SLR.4
1 Oct 99

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

DETAILED INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

LESSON TITLE

INTRODUCTION TO RIFLE SHOOTING POSITIONS/SLING

COURSE TITLE

SUSTAINMENT LEVEL RIFLE MARKSMANSHIP (PHASE I, II, III)

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

INSTRUCTOR PREPARATION CHECKLIST

ESSENTIAL DATA

LESSON DESIGNATOR	SLR.4
LESSON TITLE	Introduction to Rifle Shooting Positions/Sling
DATE PREPARED	1 October 1999
TIME	1 hr
METHOD	Lecture and demonstration
LOCATION	Indoor/outdoor classroom
INSTRUCTORS REQUIRED	One Primary Marksmanship Instructor (PMI)
REFERENCE	MCRP 3-01A
TRAINING AIDS/EQUIPMENT	M16A2 service rifle, sling, cartridge belt, magazines, magazine pouches, and slides (sSLR.4-1 - sSLR.4-8)

INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE: *A load-bearing vest may be substituted for magazine pouches. Gear will be worn in accordance with the MBST Handbook.*

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DETAILED OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION TO RIFLE SHOOTING POSITIONS/SLING

INTRODUCTION (3 MIN)

1. GAIN ATTENTION. On the battlefield, the rifleman must assume the steadiest possible position which will also provide observation of the target and maximum cover and concealment. Consideration must be given to the terrain, vegetation, and tactical situation before choosing a position or variation of a position. There are four basic positions: prone, sitting, kneeling, and standing. The more stable the shooting position, the easier it is to steady the rifle and control the trigger while keeping the sights aligned. The use of a sling helps to stabilize the rifle while shooting. In addition, the application of the factors common to all shooting positions is essential to obtaining the best results in rifle shooting.

2. OVERVIEW. This lesson will cover the adjustment of the web sling into the hasty sling and the loop sling. In addition, this lesson will cover the seven factors common to all shooting positions and the three elements of a good shooting position (with a loop sling).

3. INTRODUCE LEARNING OBJECTIVES. The Terminal Learning Objectives and Enabling Learning Objectives pertaining to this lesson are as follows:

a. TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE. Given an M16A2 service rifle, sling, cartridge belt, magazines, magazine pouches, ammunition, and a target, without the aid of references, fire the rifle at the sustained rate of fire, achieving a five shot group with the size not exceeding seven minutes of angle (MOA) and IAW MCRP 3-01A. (PVTX.11.3)

b. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1) Given an M16A2 service rifle, sling, cartridge belt, magazines, and magazine pouches, without the aid of references, adjust the hasty sling to the prone position IAW MCRP 3-01A. (PVTX.11.3e)

2) Without the aid of references, identify the seven factors common to all shooting positions with a hasty sling IAW MCRP 3-01A. (PVTX.11.3f)

c. TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE. Given an M16A2 service rifle, sling, cartridge belt, magazines, magazine pouches, ammunition, data book, and targets, without the aid of references, engage stationary targets IAW MCRP 3-01A and to achieve a qualifying score IAW MCO 3574.2_. (PVTX.11.5)

d. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1) Given an M16A2 service rifle, sling, cartridge belt, magazines, magazine pouches, and a target, without the aid of references, adjust the hasty sling to a shooting position IAW MCRP 3-01A. (PVTX.11.5a)

2) Given an M16A2 service rifle, sling, cartridge belt, magazines, and magazine pouches, without the aid of references, adjust the loop sling to the prone position IAW MCRP 3-01A. (PVTX.11.5e)

3) Without the aid of references, identify the elements of a good shooting position with a loop sling IAW
MCRP 3-01A. (PVTX.11.5f)

4) Without the aid of references, identify the seven factors common to all shooting positions with a loop sling IAW MCRP 3-01A. (PVTX.11.5g)

4. METHOD. This lesson will be taught in a classroom setting using lecture and demonstration.

5. EVALUATION. Topics from this lesson will be evaluated in a comprehensive written examination for Phase I of this course following completion of lessons SLR.1 - SLR.12. Application of sling adjustments will be evaluated via a performance checklist during the Positions Practical Application class, SLR.8a.

TRANSITION: The sling helps support and stabilize the rifle during firing. The support afforded by the sling is extremely valuable to every rifleman, whether he is on the range or in combat.

BODY (55 MIN)

NOTE
The procedures in this lesson are written for right-handed Marines. Left-handed Marines should reverse instructions as needed.

1. (2 MIN) TYPES AND USES OF THE RIFLE WEB SLING

a. Purpose. When the rifle sling is adjusted properly, it will provide maximum stability for the weapon and help stabilize the front sight and reduce the effects of the rifle's recoil.

b. Types of Slings. There are two basic types of rifle sling adjustments: the hasty sling and the loop sling.

1) Hasty Sling. The hasty sling is more adaptable to combat situations than the other types of slings. It is advantageous in combat because it can be acquired quickly and it provides added stability to the rifle. The hasty sling is used in all firing positions.

a) If properly adjusted, the hasty sling supports the weight of the weapon and provides maximum stability for the rifle and reduces the effects of the rifle’s recoil.

b) The hasty sling is easy to use because the same sling setting can be used for all firing positions.

2) Loop Sling. The loop sling provides the greatest amount of stability during firing. This stability allows the Marine to perfect marksmanship fundamentals. A loop sling takes longer to don and remove than a hasty sling. Therefore, it has limited combat application; it is best used where stability of hold is needed for a precision or long-range shot.

Confirm by questions.

TRANSITION: It is important to know not only the different applications of the web sling for different shooting positions, but also the step-by-step methods for adjusting the web sling into these configurations.

2. (18 MIN) DONNING THE SLING

INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE: *Demonstrate the procedures in this section as they are explained.*

a. Donning the Hasty Sling. To form and don the hasty sling, perform the following steps:

1) Hold the rifle vertical with the barrel pointing upward.

2) Unhook the J-hook from the lower sling swivel.

3) Loosen the sling keeper.

4) Adjust the sling until the J-hook hangs below the butt of the rifle. (The distance will vary based on the individual Marine, but the J-hook will usually hang approximately 3 - 10 inches below the butt.) Secure the sling keeper.

5) Turn the sling a half turn outboard (this will allow the sling to lay flat against the arm).

6) Attach the J-hook to the lower sling swivel so the open end of the J-hook faces outboard, away from the rifle.

7) While holding the rifle with the right hand, place the left arm through the sling near the lower sling swivel. Slide the arm up through the sling below the half twist. The sling makes contact low on the arm just below the triceps, above the elbow. The sling lies flat on the back of the arm.

Refer to slide SLR.4-1.

8) With the left hand, grasp the handguard by pinching it in the “V” formed by the thumb and forefinger. The sling lies flat against the back or side of the wrist or on the arm near the wrist.

9) Move the left hand as required to level the rifle with the line of sight. Placement of the forward hand controls the tension on the sling between the back of the wrist or arm and the upper sling swivel. This hand placement, with a straight locked wrist, will cause the sling to pull straight under the handguards and serves to stabilize the front sight of the rifle.

Refer to slide sSLR.4-2.

10) Move the feed end of the sling in or out of the sling keeper to adjust the hasty sling. Sling tension is further adjusted by pushing the elbow outboard. (This enables one sling setting to fit all positions.) It is important for the hasty sling to be adjusted so it supports the rifle. The sling setting must allow the left elbow to push outboard against the sling so the elbow is not inverted under the rifle.

11) Locate the sling keeper near the feed end of the sling and secure so the back side or flat end of the sling keeper is against the arm.

b. Donning the Loop Sling. To form the loop sling, perform the following steps:

1) Place the rifle butt on the right hip and cradle the rifle in the right arm.

2) Disconnect the J-hook from the lower sling swivel.

3) With the M-buckle near the hook, feed the sling through the top of the M-buckle to form a loop large enough to slip over the arm.

4) Give the loop a half turn outboard and insert the left arm through the loop, positioning the loop high above the biceps.

5) Position the M-buckle on the outside of the left arm.

6) Tighten the loop on the left arm, ensuring the M-buckle moves toward the center of the arm as the loop tightens. The sling must pull from the center of the arm to be properly positioned. In this way, as tension is applied to the sling in the firing position, the loop will tighten.

7) To adjust the sling for the proper length, loosen the sling keeper and pull the feed end down toward the loop. This adjustment varies with every individual and every firing position:

a) 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.

b) 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 sling must be lengthened.

8) Move the sling keeper toward the left arm and secure it. The sling keeper should be positioned near the feed end of the sling.

9) Place the left hand over the sling from the left side and under the rifle. The rifle handguard should rest in the "V" formed between the thumb and forefinger and across the palm of the hand.

Refer to slide sSLR.4-3.

10) Move the left hand as required to achieve a desired sight picture. Adjust the length of the sling for proper sling tension and support.

Confirm by questions.

TRANSITION: The rifle sling is used to stabilize the weapon sights so the fundamentals can be accurately applied. To achieve this, the rifle firing position must be stable. The seven factors common to all shooting positions are essential to accurate shooting and stability of the weapon.

3. (35 MIN) THE SEVEN FACTORS AND THREE ELEMENTS

INSTRUCTOR'S NOTE: *Demonstrate the procedures in this section as they are explained.*

a. Seven Factors Common to all Shooting Positions. The seven common factors affect your ability to hold the rifle steady, maintain sight alignment, and control the trigger. The way these factors are applied differs slightly for each position, but the principles of each factor remain the same.

Refer to slides sSLR.4-4 and sSLR.4-5.

1) Forward Hand. The placement of the forward hand affects placement of the left elbow, eye relief, stock weld, and sling tension.

a) Forward Hand – Hasty Sling. In a hasty sling configuration, the sling is attached to the upper and lower sling swivels of the rifle. When the left arm is placed in the hasty sling, tension created by the sling travels from side to side. This tension affects how the position is established. There are fundamental differences between the application of the seven factors when using the hasty sling. The most obvious of these is placement of the left hand and the left elbow.

Refer to slide sSLR.4-6.

(1) To maximize the support provided by the hasty sling, the left elbow should not be inverted and under the rifle. Instead, the elbow should be pushed outboard against the sling. To achieve this, the position of the shooter's body must be more squared to the target. In addition, the hasty sling must be loosened to allow the elbow to push out against the sling far enough so that the elbow is not under the rifle.

(a) The tension on the hasty sling causes the center of balance to change on the rifle. When the elbow is under the rifle with the hasty sling donned, the sling pulls down on the sling swivel disrupting the center of balance and causing the

muzzle to drop. Therefore, the elbow must be pushed outboard.

(b) Outboard tension on the sling by the elbow drives the buttstock into the pocket of the shoulder. To enable this, the sling must make contact on the arm just below the triceps, above the elbow.

(2) To stabilize the front sight of the rifle, the forward hand, wrist, and forearm should be straight with the wrist locked in place; the hand is rotated up so the rifle rests in the "V" formed by the thumb and index finger; the fingers will not curl around the handguards. Instead, they will pinch the handguard slightly to keep the hand from slipping on the handguard during recoil.

(a) When the forward hand's wrist is straight and locked, it creates resistance on the sling close to the muzzle because the sling is in contact with the back or side of the wrist or on the arm near the wrist. This resistance allows the front sight to be stabilized.

(b) In contrast, when the rifle rests across the palm of the hand, the only resistance created is where the sling meets the triceps. Since the resistance is further from the muzzle of the rifle, it makes stabilizing the front sight more difficult.

Refer to slide sSLR.4-7.

b) Forward Hand – Loop Sling. With the loop sling donned, the handguard of the rifle rests in the "V" formed by the thumb and index finger of the left hand. The left wrist is straight with the rifle resting across the heel of the hand. The left elbow should be positioned under the weapon to create bone support and a consistent resistance to recoil. The fingers can curl around the handguard, but should apply only the minimum amount of pressure to prevent the hand from slipping on the handguard.

2) Rifle Butt in the Pocket of the Shoulder. The rifle butt placed firmly in the pocket formed in the right shoulder provides resistance to recoil, helps steady the rifle, and prevents the rifle butt from slipping in the shoulder during firing. Consistent placement of the rifle butt in the shoulder pocket is essential to maintaining a BZO and firing tight shot groups.

a) Hasty Sling. With the hasty sling donned, the butt of the rifle is placed in the pocket of the shoulder. The body is squared to the target to provide a pocket for the butt of the weapon.

(1) Outboard tension on the sling by the left elbow drives the buttstock into the pocket of the shoulder.

(2) Squaring the body more to the target will provide a better pocket in the shoulder in which to place the rifle butt.

(3) The butt of the rifle should be placed high in the shoulder to achieve a proper stock weld. Placing the weapon high in the shoulder allows you to bring the stock up to your head, rather than lowering your head to the stock, which can degrade acquisition of sight alignment and sight picture.

b) Loop Sling. With the loop sling donned, the toe of the rifle butt is placed in the pocket of the shoulder. Therefore, the butt of the weapon is higher in the shoulder than with the hasty sling donned.

3) Grip of the Right Hand. Grasp the pistol grip with the right hand and place the forefinger on the trigger, with the thumb and remaining fingers wrapped around the pistol grip.

a) Firm rearward pressure should be exerted to help keep the rifle butt firmly in the shoulder, reducing the effects of recoil. (This is not as critical with the hasty sling donned because outboard tension by the left elbow against the sling drives the rifle butt into the shoulder.)

b) The trigger finger should be placed naturally on the trigger and care should be taken to ensure that the trigger finger can move independently without dragging on the side of the receiver. Proper placement of the right hand high on the

pistol grip allows the trigger to be moved straight to the rear without disturbing sight alignment.

4) Right Elbow. The right elbow should be positioned naturally to provide balance to the position and create a pocket in the shoulder for the rifle butt. If the elbow is correctly positioned, it helps to form the pocket in the right shoulder where the rifle butt rests. The placement of the elbow should remain consistent from shot to shot, ensuring the resistance to recoil remains constant.

5) Stock Weld. The placement of the shooter's cheek against the stock should remain firm and consistent from shot to shot. Consistency of stock weld is achieved through proper placement of the rifle butt in the pocket of the shoulder. A firm contact between the cheek and the stock enables consistent eye relief and enables the head and rifle to recoil as a single unit. The head should remain erect to allow the aiming eye to look straight through the rear sight aperture.

6) Breathing. Breathing causes movement of the chest and a corresponding movement in the rifle and its sights. To minimize this movement and the effect it has on aiming, apply breath control.

7) Muscular Tension/Relaxation

a) Muscular Tension – Hasty Sling. With the hasty sling donned, the shooter must apply an amount of controlled muscular tension in the left arm to keep the sling taut and stabilize the weapon sights. Resistance against the hasty sling controls the point at which the rifle sights will settle. The muscular tension is applied outward against the sling rather than in an effort to hold the rifle up. However, muscular tension should not be excessive to cause the shooter to shake, tremble, or fatigue.

b) Muscular Relaxation – Loop Sling. When using the loop sling, the muscles should be relaxed. Relaxation prevents undue muscle strain and reduces excessive movement. If proper relaxation is achieved, natural point of aim and sight alignment are more easily maintained.

c. Three Elements of a Good Shooting Position. There are three elements essential to achieving a good shooting position with the loop sling: bone support, muscular relaxation, and natural point of aim. The three elements of a shooting position applied with the loop sling do not apply when firing with a hasty sling. While some degree

of bone support is still achieved with the hasty sling, muscular tension is applied rather than muscular relaxation. Natural point of aim does apply to both slings, however.

Refer to slide sSLR.4-8.

1) Bone Support. The body's skeletal structure provides a stable foundation to support the rifle's weight. A weak shooting position will not withstand the repeated recoil of the rifle when firing at a sustained rate or buffeting from wind. To attain a correct shooting position, the bones of the body must support as much of the rifle's weight as possible. Proper use of the sling provides additional support.

a) The weight of the weapon should be supported by bone rather than muscle because muscles fatigue whereas bones do not.

b) Establish a strong foundation for the rifle by utilizing bone support. This will enable the shooter to relax as much as possible while minimizing the movement of the weapon due to muscle tension.

2) Muscular Relaxation. Once bone support is achieved, muscles are relaxed. Muscular relaxation helps to hold steady and increase the accuracy of your aim. Muscular relaxation also allows the maximum use of bone support to create a minimum arc of movement and consistency in resistance to recoil.

a) There is no way to achieve muscular relaxation without bone support. During the shooting process, the muscles of the body must be relaxed as much as possible. Muscles that are tense will cause excessive movement of the rifle, disturbing the aim.

b) When proper bone support and muscular relaxation are applied, the rifle will settle onto your aiming point, making it possible to apply trigger control and deliver a well-aimed shot.

3) Natural Point of Aim. The point at which the rifle sights settle when in a firing position is called natural point of aim.

a) Since the rifle becomes an extension of your body, it may be necessary to adjust the position of your body, thereby adjusting your natural point of

aim, until the rifle sights settle naturally on the desired aiming point on the target.

b) When in a shooting position with proper sight alignment, the position of the tip of the front sight post on the target will indicate the natural point of aim.
c) One method of checking for natural point of aim is to aim in on your target, close your eyes, take a couple of breaths, and relax as much as possible. When you open your eyes, the tip of the front sight post should be positioned on the desired aiming point while maintaining sight alignment.

d) To get the front sight post to rest center mass on the target, the Marine may have to adjust his position. Natural point of aim will be discussed further in each of the position classes.

Confirm by questions.

TRANSITION: Success in combat may rest largely upon the establishment of a stable firing position. That is why it is critical to understand and apply the seven factors common to all shooting position, the three elements of a good shooting position (with the loop sling), and the proper adjustment of the sling.

OPPORTUNITY FOR QUESTIONS: (1 MIN)

1. Respond to questions from the class.

2. Prompt Marines with questions to the class.

a. QUESTION: Why is the rifle sling important to the shooter?

ANSWER: It provides maximum stability for the weapon and helps stabilize the front sight and reduce the effects of the rifle's recoil.

b. QUESTION: What is the difference in forward hand placement when using a hasty sling vice a loop sling?

ANSWER: With the hasty sling donned, the hand is rotated up so the rifle rests in the "V" formed by the thumb and index finger; the fingers will not normally curl around the handguards. With the loop sling donned, the rifle rests across the heel of the hand and the fingers normally

curl around the handguards.

c. QUESTION: Why is it necessary to apply controlled muscular tension in the left arm when using a hasty sling?

ANSWER: With the hasty sling donned, the shooter must apply an amount of controlled muscular tension in the left arm to keep the sling taut and stabilize the weapon sights.

> ***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 sling is an important tool in firing consistently and accurately because it provides stability and control of the rifle during firing. The hasty sling is particularly advantageous in combat because it can be acquired quickly and the same sling setting can be used in all firing positions. Understanding the factors common to all shooting positions will help the Marine obtain the best results when employing any rifle firing position. And when firing with the loop sling, the application of the three elements of a good shooting position will improve accuracy. The ability to understand and apply these basic firing techniques is essential to ensuring consistent and accurate target engagement.

SLIDES

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