

CHAPTER 7 - SQUAD DRILL

DIRECTING FLANK

1. When a squad moves off, the Directing Flank is to be indicated in the command, eg:

By the left/right - **quick** - MARCH

2. When a squad is moving diagonally, the Directing Flank is to be that towards which the squad is inclined.
3. When a squad is marching in line by a flank and it is intended to change the direction to the opposite flank, the new flank of direction is to be indicated (before the actual command to change direction) by the command:

By the right

The Directing Flank is to be that on which the change of direction is to be made; the forward movement on the completion of the change is to be directed by that flank unless otherwise ordered.

4. When a squad or unit is marching on a road, the flank directed is usually that of the nearside, according to the local rule of the road.
5. When a squad is required to wheel, the pivot flank is to be the Directing Flank during the wheeling movement. On completion of the wheel, the squad is to revert, without further orders, to marching by the original flank.

SIZING A SQUAD

6. When Sizing a Squad, the tallest person of the squad is to be placed as a marker in front of the right-hand person.
7. On the command:

Tallest on the right, shortest on the left - **in single rank** - SIZE

personnel, with the exception of the marker, are to turn to the left, break ranks and fall in on the left of the marker in a single rank, according to size, and dress off without intervals.

Note: Individuals can most easily assess their correct position by comparing their shoulder height with the person next to them. Further minor adjustments can be made by the NCO IC before the next order is given.

8. Then, on the command:

squad - NUMBER

all personnel, except the right marker, are to turn their head and eyes smartly to the right. At the same time, the right marker is to start the numbering by calling out:

One

This is to be followed immediately by the next person on the marker's left turning the head to the front and at the same time calling out:

Two

and so on, until all personnel are numbered. The last person after calling out number is to say rank of senior person on parade, eg Sgt/Sir/Mam.

Note: Numbering is sometimes necessary while personnel are in 3 ranks. In this case the procedure is the same, the personnel in each rank taking on the number of the person calling out in the front rank for the file as a whole. Only the front rank are to turn their heads and call out the numbers; the rest pay attention to hear their numbers called.

9. This is followed by the command:

Odd numbers, 2 paces step for - **ward** - MARCH

whereupon the odd numbered personnel take the paces forward, while even numbers stand fast. On the command:

Number 1 stand fast - **ranks, right and left** - TURN

Personnel of the front rank (odd numbers), except No 1, are to turn to the right and those of the rear rank (even numbers) are to turn to the left.

10. On the command:

Form squad - **quick** - MARCH

personnel, except No 1 who stands fast, are to step off in the direction they are facing. The rear rank is to wheel to the right and follow the last person of the front rank.

- a. No 3 is to halt one pace to the rear of No 1.
- b. No 5 is to halt one pace to the rear of No 3 (to form the first file of 3s).
- c. No 7 halts to the left of No 1.
- d. Those following continue to form files of 3s until all are assembled.

On coming to a halt at their positions, the last person on each file gives the command 'Up' and all 3 turn into line together and the NCO gives a dressing on completion of move.

11. Forming 2 Ranks From 3. On the command:

Squad, form two - RANKS

- a. Odd numbers of the centre rank are to take a pace to the left with the left foot, a pace forward with the right foot, bend the left knee and bring the left foot to the right to assume the position of attention, standing in the front rank.
- b. At the same time, the even numbers of the centre rank are to take a pace to the left with the left foot, a pace to the rear with the right foot, bend the left knee and bring the left foot to the right to assume the position of attention, standing in the rear rank.

On completion of the movement, the squad is to be dressed.

RETURNING TO 3 RANKS FROM 2

12. On the command:

Squad, form three - RANKS

- a. The odd numbers of the original centre rank are to take a pace to the rear with the left foot, a pace to the right with the right foot, bend the left knee and bring the left foot to the right to resume the position of attention in the centre rank.
- b. At the same time, the even numbers of the original centre rank are to take a pace forward with the left foot, a pace to the right with the right foot, bend the left knee and bring the left foot to the right to resume the position of attention in the centre rank.

On completion of the movement the squad is to be dressed.

MOVEMENT OF A SQUAD IN LINE

13. On the command:

By the left/right - **quick/slow** - MARCH

the squad is to step off. The front person of the file on the Directing Flank ordered is to select a point ahead of himself so that by marching on the point he maintains direction.

14. The personnel of each rank, with the exception of the Directing File, are (without turning the head) to glance occasionally to the Directing Flank in order to maintain their dressing. Personnel of the centre and rear ranks are to maintain their correct covering and distance from the rank in front.

15. A Blank File consisting of one person is at all times to be with the leading rank. Thus, when a squad is turned about on the march, the single person of the Blank File on hearing the cautionary command '**about**' is to mark time for 2 paces, thus gaining the new correct position before the turn is completed.

16. Similarly, when the squad is turned about at the Halt the single person is, without further orders, to take 2 paces forward after turning about.

17. When a squad is required to move to the rear for a short distance before resuming the original direction, the following commands are to be given:

Squad will retire - **about** - TURN.

And, after completion:

Squad will advance - **about** - TURN

The ranks on the these instances are not changed and consequently the Blank File is not adjusted.

18. Movement of a Squad in Column of 3s. When a squad is required to move from one point of assembly to another, they are to march in column of 3s. When there is a Blank File consisting of one person it is to be on the Directing Flank.

19. Inclined Turns. On the command:

Squad, left/right - **in** - CLINE

the squad turns in the direction ordered. While marching, formation and direction are maintained as described in Para 16. When the squad is required to face/move in the original direction, a similar order is given.

20. Turning to a Flank from Line (when Halted). To turn a squad to a flank, the order is to be given:

Move to the left/right - **left/right** - TURN

21. Forming Line from 3s Facing a Flank (when Halted). To Form Line from 3s, the order is to be given:

Into line - **left/right** - TURN

22. Turning to a Flank from Line (when Marching). To Turn to a Flank when marching, the order is to be given:

Move to the left/right - **left/right** - TURN

23. Forming Line from 3s (when Marching). To Form Line when marching, the order is to be given:

Into line - **left/right** - TURN

CHANGING DIRECTION (THE WHEEL)

24. On the command:

Change direction left/right - **left/right** - WHEEL

Note: In this case only, the executive word 'WHEEL' is to be drawn out in length.

The left/right hand person of the leading line of 3s, on the inside of the turn, is to move round on the arc of a circle radius 120cms (4 ft) and step short (30cms (12 ins)) for 6 paces to enable the other 2 persons of the line to wheel in unison; they both glance inwards towards the inner person as they wheel. When the line has wheeled through a quarter circle (90°) it is to lead on in the new direction. The remaining lines of 3s are to follow suit.

25. When a squad is ordered to Halt or Mark Time and only part of it has completed a wheel, the command is to be given:

Rear files - COVER

Whereupon those lines of 3s that have not yet wheeled are to cover those that have, by moving by the shortest route.

26. When a squad is required to wheel at an angle less than a complete right or left wheel, when the leading line of 3s is facing in the required direction the command is to be given:

for - WARD

27. Forming 2 Files from 3 (in Column). On the command:

Form two - FILES

a. The odd numbered personnel of the centre rank are to disengage to the left rear and take up their positions behind their respective front rank numbers.

b. At the same time the even numbered personnel of the centre rank are to disengage themselves to the right rear and take up their positions behind their respective rear rank numbers. Personnel are then to adjust their correct distances in succession from front to rear without further orders.

28. Forming Single File from 2 (in Column). On the command:

Form single - FILE

personnel of the right file are to take up positions behind the personnel immediately on their left. Personnel are then to adjust their correct distances in succession from front to rear without further orders.

29. Returning to 2 Files from Single. On the command:

Form two - FILES

the personnel of the original right hand file are to return to their positions on the right of the number immediately in front of them. During this movement the leading person (of the left file) is to step short. The remainder are then to correct their distance and dressing and are then to step short. When the squad is reformed, the order is to be given:

quick - MARCH

30. Returning to 3 Files from 2. On the command:

Form three - FILES

- a. The odd numbered personnel of the original centre file are to disengage to their right front;
- b. the even numbered personnel of the original centre file are to disengage to their left front

and return to their positions abreast of their respective left and right numbers. During this movement, the leading persons of the left and right files are to step short. The remainder are to correct their distance and dressing and are then to step short. When the squad is re-formed, the order is to be given:

quick - MARCH

Notes:

1. References above to the left, centre and right files, it should be noted, refer to the original front, centre and rear ranks of the squad in line, respectively.
2. The movements detailed above are, for simplicity, given assuming the squad is moving in column of 3s to the right. It follows, therefore, that if the squad is moving to the left the moves by personnel changing file are to be different.