



CPP.5
1 Oct 12

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
WEAPONS TRAINING BATTALION
TRAINING COMMAND
27211 GARAND ROAD
QUANTICO, VIRGINIA 22134-5036

LESSON PLAN

PISTOL STANDING POSITION AND GRIP

CPP.5

COMBAT PISTOL PROGRAM

CID XXXX

REVISED 10/1/2012

APPROVAL _____

DATE _____



INTRODUCTION

(3 MIN)

(ON SLIDE #1)

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 target engagement. The more stable the firing position, the easier it is to steady the pistol and control the trigger while keeping the sights aligned. A firm grip is key to this process.
2. OVERVIEW. This lesson will cover stability of hold, purpose of a firing grip, the standing position, and selection of a firing position.
3. INTRODUCE LEARNING OBJECTIVES. The Terminal Learning Objective and Enabling Learning Objective pertaining to this lesson are as follows:
 - a. TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE. Given a service pistol, (3) magazines, magazine pouch, ammunition, target, unit-issued holster, and personal protective equipment (PPE), without the aid of references, engage stationary threats with the service pistol to eliminate threats while achieving a qualifying score of 264 on the Combat Pistol Program (CPP) Firing Table One, Training Block Five in accordance with MCO 3574.2_.
 - b. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE. Given a service pistol, (3) magazines, magazine pouch, ammunition, target, unit-issued holster, and personal protective equipment (PPE), without the aid of references, assume a standing position with the pistol IAW MCRP 3-01B.
4. METHOD. This lesson will be taught in a classroom/outdoor setting using lecture, demonstration, and practical application.
5. EVALUATION. Performance will be evaluated during Pistol Firing Table One, Training Block Five, CPP.14.

TRANSITION: To shoot accurately, the Marine must assume a stable firing position to steady the weapon sights and provide a platform for managing recoil. Key to a pistol firing position is the firing grip. The firing position chosen must provide stability and balance, while the grip must provide control during firing.



BODY

(25 MIN)

PRACTICAL APPLICATION: (25 Min) Use the EDIP (Explain, Demonstrate, Imitate, Practice) method to conduct this demonstration and practical application. The practical application requires (1) pistol, (2) magazines, (1) holster, (1) belt, and magazine pouches per demonstrator; (1) target per shooter set up at 7, 15, and 25 yards.

STUDENT ROLE: The students will be in a good position to view the demonstration and will hold all questions until prompted at the end of the demonstration. The students will be spaced out to provide enough room to practice the skills.

INSTRUCTOR ROLE: Explain and demonstrate each step of a procedure and have students imitate that step before moving on to the next step. Once all of the steps are taught using EDIP, have students practice the entire procedure until they are performing it correctly. Emphasize the four safety rules throughout. The instructor must Unload, Show Clear and let at least one other individual inspect the weapon and all magazines before commencing the demonstration. Ensure shooters determine the condition of their weapon every time they holster.

1. **Safety Brief:** (From the ORAW) Brief the shooters on what to do if there is a mishap.

2. **Supervision and Guidance:** The instructor(s) will explain every step of the procedure/technique. The instructor(s) will demonstrate at half speed so all shooters can follow every step. The instructor will supervise performance and provide feedback.

1. (5 MIN) STABILITY OF HOLD

(ON SLIDE #2)

a. Definition. The ability to hold the pistol sights still on a designated area of a target is considered stability of hold. Size and distance to the target dictates how critical stability of hold must be. The smaller the target or the longer the range to the target requires more stability of hold. Likewise, the larger the target or the shorter range requires less stability of hold.



(ON SLIDE #3)

b. Purpose of Stability. A consistent, stable position is assumed for two distinct purposes:

1) Minimize Movement of the Weapon Sights. A pistol firing position must be stabilized to minimize movement of the weapon sights so an accurate shot can be fired. A stable firing position enables the weapon's sights to be controlled to deliver accurate fire on a target.

2) Minimize the Effects of Recoil. A pistol firing position must be stabilized to minimize the effects of recoil for recovery of the sights to the same area on the target. In combat, it may be necessary to engage the same target more than once to eliminate it. If the firing position is stable, the pistol sights should recover to the same area on the target, allowing rapid reengagement. Distributing the body's weight to balance the position will stabilize it and allow better management of recoil.

(ON SLIDE #4)

c. Controlled Muscular Tension. A pistol firing position is stabilized through controlled muscular tension. Because the pistol is fired without benefit of bone support, muscular tension is needed in the body to stabilize the position and the weapon sights.

1) A consistent amount of muscular tension is needed to hold the weapon steady so the sights can be aligned with the aiming eye and the target.

2) Controlled and consistent tension in the body allows the Marine to offer resistance to manage recoil and bring the sights back on target quicker.

3) Too much tension, however, can cause strain or produce additional movement by trembling.

4) Muscular tension is correct when the Marine can control the pistol before, during, and after firing the shot.

Confirm by questions.



TRANSITION: Stability of hold is necessary to hold the sights steady on the target. Maintaining the correct relationship between the pistol sights is essential for accurate target engagement. A proper grip will greatly assist in stability of hold.

2. (5 MIN) PURPOSE OF A PISTOL FIRING GRIP

A proper grip is one which provides maximum control of the pistol before, during, and after firing:

(ON SLIDE #5)

a. A Proper Grip Must Stabilize the Weapon Sights Before Firing. To fire an accurate shot, the pistol sights must be stabilized prior to and as the bullet exits the muzzle of the weapon.

1) A proper grip controls the alignment of the weapon sights and stabilizes the sights so an accurate shot may be fired.

2) To have a proper grip, there must be muscular tension in the wrist and forearms. Consistent muscular tension in the wrist, forearms, and grip helps maintain sight alignment by reducing the movement in the grip which can cause movement in the weapon sights. The grip is correct when it allows the pistol sights to be naturally aligned to the aiming eye.

3) When establishing a two-handed grip, equal pressure must be applied with both hands. Consistent, equal pressure from both hands will stabilize the weapon sights and allow them to be aligned and level with respect to the aiming eye.

b. A Proper Grip Must Allow Trigger Control to be Applied During Firing. The grip should provide a foundation for the movement of the trigger finger. The trigger finger must apply positive pressure on the trigger as an independent action, completely free of the other muscles of the gripping hand. There should not be excessive pressure on the web of the hand on the backstrap of the pistol because it will interfere with the manipulation of the trigger by the trigger finger.



c. A Proper Grip Must Manage Recoil After Firing. Once a shot is fired, the pistol recoils, disturbing alignment of the sights. A proper grip must facilitate a quick recovery from recoil so the sights quickly return to the same area on the target.

1) The amount the muzzle climbs during recoil depends on the amount of controlled muscular tension in the grip and wrists applied to stabilize the weapon and create consistency in resistance to recoil. Controlled muscular tension allows the weapon sights to recover consistently back on target within a minimum amount of time.

2) Equal pressure must be applied to the grip with both hands because recoil will travel where there is least resistance and the sights will not return to the same area on the target. Firm pressure ensures the pistol does not slip during recoil.

3) An improper grip or lack of controlled muscular tension will cause the pistol to move in the Marine's hand after the shot is fired, disrupting sight alignment and requiring the Marine to reestablish his grip.

Confirm by questions.

TRANSITION: The firing grip is key to establishing a good firing position and quick and accurate engagement. The standing position provides excellent mobility and observation of the enemy, although it is the least stable position.

3. (10 MIN) ISOSCELES STANDING POSITION AND GRIP

a. Assuming the Isosceles Standing Position and Grip. In the Isosceles position, the body is squared to the target and equal pressure is applied on the pistol from the grip. When confronted with a target, the natural physical reaction is to face the target and push out with the arms. The Isosceles position capitalizes on this natural response. To assume the Isosceles standing position:



(ON SLIDE #6)

1) Face the target with the feet approximately shoulder width apart. The support foot may be slightly forward of the strong foot (approximately half a boot length) to balance the position. The shoulders are squared to the target.

(ON SLIDE #7)

2) Establish a two-handed firing grip in the Isosceles position:

a) Firmly grip the pistol with the strong hand on the pistol grip. Place the thumb on the decocking/safety lever in a position to operate it.

b) Place the heel of the support hand on the exposed portion of the pistol grip in the pocket formed by the fingertips and heel of the strong hand. There should be maximum contact between the pistol grip and the hands. Wrap the fingers of the support hand over the fingers of the strong hand. Ensure both thumbs rest on the left side of the pistol and point toward the target.

c) Apply equal pressure on both sides of the pistol to allow for the best management of recoil. Muscular tension and grip pressure are evenly distributed around the pistol, minimizing the effects of recoil and allowing quicker recovery of the sights on target.

NOTE

Ensure the support thumb does not apply excessive pressure to the slide stop or the slide.

d) Rest the trigger finger naturally, straight and outside of the trigger guard, so the finger can be moved quickly and easily to the trigger.

NOTE

The index finger of the support hand may or may not rest on the front of the trigger guard.



(ON SLIDE #8)

- 3) Elevate and extend the arms toward the target. The elbows face outboard with the arms slightly bent to absorb recoil.
- 4) Roll the shoulders forward and shift the body weight slightly forward to stabilize the position and better manage recoil. There should be an equal amount of muscular tension on both sides of the body to best manage recoil.
- 5) Tuck the head between the shoulders; the head is extended forward but kept erect so the aiming eye can see through the sights.

(ON SLIDE #9)

b. Body Alignment. The body must be properly aligned 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 to the same area on the target every time the weapon is presented. The Marine can check his body alignment to ensure his sights are centered on his aiming area:

- 1) Orient your body to a target and establish the standing position with a two-handed firing grip. Aim in on the target.
- 2) Close the eyes and take a deep breath.
- 3) Open the eyes and see where the pistol sights are in relation to the target. If the pistol sights are right or left of the target:
 - a) Move the feet to adjust the position right or left.
 - b) Do not force the weapon sights onto the target area by moving the arms; this will increase the muscular tension on one side of the body, disturbing balance and making recoil harder to manage.
- 4) If the pistol sights are significantly out of alignment when the weapon is at eye level, it may be an indication of a poor grip. When the grip is correct, to include the muscular tension in the grip, wrist, and



forearms, the pistol sights should be aligned to the point that only minor adjustments are needed to align the sights to the aiming eye.

5) Repeat these steps. Body alignment and muscular tension are correct when the sights are placed in the same area on the target every time the Marine aims in on the target.

Confirm by questions.

TRANSITION: A firing position is selected based on the combat situation and individual body configuration. It is important to understand how to select a firing position in combat.

4. (5 MIN) SELECTION OF A SERVICE PISTOL FIRING POSITION

- a. Pistol Firing Positions. The service pistol can be fired from a standing, kneeling, and prone position.
- b. Selection of a Position. The selection of a firing position in combat is based on considerations of mobility, observation of the enemy, and stability.

(ON SLIDE #10)

1) Mobility. A firing position must provide mobility should the Marine need to move. For example, the standing position permits maximum mobility because it can be quickly assumed and easily maneuvered from and it permits lateral mobility to engage widely dispersed targets. The prone position provides limited mobility because it is the most time consuming position to get into and out of and it lacks lateral mobility to engage dispersed targets.

2) Observation of the Enemy. A firing position should allow observation of the enemy while minimizing the Marine's exposure. In combat, there can be many obstructions to a clear field of view. Terrain features such as vegetation, earth contours, and man-made structures can often dictate the firing position. For example, the prone position normally allows the least exposure, but it usually provides a limited field of view. Kneeling may provide a wider field of view, but



generally provides less concealment.

3) Stability. A solid firing position establishes a stable foundation for target engagement. A firing position must provide maximum stability while firing. If the Marine's position is not stable, recoil will force him out of his firing position, requiring him to reestablish his position before he takes his next shot.

Confirm by questions.

TRANSITION: To be proficient, the Marine must be able to select a stable firing position that provides a solid foundation for accurate shooting while meeting the demands of the combat situation.

OPPORTUNITY FOR QUESTIONS:

(1 MIN)

1. Respond to questions from the class.
2. Prompt Marines with questions to the class.
 - a. QUESTION: What three things does a good grip on the service pistol provide the Marine before, during, and after firing?

ANSWER: The ability to stabilize the weapon sights before firing; the ability to apply trigger control during firing; and the ability to manage recoil once the shot is fired.

- b. QUESTION: How are the shoulders positioned in the Isosceles variation of the standing position?

ANSWER: The shoulders are squared to the target.

- c. QUESTION: What three things should be considered when selecting a firing position in combat?

ANSWER: Mobility, observation of the enemy, and stability.



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

SUMMARY:

(1 MIN)

Because the pistol is fired without benefit of bone support, it is critical to establish a stable and consistent grip and firing position to shoot accurately. While a proper firing position provides stability and balance for shooting, a firing grip provides maximum control of the pistol to ensure firing accuracy and consistency. When assumed properly, the standing position provides a stable base for accurate firing by allowing the pistol to be steadied and the trigger to be controlled while keeping the sights aligned.