

Squad Fighting Positions

Squad fighting positions consist of multiple mutually supporting fire team positions.

Positions are hidden to avoid enemy observation and fires. Positions use frontal cover to defeat enemy suppression.

How to Build a Squad Position

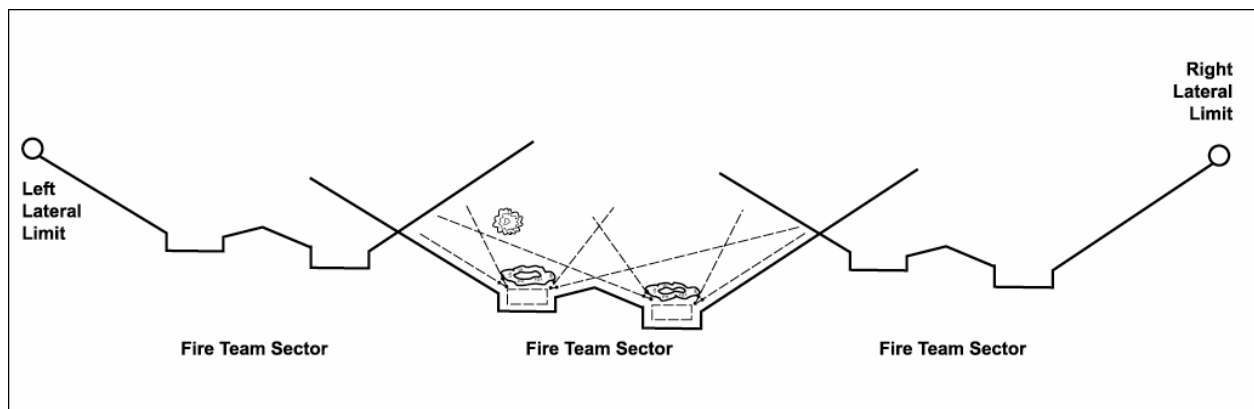
Given a sector of fire, you and your squad:

- 1. Divide the squad sector into three fire team sectors.** Leaders examine the terrain together to select good defensive ground.
- 2. Interlock fire team sectors.** Team positions are mutually supporting, interlocking their fires across each other's fronts. Stagger team positions by dropping the center fire team back.
- 3. Coordinate the squad sector of fire with adjacent units.** Coordinate defensive plans with higher headquarters.
- 4. Build fighting positions.** Build overhead cover. Camouflage your positions.

Requirements of a Squad Position

Once the sector is covered by fire, the position:

- *Must be invisible.* Invisible positions protect you from direct fire, indirect fire, and observation. Invisible positions let you ambush the enemy before he knows your location.
- *Must provide frontal cover.* Frontal cover lets you to fight while being suppressed. Oblique fires defeat the enemy's mutual support, overwatch, fire and movement, and assault fires.
- *Must consist of mutually supporting fire team positions.* Each position is protected by the fire of its neighbor.
- *Must support adjacent units with interlocking fires.*
- *Must protect any co-located company weapons.*



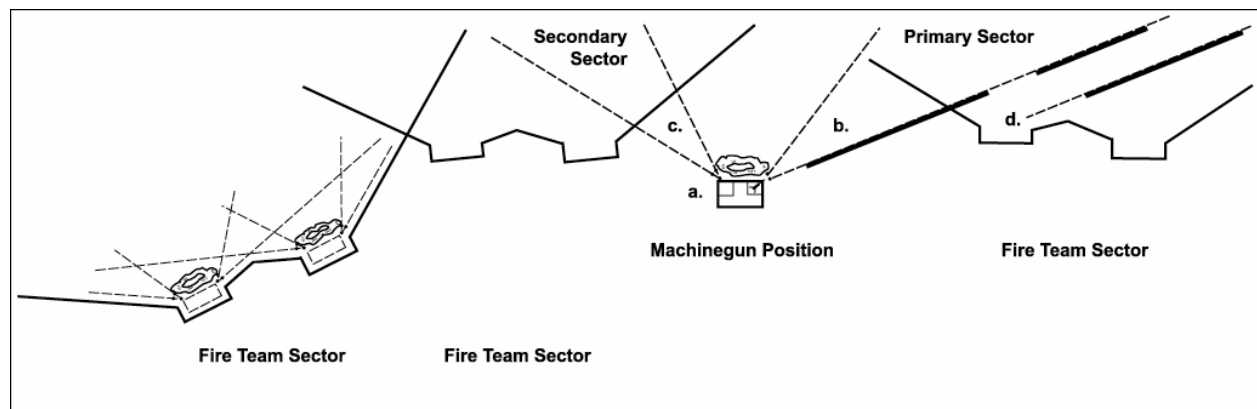
Squad Weapons

- **Automatic weapons** cover critical sectors. A PDF is laid on likely avenues of approach such as gullies or ditches. Automatic weapons can be interlocked across the squad frontage with two FPLs, or laid to parallel the mission of a co-located machinegun.
- **Grenade launchers** shoot dead space, cover obstacles, and reinforce the PDF or FPL. In dense terrain, gunners should set aiming stakes to avoid hitting obstacles. Overhead obstacles should be removed.

- **Hand grenades** and **claymore mines** cover the dead space in front of each position.
- **AT-4s** should be staged on sectors that cover vehicle approaches or reinforce automatic rifle PDFs.
- **Squad weapons** must be well positioned and coordinated to strengthen the position. In the defense, all weapons – company weapons, battalion weapons, artillery, and close air support – must be integrated by leaders at all levels.

Company Weapons

- Squad positions are often sited to protect a **machinegun** (MG) position. MGs have priority and are positioned first. Once the gun is laid on an FPL or PDF, primary and secondary sectors are cleared, and the MG team leader constructs a range card. See *FM 7-7*, pp B-24 and 25 for MG fighting holes.
- In the illustration below, the MG position (a) is sited on the platoon's left flank. The primary sector (b) is defined by a FPL across the platoon frontage. Note how the MG position is tucked back and protected by staggered fire team positions. A secondary sector (c) covers the platoon's left flank. An automatic rifle (d) is laid to parallel the MG FPL. The left two fire teams are turned to protect the left flank.
- When the MG displaces to a supplementary position, the squad follows and also takes up a supplementary position in support.
- These same procedures are used for **anti-armor weapons**. See *FM 7-7*, p B-25-28 for anti-armor fighting positions.



Squad Leader Tasks

- Post security OP during construction of position.
- Coordinate sectors of fire for all units and weapons. Construct sector sketch.
- Establish alert levels, watch schedule and sleep plan.
- Inspect Camouflage. Tents and hanging clothes cannot be visible. Vehicles cannot be allowed near.
- Rehearse defensive fight: communications with platoon, supporting fires, illumination, and medevac.
- If planned, rehearse movement to alternate or supplementary positions.
- The **Platoon Commander** coordinates obstacles, artillery and mortar fires, and local security patrols. The platoon defensive plan assigns primary, alternate, and supplementary positions.

In contact, squads build fighting positions in a progressive manner:

Type		Build Time with Hand Tools	Protection from Indirect Fire	Notes
Hasty	Crater	12 minutes	Better than open	Crater or hole at least 1.5 feet deep and 2 to 3 feet across. Dig steep side toward enemy.
	Skirmisher Trench	30 minutes	Better than open	In prone position, scrape dirt to form parapet at oblique angle to the enemy.
	Prone Position	1 hour	Better than open	6 feet long, 1.5 feet deep. Oblique hole permits fire from behind cover
Deliberate	One Man	3 hours	Artillery outside 30 feet	
	One Man with Overhead	8 hours	Artillery within 30 feet	4 to 6 inch logs overhead overlap hole by 1 foot on each side. Covered with soil.
	Two-Man	6 hours	Artillery outside 30 feet	Shared ammunition, security, rest, and psychological support.
	Two-Man with Overhead	11 hours	Artillery within 30 feet	4 to 6 inch logs overhead overlap hole by 1 foot on each side. Covered with soil.

Fighting hole kits of engineer stakes, plywood sheets, plastic waterproofing, sandbags, shovels, and pick-axes should be available from higher headquarters.

See Fire Team Fighting Positions and Individual Fighting Positions