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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

RIFLE PRONE POSITION

COURSE TITLE

ANNUAL RIFLE TRAINING



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

DETAILED OUTLINE

RIFLE PRONE POSITION

INTRODUCTION

(3 MIN)

1. GAIN ATTENTION. The prone position is the steadiest of the four shooting positions and easy to assume. The prone position provides the shooter stability and control during firing, which will ensure successful engagement of the target in combat situations.
2. OVERVIEW. This lesson will cover the prone shooting position to include the steps to assume both the straight leg prone and the cocked leg prone positions.
3. INTRODUCE LEARNING OBJECTIVES. The Terminal Learning Objective pertaining to this lesson is as follows:

TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE. Given a service rifle/carbine, sling, magazines, cartridge belt, magazine retention device (pouches or load-bearing vest), ammunition, and a target, without the aid of references, engage targets from a prone position IAW MCRP 3-01A. (0300.M16.1005)
4. METHOD. This lesson will be taught in a classroom setting using lecture and demonstration.
5. EVALUATION. The Marine will be evaluated on this material during Table 1 firing.

TRANSITION: Each shooting position has different applications for combat. The position chosen in combat will be determined by the situation. There are two variations of the prone position: the straight and cocked leg positions. The Marine should try both variations to find a position that is natural, comfortable and stable.



BODY

(35 MIN)

INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE: Demonstrate the positions as they are explained. 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.

NOTE

These procedures are written for right-handed shooters. Left-handed shooters should reverse instructions as needed.

1. (2 MIN) INTRODUCTION TO THE PRONE POSITION

a. Description. The prone position provides a very steady foundation for shooting, is easy to assume, and presents a low profile. However, the prone position is the least mobile of the shooting positions and may restrict a Marine's field of view for observation. In this position, the Marine's weight is evenly distributed on the elbows, providing maximum support and good stability for the rifle. The hasty sling, three-point sling, or the loop sling is used when firing from either of the two variations of the prone position on the Table 1 Course of Fire.

b. Variations. There are two variations of the prone position that can be adapted to the individual shooter: straight leg prone and cocked leg prone. The Marine should experiment with all the variations and select the position which is easiest to assume and provides the most stability for firing.

Confirm by questions.

TRANSITION: There are two variations of the prone position, the straight leg and cocked leg. Both variations can be assumed using any of the three sling adjustments: hasty, loop, or three-point. We will begin by discussing assuming the prone position using a hasty sling.

2. (10 MIN) ASSUMING THE PRONE POSITION WITH A HASTY SLING

(ON SLIDE #1)

a. Straight Leg Position with the Hasty Sling. Apply the five factors to this position.



- 1) Stand erect, face the target, and spread your feet a comfortable distance.
- 2) Grasp the pistol grip with the right hand.
- 3) Reaching under the sling, grasp the handguard with the left hand. Do not incorporate the sling into the grasp of the left hand.
- 4) With the right hand, push the butt of the weapon down to elevate the muzzle. Maintain control of the muzzle with the left hand on the handguards.
- 5) Lower yourself into position by dropping to both knees. Release your right hand from the pistol grip to break your fall as you drop into position. Shift your weight forward to lower your upper body to the ground using your right hand to break the forward motion.
- 6) Once on the ground, extend your left elbow in front of you. Stretch your legs out behind you. Spread your feet a comfortable distance apart with your toes pointing outboard and the inner portion of your feet in contact with the ground.
 - a) As much of your body mass should be aligned directly behind the rifle as possible.
 - b) If body alignment is correct, the weapon's recoil is absorbed by the whole body and not just the shoulder.
- 7) Grasp the pistol grip with your right hand and place the rifle butt in your right shoulder pocket.
- 8) Lower your head and place your cheek firmly against the stock to allow the aiming eye to look through the rear sight aperture.
- 9) Rotate your left hand up, pinching the handguard between your thumb and forefinger. The magazine must be on the inside of your left arm.
- 10) Slide both elbows outboard on the ground so there is outboard tension against the sling (moving the elbows out tightens the sling) and both shoulders are level. The elbows should provide a tripod of support with the body.
- 11) Adjust the position of your left hand on the handguard to allow the sling to support the weapon and the front sight to be centered in the rear sight aperture.



12) To adjust for a minor cant in the rifle, rotate the handguard left or right in the "V" formed by the thumb and forefinger by rotating the pistol grip left or right.

(ON SLIDE #2)

b. Cocked Leg Position with the Hasty Sling. Apply the five factors to this position.

1) To assume the cocked leg prone position with the hasty sling, drop to the ground in the same manner as for the straight leg position.

2) Once on the ground, roll your body to the left side and extend your left elbow on the ground. Your left leg is stretched out behind you, almost in a straight line. This allows the mass of the body to be placed behind the rifle to aid in absorbing recoil.

INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE: *Using the demonstrator to illustrate, point out the straight line formed from the rifle and continuing through the body and the left leg.*

3) Turn the toe of your left foot inboard so the outside of your left leg and foot are in contact with the ground. Bend your right leg and draw it up toward your body to a comfortable position. Turn your right leg and foot outboard so the inside of your right boot is in contact with the ground. Cocking the leg will raise the diaphragm, making breathing easier.

4) Grasp the pistol grip with your right hand and place the rifle butt in your right shoulder pocket.

5) Lower your head and place your cheek firmly against the stock to allow the aiming eye to look through the rear sight aperture.

6) Rotate your left hand up, pinching the handguard between your thumb and forefinger. The magazine must be on the inside of your left arm.

7) Roll your body to the right while lowering your right elbow to the ground. Slide both elbows outboard on the ground so there is outboard tension against the sling (moving the elbows out tightens the sling). The right shoulder is higher than the left shoulder in the cocked leg position.



8) Adjust the position of your left hand on the handguard to allow the sling to support the weapon and the front sight to be centered in the rear sight aperture.

9) To adjust for a minor cant in the rifle, rotate the handguard left or right in the "V" formed by the thumb and forefinger by rotating the pistol grip left or right.

Confirm by questions.

TRANSITION: The prone position provides a stable platform for shooting. It is the steadiest position from which to learn and perfect the fundamentals of marksmanship. We will now discuss assuming the prone position using a loop sling.

3. (10 MIN) ASSUMING THE PRONE POSITION WITH A LOOP SLING

a. Consideration for Firing with the Loop Sling. Attach the loop sling. Position the loop of the sling on the left arm above the biceps muscle to provide the best support for the rifle with the least amount of physical effort on the part of the shooter. The loop should not be tightened excessively on the arm. If blood flow is restricted, excessive pulse beat is transmitted through the rifle sling to the rifle and causes a noticeable, rhythmic movement of the rifle sights. When this occurs, a stable hold at the desired aiming point is impossible to achieve.

(ON SLIDE #3)

b. Straight Leg Position with the Loop Sling. Apply the five factors to this position.

1) Stand erect, face the target, and spread your feet a comfortable distance.

2) Place your left hand forward under the handguard. Your right hand should be on the pistol grip, but may be removed to break your fall as you drop into position.

3) Lower yourself into position by dropping to both knees. Then shift your weight forward to lower your upper body to the ground using your right hand to break the forward motion.



4) Roll your body to the left side as you extend and invert your left elbow on the ground. Stretch your legs out behind you. Spread your feet a comfortable distance apart with your toes pointing outboard and the inner portion of your feet in contact with the ground.

a) As much of your body mass should be aligned directly behind the rifle as possible.

b) If body alignment is correct, the weapon's recoil is absorbed by the whole body and not just the shoulder.

5) Grasp the rifle butt with your right hand and place the rifle butt into your right shoulder pocket so the sights are level with your eyes.

6) Grasp the pistol grip with your right hand.

7) Rotate your body to the right while your elbow is lowered to the ground so your shoulders are level and your right wrist is as straight as possible.

8) Lower your head and place your cheek firmly against the stock in the same place for every shot to ensure you maintain consistent eye relief and stock weld.

9) Move your left hand to a location under the handguard that provides maximum bone support and stability for the weapon. This may require that you remove the rifle from your shoulder to reposition your left hand.

10) Tension on the rifle sling is correct when it causes the rifle butt to be forced rearward into the pocket of the shoulder. This serves to keep the buttplate in the shoulder pocket during recoil. To increase the amount of tension on the rifle sling, the sling must be shortened. To lessen the tension, the rifle sling must be lengthened.

(ON SLIDE #4)

c. Cocked Leg Position with the Loop Sling. Apply the five factors to this position.

1) Drop to the ground in the same manner as for the straight leg position.

2) Once on the ground, roll your body to the left side and extend and invert your left elbow on the ground. Then stretch your left leg out behind you, almost in a straight line. This allows the mass of the body to be placed behind the rifle to aid in absorbing recoil.



INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE: *Using the demonstrator to illustrate, point out the straight line formed from the rifle and continuing through the body and the left leg.*

- 3) Turn the toe of your left foot inboard so the outside of your left leg and foot are in contact with the ground. Then bend your right leg and draw it up toward your body to a comfortable position. Turn your right leg and foot outboard so the inside of your right boot is in contact with the ground. Cocking the leg will raise the diaphragm, making breathing easier.
- 4) Grasp the rifle butt with your right hand and place the rifle butt into your right shoulder pocket so the sights are level with your eyes.
- 5) Grasp the pistol grip with your right hand.
- 6) Roll your body to the right while your right elbow is lowered to the ground and your right wrist is as straight as possible. The right shoulder is higher than the left shoulder in the cocked leg position.
- 7) Lower your head and place your cheek firmly against the stock in the same place for every shot to ensure you maintain consistent eye relief and stock weld.
- 8) Move your left hand to a location under the handguard that provides maximum bone support and stability for the weapon.
- 9) Adjust the tension on the sling in the same manner as described in the straight leg position.

Confirm by questions.

TRANSITION: Both variations of the prone position can be assumed using any of the three sling adjustments. We will now discuss assuming the prone position using a three-point tactical sling.



4. (10 MIN) ASSUMING THE PRONE POSITION WITH A 3-POINT SLING

(ON SLIDE #5)

a. Straight Leg Position with the 3-point Sling. Apply the five factors to this position.

- 1) Stand erect, face the target, and spread your feet a comfortable distance.
- 2) Grasp the pistol grip with the right hand.
- 3) Reaching under the sling, grasp the handguard with the left hand. Do not incorporate the sling into the grasp of the left hand.
- 4) With the right hand, push the butt of the weapon down to elevate the muzzle. Maintain control of the muzzle with the left hand on the handguards.
- 5) Lower yourself into position by dropping to both knees. Release your right hand from the pistol grip to break your fall as you drop into position. Shift your weight forward to lower your upper body to the ground using your right hand to break the forward motion.
- 6) Roll your body to the left side as you extend and invert your left elbow on the ground. Stretch your legs out behind you.
- 7) Grasp the rifle butt with your right hand and push it forward to allow the sling to slide around the torso. Place the rifle butt into your right shoulder pocket so the sights are level with your eyes.
- 8) Grasp the pistol grip with your right hand.
- 9) Rotate your body to the right while lowering your elbow to the ground so your shoulders are level.
- 10) Spread your feet a comfortable distance apart with your toes pointing outboard and the inner portion of your feet in contact with the ground.
 - a) As much of your body mass should be aligned directly behind the rifle as possible.
 - b) If body alignment is correct, the weapon's recoil is absorbed by the whole body and not just the shoulder.
- 11) Lower your head and place your cheek firmly against the stock in the same place for every shot to ensure you maintain consistent eye relief and stock weld.



12) Move your left hand to a location under the handguard that provides maximum bone support and stability for the weapon.

(ON SLIDE #6)

b. Cocked Leg Position with the 3-point Sling. Apply the five factors to this position.

1) Drop to the ground in the same manner as for the straight leg position.

2) Once on the ground, roll your body to the left side and extend and invert your left elbow on the ground. Then stretch your left leg out behind you, almost in a straight line. This allows the mass of the body to be placed behind the rifle to aid in absorbing recoil.

INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE: *Using the demonstrator to illustrate, point out the straight line formed from the rifle and continuing through the body and the left leg.*

3) Turn the toe of your left foot inboard so the outside of your left leg and foot are in contact with the ground. Then bend your right leg and draw it up toward your body to a comfortable position. Turn your right leg and foot outboard so the inside of your right boot is in contact with the ground. Cocking the leg will raise the diaphragm, making breathing easier.

4) Grasp the rifle butt with your right hand and push it forward to allow the sling to slide around the torso. Place the rifle butt into your right shoulder pocket so the sights are level with your eyes.

5) Grasp the pistol grip with your right hand.

6) Roll your body to the right while your right elbow is lowered to the ground and your right wrist is as straight as possible. The right shoulder is higher than the left shoulder in the cocked leg position.

7) Lower your head and place your cheek firmly against the stock in the same place for every shot to ensure you maintain consistent eye relief and stock weld.

8) Move your left hand to a location under the handguard that provides maximum bone support and stability for the weapon.



Confirm by questions.

TRANSITION: Since the rifle becomes an extension of your body, it may be necessary to adjust natural point of aim until the rifle sights settle on the desired aiming point on the target. Natural point of aim can be achieved in the prone position by making minor body adjustments.

5. (3 MIN) ADJUSTING NATURAL POINT OF AIM

Natural point of aim can be achieved in the prone position by making minor body adjustments.

a. Adjusting Up or Down. If the natural point of aim is above or below the desired aiming point:

1) Move your body slightly forward or back using your left elbow as a pivot and by digging your toes in.

a) Pushing your body forward causes the sights to settle lower on the target.

b) Pulling your body backward causes the sights to settle higher on the target.

2) Vary the placement of the left hand in relation to the handguards.

a) Moving the left hand forward on the handguards lowers the muzzle of the weapon, causing the sights to settle lower on the target.

b) Moving the left hand back on the handguards raises the muzzle of the weapon, causing the sights to settle higher on the target.

3) Vary the placement of the stock in the shoulder.

a) Moving the stock higher in the shoulder lowers the muzzle of the weapon, causing the sights to settle lower on the target.

b) Moving the stock lower in the shoulder raises the muzzle of the weapon, causing the sights to settle higher on the target.

b. Adjusting Right or Left. The natural point of aim can be adjusted right or left in the prone position by adjusting body alignment in relation to the target. When adjusting



body alignment, keep the left elbow in place.

Confirm by questions.

TRANSITION: The prone position provides a stable platform for shooting. It is the steadiest position from which to learn and perfect the fundamentals of marksmanship.

OPPORTUNITY FOR QUESTIONS: (1 MIN)

1. Respond to questions from the class.
2. Prompt students with questions to the class.
 - a. **QUESTION:** What is one advantage of using the prone position?

ANSWER: The position provides stability for the shooter and a very low profile.

- b. **QUESTION:** What are the two variations of the prone position?

ANSWER: The straight leg and the cocked leg.

- c. **QUESTION:** What is one disadvantage of using the prone position?

ANSWER: The prone position is the least mobile of the shooting positions and may restrict a Marine's field of view for observation.

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

SUMMARY: (1 MIN)

The prone position is the most stable position of the four basic rifle shooting positions and provides the lowest profile. A variation of a shooting position should be chosen that can be achieved naturally and provides balance, stability, and control. Additionally, a shooting position should be chosen that is consistent with the combat situation and allows accurate engagement of the target.



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