

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
FIELD MEDICAL TRAINING BATTALION
Camp Lejeune, NC 28542-0042

FMST 304

Hand and Arm Signals

TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S)

1. Given a command or situation, communicate using hand and arm signals by communicating all signals correctly. (HSS-MCCS-1011)

ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S)

1. Without the aid of references, given a description or list, **identify commonly used hand and arm signals**, within 80% accuracy, per FM 21-60. (HSS-MCCS-1011a)

2. Without the aid of references, **perform hand and arm signals**, to exercise control and pass information, without omission, per FM 21-60. (HSS-MCCS-1011b)

3. Without the aid of references, given a description or list, **define the purpose of commonly used hand and arm signals**, within 80% accuracy, per FM 21-60. (HSS-MCCS-1011c)

OVERVIEW

Efficient combat operations depend on clear, accurate, and secure communication among ground units. Control and coordination are achieved by the most rapid means of communication available between men and units. When electrical means of communication are inadequate, or not available, a station to station system of visual communication is an alternate means for transmitting orders, information, or requests for aid and/or support.

1. **HAND AND ARM SIGNALS** - The most commonly used form of signaling is the hand and arm method. It must be remembered that the hand and arm signals are orders or commands that must be carried out.

a. **Advantages and Uses**

(1) The noise of the battle does not hinder the use of the hand and arm signals.

(2) Used when silence must be maintained

(3) **Disadvantages**

(a) The signal must be seen

(b) Must be aware of other members location

2. **COMMON HAND AND ARM SIGNALS**

Decrease Speed - Extend the arm horizontally sideward, palm to the front, and wave arm downward several times, keeping the arm straight. Arm does not move above the horizontal plane.



Figure 10

Change Direction - Extend arm horizontally to the side, palm to the front.



Figure 11

Enemy In Sight - Hold the rifle horizontally, with the stock on the shoulder, the muzzle pointing in the direction of the enemy.



Figure 12

Range - Extend the arm fully towards the leader or men for whom the signal is intended with fist closed. Open the fist exposing one finger for each 100 meters of range.



Figure 13

Commence Fire - Extend the arm in front of the body, hip high, palm down, and move it through a wide horizontal arc several times.



Figure 14

Fire Faster - Execute the Commences Fire signal rapidly.



Figure 15

Fire Slower - Execute the Commences Fire signal slowly.



Figure 16

Cease Fire - Raise the hand in front of the forehead, palm to the front, and swing the arm and forearm up and down several times in the front of the face.



Figure 17

Assemble - Raise the arm vertically to the full extent of the arm, finger's extended and joined, palm to the front, and wave in large horizontal circles.



Figure 18

Form Column - Raise either arm to the vertical position. Drop the arm to the rear, making complete circles in a vertical plane parallel to the body.



Figure 19

Are You Ready - Extend the arm toward the leader for whom the signal is intended, hand raised, fingers extended and joined, raise arm slightly above horizontal, palm facing outward.



Figure 20

I Am Ready - Execute the signal, are you ready.



Figure 21

Shift - Raise the hand that is on the side toward the new direction across the body, palm to the front; then swing the arm in a horizontal arc, extending arm and hand to point in the new direction.



Figure 22

Echelon - Face the unit being signaled, and extend one arm 45 degrees above the other arm 45 degrees below the horizontal, palms to the front. The lower arm indicates the direction of echelon.

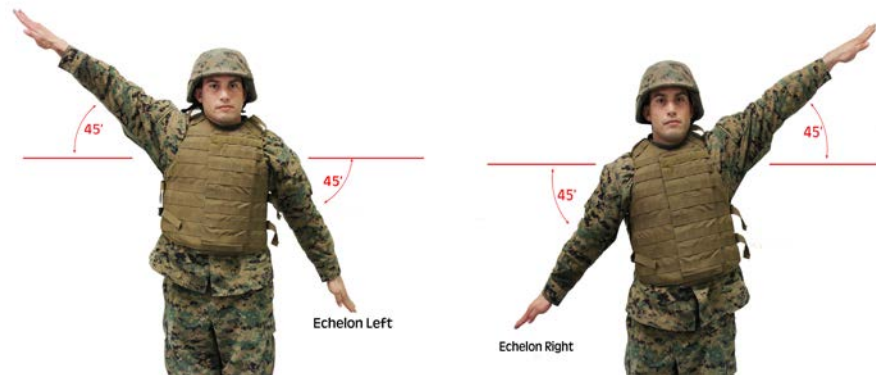


Figure 23

Skirmisher - Raise both arms laterally until horizontal, arms and hands extended, palms down. If it is necessary to indicate the direction, move in the desired direction at the same time.



Figure 24

Wedge - Extend both arms downward and to the side at an angle of 45 degrees below the horizontal plane, palms to the front.



Figure 25

Vee - Extend arms at an angle of 45 degrees above the horizontal plane forming the letter 'V' with the arms and torso.



Figure 26

Fireteam - Place the right arm diagonally across the chest.



Figure 27

Squad - Extend the arm and hand toward the squad leader, palm of the hand down, distinctly, moving the hand up and down several times from the wrist holding the arm steady.

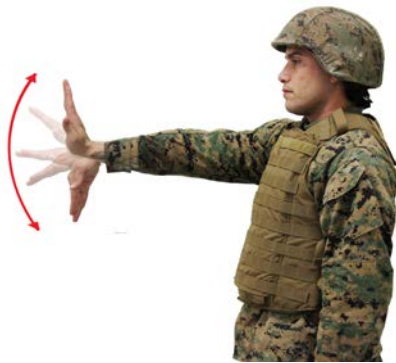


Figure 28

Platoon - Extend both arms forward, palm of the hands down and make large vertical circles with hands.



Figure 29

Close Up - Start signal with both arms extended horizontally, palm forward, and bring hands together in front of the body momentarily.



Figure 30

Open Up or Extend - Start signal with arms extended in the front of the body, palms together, and bring arms to the horizontal position, palms forward.



Figure 31

Disperse - Extend either arm vertically overhead, wave the hand and arm to the front, left, right, and rear, the palm toward the direction of each movement.



Figure 32

Leaders Join Me – Extend arm toward the leaders and beckon leaders with finger as shown.



Figure 33

I Do Not Understand - Raise both arms horizontally at the hip level, bend both arms at elbows, palms up, and shrug shoulders in the manner of universal “I don’t understand.”



Figure 34

Forward - Face and move to the desired direction of march, at the same time extend the arm horizontally to the rear, then swing it overhead and forward in the direction of movement until it is horizontal, palm down.



Figure 35

Halt - Carry the hand to the shoulder, palm to the front then thrust the hand upward vertically to the full extent of the arm and hold it in the position until the signal is understood.



Figure 36

Freeze - Make the signal for a halt and make a fist with the hand.



Figure 37

Dismount, Down, Take Cover - Extend arm sideward at an angle of 45 degrees above horizontal, palm down, and lower it to the side.



Figure 38

Mount – With the hand extended downward at the side with the palm out, raise arm sideward and upward to an angle of 45 degrees above the horizontal. Repeat until understood.



Figure 39

Disregard Previous Command – Face the unit or individual being signaled, then raise both arms and cross them over the head, palms to the front.



Figure 40

Right (Left) Flank – Extend both arms in direction of desired movement.



Figure 41

Double Time - Carry the hand to the shoulder, fist closed rapidly thrust the fist upward vertically to the full extent of the arm and back to the shoulder several times.



Figure 42

Hasty Ambush (LEFT OR RIGHT) - Raise fist to shoulder level and thrust it several times in the desired direction.

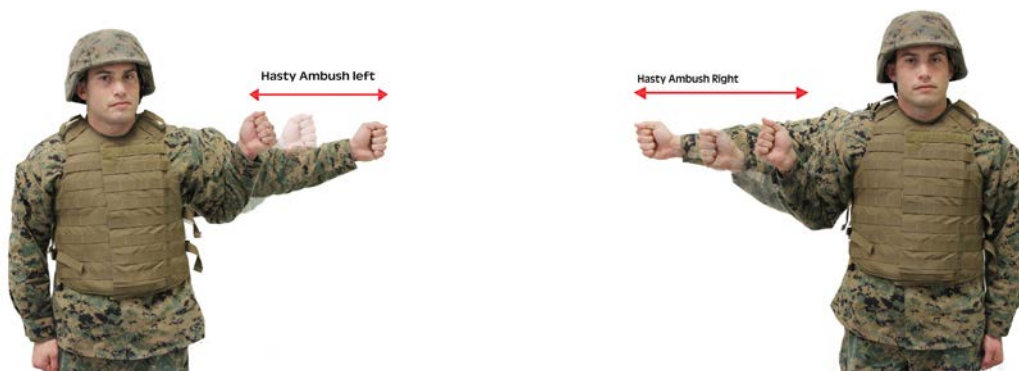


Figure 43

Rally Point - Touch the belt buckle with one hand and then point to the ground.



Figure 44

Objective Rally Point - Touch the belt buckle with one hand, point to the ground, and make a circular motion.



Figure 45

Pace Count – Tap the heel of the boot repeatedly with an open hand.



Figure 46

Head Count – Tap the back of the helmet repeatedly with an open hand.



Figure 47

Danger Area – Draw the right hand, palm down, across the neck in a throat-cutting motion from left to right.



Figure 48

3. Visual signals are any means of communication that require sight and can be used to transmit prearranged messages rapidly over short distances. This includes the devices and means used for the recognition and identification of friendly forces.

REFERENCES:
Marine Rifle Squad
Visual Signals

MCIP 3-10A.4i
FM 21-60

Hand and Arm Signal Review

1. Describe a Rally Point Hand and Arm Signal.
2. Describe a Dismount, Down, Take Cover Hand and Arm Signal.
3. Describe a I Am Ready Hand and Arm Signal.
4. Describe a Freeze Hand and Arm Signal.
5. Describe a Fire Faster Hand and Arm Signal.