while keeping the sights aligned, and recover the sights back on target. There are times when you will need to maintain a smaller profile to the enemy. In this case, the kneeling position can be assumed. There is a Weaver and an Isosceles variation of the kneeling position, each of which has a specific grip.
2. OVERVIEW. This lesson will cover the Weaver and Isosceles variations of the kneeling position, and the procedures to present the pistol to the target while assuming a kneeling position.
3. INTRODUCE LEARNING OBJECTIVES. The Division Match instruction is structured to prepare the shooter to fire the Division Match Course and is not a component of a formal school program. Therefore, there are no learning objectives.
4. METHOD. This lesson will be taught in a classroom setting using lecture and demonstration.
5. EVALUATION. The Division Match instruction is structured to prepare the shooter to fire the Division Match Course and is not a component of a formal school program. Therefore, students are not evaluated on this material.

TRANSITION: The kneeling position is generally assumed from the standing position to take advantage of cover or to provide a more stable base for shooting.



BODY

(25 MIN)

**NOTE**

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

***INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE:*** *Substitutions of the language in this lesson plan for 'right' and 'left' hand may be made with 'strong' and 'support', respectively, or 'firing' and 'non-firing' as desired.*

**1. (5 MIN) VARIATIONS OF THE KNEELING POSITION**

- a. Introduction. The kneeling position can be quickly assumed and it allows firing from various types of cover.
- 1) The kneeling position offers a smaller exposure than the standing position and greater stability. Increased stability makes the kneeling position effective for longer range shooting.
  - 2) The kneeling position does not, however, offer as much mobility for quick reaction as the standing position.

***INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE:*** *Demonstrate each of the variations. The demonstrations can be done using either a Weaver or Isosceles variation of the position. Explain to students that the focus of the demonstration is on the lower portion of the body only.*

- b. Variations. There are four variations of the kneeling position that provide varying degrees of observation of the enemy. Depending on the cover and the need for observation, the kneeling position may be adapted to: a high kneeling, a medium kneeling, a low kneeling, or a two-kneed kneeling position.



(ON SLIDE #1)

1) High Kneeling. To assume the high kneeling variation, the toes of the right foot are curled and in contact with the deck, or the inside of the foot may be in contact with the deck. Depending on the need for observation, the buttocks may or may not rest on the right heel. The left leg is bent at the knee; the shin straight up and down. The left foot is flat on the deck.

(ON SLIDE #2)

2) Medium Kneeling. To assume the medium kneeling variation, the right ankle is straight with the foot stretched out and the bootlaces in contact with the deck. The left leg is bent at the knee; the left foot flat on the deck. The right shin may be angled to the body to create a tripod of support for the position.

(ON SLIDE #3)

3) Low Kneeling. To assume the low kneeling variation, the right ankle is turned so the outside of the foot is in contact with the deck and the buttocks are in contact with the inside of the foot. The right shin may be angled to the body to create a tripod of support for the position.

(ON SLIDE #4)

4) Two-Kneed. To assume the two-kneed variation, drop both knees onto the deck. The toes may be curled to get into and out of the position quickly. Depending on the need for observation of the enemy, the buttocks may or may not rest on the heels.

Confirm by questions.

TRANSITION: The kneeling position may be adapted to either a Weaver variation or an Isosceles variation. The Weaver and Isosceles variations of the kneeling position each have a specific firing grip which is key to establishing a good firing position. The Weaver variation is ideal for longer range shooting or a precision shot where stability is needed. The Weaver variation provides a stable firing position, which makes it easier to steady the pistol and control the trigger while keeping the sights aligned.



## 2. (5 MIN) WEAVER KNEELING POSITION

**INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE:** *Demonstrate the Weaver kneeling position and each of its variations (high, medium, low, two-kneed) as they are explained.*

a. Assuming the Weaver Kneeling. The Weaver variation of the kneeling position offers an advantage in providing bone support due to the left elbow's placement on the knee. The Weaver variation further enables firing from the side of cover while exposing less of the body to a threat.

(ON SLIDE #5)

1) To assume the Weaver kneeling position, make a half turn to the right, drop the right foot back or step forward with the left foot, and place the right knee on the deck. If firing from a two-kneed position, drop forward onto both knees. The body should be positioned at a 40-60 degree angle oblique to the target.

2) Blade the shoulders at a 40-60 degree angle oblique to the target, the left shoulder forward of the right.

3) Extend the arms toward the target using a Weaver grip.

4) Bend forward at the waist to better manage recoil.

5) Place the flat part of the upper left arm, just above the elbow, in firm contact with the flat surface formed on top of the bent knee. The point of the left elbow extends just slightly past the left knee. However, depending on the need for stability or observation of the enemy, the elbow does not have to rest on the knee.

b. Natural Body Alignment. Check natural body alignment to the target so when the pistol is presented, the sights fall naturally on the target. It takes a combination of body alignment and consistent muscular tension to ensure the sights fall naturally to the same area on the target every time the weapon is presented.

c. Search and Assess to a Higher Profile. After searching and assessing at the kneeling position, maintain control of the pistol, and stand while continuing to search and assess.

Confirm by questions.



TRANSITION: While the Weaver variation is effective for long range engagements where stability is needed, the Isosceles variation is particularly effective for management of recoil.

### 3. (5 MIN) ISOSCELES KNEELING POSITION

***INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE:*** Demonstrate the Isosceles kneeling position and each of its variations (high, medium, low, two-kneed) as they are explained.

a. Assuming the Isosceles Kneeling. The Isosceles variation offers an advantage in enabling the Marine to fire over the top of cover while exposing less of his body to a threat.

(ON SLIDE #6)

1) To assume the Isosceles kneeling position, drop the right foot back or step forward with the left foot, and place the right knee on the deck. If firing from a two-kneed position, drop forward onto both knees.

2) Square the shoulders to the target.

3) Extend the arms toward the target using an Isosceles grip.

4) Lean forward with the shoulders rolled forward and the head tucked between the shoulders to better manage recoil.

b. Natural Body Alignment. Check natural body alignment to the target so when the pistol is presented, the sights fall naturally on the target. It takes a combination of body alignment and consistent muscular tension to ensure the sights fall naturally to the same area on the target every time the weapon is presented.

c. Search and Assess to a Higher Profile. After searching and assessing at the kneeling position, maintain control of the pistol, and stand while continuing to search and assess.

Confirm by questions.

TRANSITION: In combat, the Marine may need to engage a target from the kneeling position. To be effective, the Marine must be able to quickly and smoothly present the weapon to the target while assuming the kneeling position with the weapon in a carry or in the holster.



4. (10 MIN) PRESENTATION WHILE ASSUMING THE KNEELING POSITION

**INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE:** *Demonstrate the procedures to present the pistol and assume a kneeling position using both the Weaver and Isosceles variations. Demonstrate the Weaver first. Procedures should be demonstrated and taught emphasizing that presentation is performed in a continuous, fluid motion.*

To present the pistol while assuming the kneeling position, perform the following steps in sequence:

a. From the Standing Carries

1) From the Ready and from the Alert (arms straight):

a) When a target appears, drop to the kneeling position while raising the arms to bring the weapon to bear on the target.

**NOTE**

For the Weaver variation, maintain the body's position in a 40-60 degree oblique to the target.

b) At the same time, sweep the safety with the thumb of the right hand, place the trigger finger on the trigger, acquire sight alignment and sight picture within the aiming area, and apply trigger pressure until the shot is fired.

2) From the Alert (close quarters, elbows bent):

a) When a target appears, drop to the kneeling position while punching the arms out toward the target.



**NOTE**

For the Weaver variation, maintain the body's position in a 40-60 degree oblique to the target.

b) At the same time, sweep the safety with the thumb of the right hand, place the trigger finger on the trigger, acquire sight alignment and sight picture within the aiming area, and apply trigger pressure until the shot is fired.

b. From the Standing Holster Transport

***INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE:*** Demonstrate the complete presentation from the Weaver, followed by the demonstration from the Isosceles variation.

1) When a target appears, withdraw the pistol from the holster while dropping to the kneeling position. Take care not to cover your leg with the weapon when dropping to the kneeling. The weapon should be rotated to the target by the time the knee hits the deck.

2) Sweep the safety with the thumb of the right hand, establish a two-handed firing grip, and:

a) In the Weaver variation, raise the arms to bring the weapon to bear on the target.

b) In the Isosceles variation, punch the weapon out toward the target.

3) At the same time, place the trigger finger on the trigger, acquire sight alignment and sight picture within the aiming area, and apply trigger pressure until the shot is fired.

Confirm by questions.

TRANSITION: A smooth and fluid motion is essential to proper weapons presentation. Practice in presenting the pistol from the kneeling position will increase the Marine's combat effectiveness.



OPPORTUNITY FOR QUESTIONS:

(1 MIN)

1. Respond to questions from the class.
2. Prompt Marines with questions to the class.
  - a. QUESTION: How are the shoulders positioned in the Isosceles variation of the kneeling position?

ANSWER: The shoulders are squared to the target.

- b. QUESTION: What are the four kneeling positions?

ANSWER: High kneeling, medium kneeling, low kneeling, and two-kneed kneeling.

- c. QUESTION: Why is natural body alignment important?

ANSWER: Natural body alignment helps ensure that the body is properly aligned to the target so when the pistol is presented, the sights fall naturally on the target.

***INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE:*** Ask Marines as many questions as necessary to ensure they fully understand the material presented in this lesson.

SUMMARY:

(1 MIN)

It is critical to establish a stable and consistent firing position and grip. When assumed correctly, the Weaver and Isosceles variations of the kneeling position are effective for target engagement. In combat, there are times when you will need to maintain a smaller profile to the enemy. The ability to efficiently present the pistol to the target while assuming a kneeling position is essential to the Marine's combat effectiveness.



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