



CURRICULUM ON MILITARY SUBJECTS

Strand M7: Unit Drill

Level 11

This Strand is composed of the following components:

- A. Squad Drill
- B. Platoon Drill**
- C. Company Drill



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B. Platoon Drill

OBJECTIVES

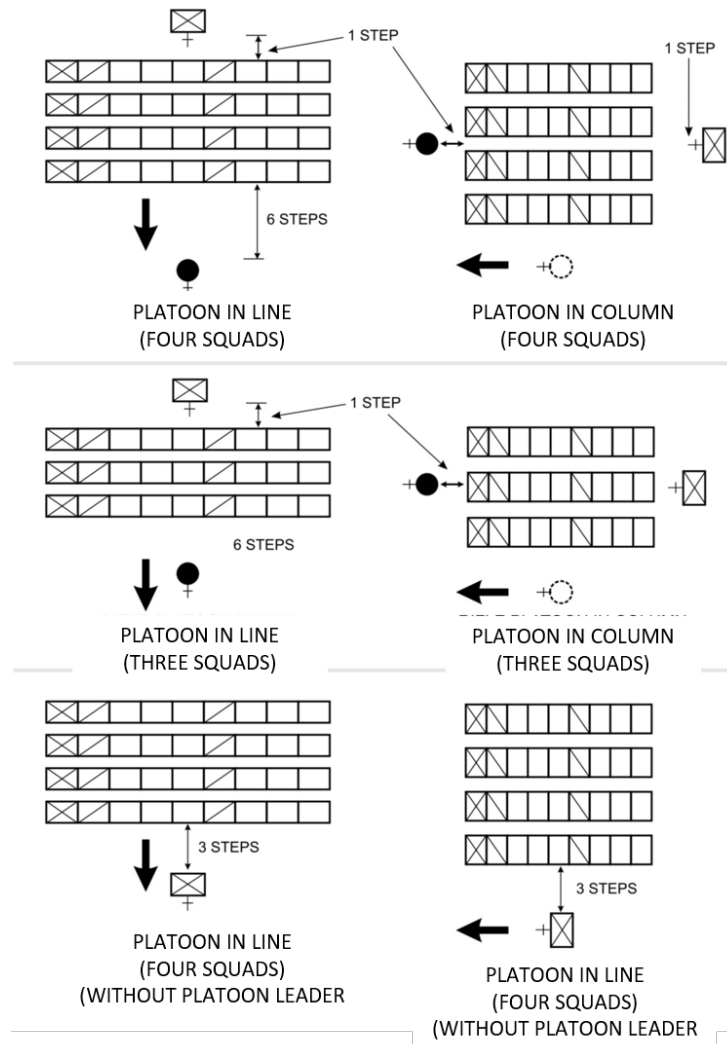
DESIRED OUTCOME (Followership) / PRACTICUM B

90% of Unit Cadets can properly execute the movements of Platoon Drill with sharpness, precision, and snap when given proper commands. They are able to:

1. Name the two formations a platoon may be in, and describe the positions of the Platoon Leader, Platoon Sergeant, and Guidon Bearer if used.
2. Properly form a platoon in line, receiving reports from the squad leaders.
3. Demonstrate how a Cadet breaks ranks when called (individually or as part of a group) from a line formation.
4. Properly execute *Count Off* in line or column formations.
5. In line formation, change from Normal Interval to Close Interval or Double Interval, from Close Interval to Normal Interval, and from Double Interval to Normal Interval.
6. Properly align the platoon in line or column formation. Check alignment in line formation.
7. Properly execute *Open Ranks March* and *Close Ranks March* with two, three, or four squads in the platoon.
8. Properly rest the platoon in one of the four rest positions.
9. Dismiss the platoon.
10. Properly execute *Eyes Right* in line or in column.
11. Properly execute *Column Right/Left March* or *Column Half Right/Left March* in a platoon from a Halt or while marching.
12. Properly execute *Rear March* in a platoon.
13. Properly *incline* a platoon while marching in column formation.
14. Properly execute *Counter Column March* in a platoon with two, three, or four squads.
15. Properly execute *Right/Left Flank March* in a platoon.
16. Form a file and reform using the commands *File from the Left/Right* or *File from the Left/Right, Column Left/Right March* and *Column of Twos/Threes/Fours to the Right/Left March*.
17. Form a column of twos from a column of fours and reform, using the commands *Column of Twos from the Left/Right March* and *Column of Fours to the Right/Left March*.
18. Demonstrate the commands used to prepare a platoon for in-ranks inspection.
19. Properly conduct a Squad Leader's Inspection in ranks.
20. Properly conduct a Platoon Leader's or Platoon Sergeant's Inspection in ranks.

B1. Basic Information

The platoon has two prescribed formations—line and column. However, the platoon may be formed into a file or a column of twos from a column formation. When in a line formation, the squads of a platoon are numbered from front to rear; in a column formation, from left to right.



For the most part, platoon drill merely provides the procedures for executing drill movements in conjunction with other squads formed in the same formation. Individual drill movements and the manual of arms are executed as previously described while performing as a squad member during the conduct of platoon drill. For continuity purposes in this lesson, “platoon sergeant” may also denote “platoon leader” when the platoon sergeant is executing drill from his post.

The leader of the first squad serves as the base when the platoon is a line formation. The leader of the last squad serves as the base when the platoon is in a column formation.

The platoon marches in the same manner prescribed for the squad. When the platoon is marching in a line, the first squad leader serves as the guide, and when the platoon is marching in a column, the fourth

squad leader serves as the guide. When marching in line or column, each member of each squad (glancing out of the corner of his right eye) maintains alignment on the Cadet to his/her right, while covering on the Cadet in front of him/her.

During all drill and ceremonies, if the platoon is armed, the platoon leader and platoon sergeant carry their rifles at *Sling Arms*. When the platoon drills as part of a larger unit, the platoon leader and platoon sergeant remain at *Sling Arms* during all manual of arms movements.

Platoon Sergeant's Post.

When the platoon drills as a separate unit or as part of a larger unit in a line formation, without officers present, the post for the platoon sergeant is three steps in front of and centered on the platoon. When in column formation, the post for the platoon sergeant is three steps to left flank of and centered on the platoon. The post for the platoon sergeant with the platoon leader present is one step to the rear and centered on the platoon in line or column formation.

When assuming his post in column from a line formation with the platoon leader present, the platoon sergeant faces to the left in marching (on the command of execution **FACE**) and marches in the most direct route to his post. He then halts and faces to the right. When assuming his post in line from a column formation, he faces to the right in marching (on the command of execution **FACE**) and marches in the most direct route to his post, halts centered on the platoon, and faces to the left.

NOTE: When the files (columns) are uneven, the platoon sergeant normally directs the Cadets in longer files to move to another file to balance the formation; or he may fill the vacancy himself as the last Cadet in the right file. Fill in from the front in a line formation, so vacant positions are in the rear squads.

When control of the formation is being exchanged between the platoon sergeant and the platoon leader, the platoon sergeant will **always** travel around the **right flank** (squad leader) of the formation when marching from post to post. The platoon leader will **always** travel around the **left flank** of the formation when marching post to post.

On the command **Open Ranks, MARCH; Backward, MARCH; Right (Left) Step, MARCH; Forward, MARCH** and on commands that cause the platoon to change interval in line, he moves at the same time (with the appropriate step) so as to maintain proper position.

Platoon Guidon Bearer's Post.

If for some reason the platoon is authorized a guidon, the bearer's post is one step in front of and two 12-inch steps to the right of and facing the person forming the platoon. When the formation is faced to the right for a marching movement, he faces to the right as in marching, double times to his post three steps in front of and centered on the squad leaders. If the platoon leader is present and at his post, the bearer's post is one step to the rear and two 12-inch steps to the left of the platoon leader.

Platoon Leader's Post.

When the platoon drills as a separate unit, in a line formation, the post for the platoon leader is six steps in front of and centered on the platoon; when in a column formation, the platoon leader is six steps to the left flank and centered on the platoon. When marching as part of a larger formation, his post is one step in front of and centered on the squad leaders.

When the platoon leader commands **Open Ranks, MARCH; Backward, MARCH; Right (Left) Step, MARCH; Forward, MARCH** or causes the platoon to change interval, he moves at the same time (with the appropriate step) so as to maintain proper position.

When assuming his post in column from a line formation, the platoon leader faces to the right in marching (on the command of execution **FACE**) and marches in the most direct route to his post, halts, and faces to the left.

When assuming his post in line from a column formation, the platoon leader faces to the left in marching (on the command of execution **FACE**) and marches in the most direct route to his post, halts perpendicular to the formation, and faces to the right.

B2. Forming the Platoon

The platoon normally forms in a line formation; however, it may re-form in a column when each man can identify his exact position in the formation.

The platoon forms basically the same as a squad. The platoon sergeant assumes the *Position of Attention* and commands **FALL IN (At Close Interval, FALL IN or In Column, FALL IN)**. On the command **FALL IN**, the first squad leader determines where to stand so that the first squad (when formed) is three steps in front of and centered on the platoon sergeant. The first squad leader takes his/her post and raises his/her left arm so that the Cadet next to him/her can establish normal (close) interval. Other squad leaders cover on the first squad leader at the correct distance (36 inches), which is obtained by estimation. The members of the first squad fall in on their squad leader as prescribed for squad drill. Members of the other squads fall in on their squad leader, assume the *Position of Attention*, and turn their heads and eyes to the right. They obtain correct distance by taking short steps forward or backward and align themselves on the man to their right. They then sharply turn their heads and eyes to the front as in the *Position of Attention* and obtain proper interval by taking short steps left and right to cover on the cadet to their front. Members of all squads, other than the first squad, will not raise their left arms unless the cadet to their immediate left has no one to his/her front in the formation on which to cover.

When a report is appropriate, the platoon sergeant commands **REPORT**. The squad leaders, in succession from front to rear, turn their heads and eyes toward the platoon sergeant and salute (holding the Salute until returned) and report. The squad leaders do not state the unit. For example:

Situation 1. When all squad members are in formation, the report is **"All present."**

Situation 2. When squad members are absent, the Cadets and reasons for absence are reported:

C/CPL Smith – Flag Detail

CFC Jones – Sick Call

CDT Williams - Unknown

The platoon sergeant turns his head and eyes toward the reporting squad leader, receives the report, and returns the salute. After receiving the report from the squad leaders, the platoon sergeant faces about and awaits the arrival of the platoon leader or a directive from the first sergeant to **REPORT**.

When the platoon leader has halted at his post, the platoon sergeant salutes and reports, **"Sir/Ma'am, All present";** or **"Sir/Ma'am, All accounted for";** or **"Sir/Ma'am, (so many) Cadets absent."**

The platoon leader returns the salute. After the salute has been returned, the platoon sergeant faces to the right in marching, inclines around the squad leaders, halts at his post, and faces to the right. If reporting to the first sergeant, the platoon sergeant turns his head and eyes toward the first sergeant, salutes, and reports.

If the platoon leader is not present for the formation, and the commander is in charge of the formation, the platoon sergeant steps forward three steps (after receiving the squad leader's report) and, on the command **POST**, assumes the duties of the platoon leader.

When appropriate, the platoon may be formed by the platoon leader rather than by the platoon sergeant. The procedures are the same as previously described except that the first squad forms six steps in front of and centered on the platoon leader, and the platoon sergeant forms at his post to the rear of the platoon. For continuity purposes in this section, "platoon sergeant" may also denote "platoon leader" when the platoon leader is executing drill from his post.

B3. Breaking Ranks

When the situation requires one or more individuals to leave the formation or to receive specific instructions from the platoon sergeant, the platoon sergeant directs: "**Cadet First Class Doe (pause), front and center**"; or, "**The following personnel front and center—Cadet First Class Doe (pause), Cadet Smith.**" When the individual's name is called, he/she assumes the position of attention and replies, "**Here, Sergeant (Sir).**" He/she then takes one (12-inch) step backward, halts, faces to the right (left) in marching, and exits the formation by marching to the nearest flank. The Cadet does not look left or right. Once the individual has cleared the formation, he begins to double-time and halts two steps in front of and centered on the platoon sergeant.

NOTE: When a group of individuals are called from the formation, the group forms centered on the platoon sergeant. The platoon sergeant should direct (point) the first man into position so that the rank will be centered when the last man has joined the group.

B4. Counting Off

The platoon counts off in the same manner as the squad. When in a line formation, the squads count in unison from **right to left**; all the squad leaders sound off together, "**ONE.**" When in a column formation, the Cadets abreast of each other (each rank) count in unison from **front to rear**; the squad leaders sound off, "**ONE.**"

B5. Changing Interval

The platoon changes interval in a line formation in the same manner as the squad.

To change interval when the platoon is in a **column** at the **Halt**, the right file stands fast and serves as the base. All other members (abreast of each other) execute the movement as previously described. To obtain **Close Interval** from Normal Interval in a platoon of four squads, the third squad takes one right

step, the second squad takes two right steps, and the first squad takes three right steps. To obtain **Normal Interval**, the procedures are the same except that the squads execute the same number of left steps.

In platoons with fewer than four squads, the right squad remains the base file, and stands fast. The squad next to the base file takes one right step, the next squad (if the platoon has three squads) takes two right steps.

To change interval when the platoon is marching in a column, the preparatory command **Close Interval** is given as the right foot strikes the ground, and the command of execution **MARCH** is given the next time the right foot strikes the ground. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the base squad (right file) takes one more 24-inch step and then executes the **Half Step**. All other cadets take one more step, simultaneously execute a **Column Half Right**, and march until **Close Interval** is obtained. They execute a **Column Half Left** and assume the Half Step when abreast of the corresponding cadet of the base squad. On the command **Forward, MARCH**, all cadets resume marching with a 24-inch step. The commands **Mark Time, MARCH** and **Platoon, HALT** may also be given. There is not a designated number of steps to take between the half-right and half-left pivots, but all members of each squad should take the same number of steps, and pivot together simultaneously.

To resume marching at **Normal Interval**, the preparatory command **Normal Interval** is given as the left foot strikes the ground, and the command of execution **MARCH** is given the next time the left foot strikes the ground. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the platoon members obtain **Normal Interval** in the same manner prescribed for **Close Interval** except that they each execute **Column Half Left** and then **Column Half Right**, with all members of each squad pivoting simultaneously.

To obtain **Double Interval** from **Normal Interval**, the procedures are the same as from **Close Interval** to **Normal Interval**.

To obtain **Normal Interval** from **Double Interval** (closing the formation in column from Open Ranks), the procedures are the same as obtaining **Close Interval** from **Normal Interval**.

B6. Aligning the Platoon

The platoon is aligned similar to the squad.

On the command of execution **DRESS**, the first squad leader stands fast and serves as the base. Other squad leaders obtain correct distance by estimation. The members of the first squad execute in the same manner as in squad drill to obtain exact interval. All other squads execute as the first squad (putting their left arms up and turning heads to the right), except that each squad member raises the left arm only for uniformity, actually covering (glancing out the corner of the left eye) on the cadet to the front.

If the platoon sergeant wants exact alignment, he faces to the **Half Left (Half Right)** in marching and marches (on the command of execution **DRESS**) by the most direct route to a position on line with the first squad, halts one step from the squad leader or left flank cadet, and faces down the line. From this position, he/she verifies the alignment of the first squad, directing the cadet to move forward or backward, as necessary, calling them by name or number: "**Cadet Jones, forward 2 inches; Number**

eight, backward 4 inches." The platoon sergeant remains at **Attention**, taking short steps to the right or left as necessary, to see down the squad.

Having aligned the first squad, the platoon sergeant, after centering himself/herself on the first squad, faces to the **left (right) in marching**, taking two (three if at open ranks) short steps to the next squad, halts, faces down the line, and aligns the squad in the same manner.

After the last squad is aligned, the platoon sergeant centers himself/herself on the squad leader by taking short steps left or right, faces to the **right (left) in marching**, returns to his/her position (**centered on the platoon**), halts perpendicular to the formation, faces to the **left (right)**, and commands **Ready, FRONT**.

NOTE: When the platoon dresses as part of a larger formation, all squad leaders turn their heads and eyes to their right and align themselves on the unit to their right. The platoon sergeant aligns the platoon from the left flank rather than from the right flank when his platoon is not formed as the right flank platoon.

To align the platoon **in column**, the commands are **COVER** and **RECOVER**. On the command **COVER**, the fourth squad leader stands fast and serves as base. The squad leaders with the exception of the left flank squad leader, raise their arms laterally to the left and turn their heads and eyes to the right. The members of the right squad raise their left arms horizontally (as in squad drill) to the front and cover on the Cadet to their front at correct distance (one arm's length plus 6 inches). Squad members of the third, second, and first squads raise their left arms horizontally to the front (**for uniformity only**), cover on the cadet to their front, and, at the same time, glance out of the corner of their right eyes aligning on the cadet to their right. To resume the Position of Attention, the command is **RECOVER**. On this command, each cadet sharply returns to the **Position of Attention**.

NOTE: Dress Right, DRESS is not given to a platoon in column formation. **COVER** is not given to a platoon in line formation.

NOTE: When the platoon is aligned in column as part of a larger unit but is not the lead platoon, the squad leaders do not raise their arms or turn their heads and eyes but cover on the squad to their front. The platoon leader/sergeant must wait until the platoon to his front has been given the command **RECOVER** before giving the command **COVER**.

B7. Opening and Closing Ranks

To open or close ranks, use the following procedures

Open Ranks March is executed from a line formation while at the halt. It may be executed while at any of the prescribed intervals. The command for this movement is **Open Ranks, MARCH**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the front rank takes **two steps forward**, the second rank takes **one step forward**, the third rank **stands fast**, and the fourth rank takes **two 12-inch steps backward**. If additional ranks are present, the fifth rank takes **four 12-inch steps backward**, and the sixth rank **takes six 12-inch steps backward**. **For platoons with fewer than four squads, the rear squad is the base, and stands fast. The squad in front of them takes one step forward. If there's a squad in front of THEM (1st Squad in a three-squad platoon), they take two steps forward.**

NOTE: After taking the prescribed steps, the Cadets do not raise their arms. If the platoon sergeant wants exact interval or alignment, he commands (At Close Interval/At Double Interval), ***Dress Right, DRESS***. If the platoon is to align on an element to the right, the squad leaders turn their head and eyes to the right and align themselves with that element.

To Close Ranks, the command is Close Ranks, **MARCH**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the first rank takes **four 12-inch steps backward**, the second rank takes **two 12-inch steps backward**, the third rank **stands fast**, and the fourth rank takes **one 24-inch step forward**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the platoon leader and platoon sergeant take the appropriate number of steps to maintain their posts. **In platoons of fewer than four squads, the squads/ranks take two steps backward for every one step they took forward at *Open Ranks March*.**

B8. Resting the Platoon

The platoon rests in the same manner prescribed for the squad.

B9. Dismissing the Platoon

The procedures for dismissing the platoon are basically the same as prescribed for the squad.

If the platoon sergeant so desires, the squads may be released to the control of the squad leaders. The platoon sergeant commands **TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR SQUADS**, and Salutes are exchanged. The platoon sergeant is no longer part of the formation.

NOTE: Without leaving their positions, the squad leaders turn their heads and eyes over the left shoulder and command **FALL OUT**. The squad leaders move to a position in the immediate area, and command **FALL IN**. Then, they carry out the previous instructions and or give any instructions for actions before the next duty formation.

At times the platoon sergeant may want to turn the formation over to a subordinate; for example, to have the subordinate march the platoon to a different location.

The platoon sergeant calls on an individual and the individual breaks rank. The designated Soldier posts two steps from and facing the platoon sergeant. The platoon sergeant passes on any additional instructions and Salutes are exchanged. After exchanging Salutes, the platoon sergeant moves to a position where he can observe, or he may resume his post at the rear of the formation.

The subordinate steps forward two steps and assumes the post of the platoon sergeant. The platoon sergeant is no longer part of the formation; however, he/she may march alongside of, or behind, the formation to make any corrections or to give further guidance, if necessary.

If the platoon leader is at his post, he commands **PLATOON SERGEANT**. The platoon sergeant faces to the left in marching and inclines around the squad leaders' left flank, halts three steps in front of and centered on the platoon and faces to the right. The platoon leader then commands **TAKE CHARGE OF**

THE PLATOON, and Salutes are exchanged. The platoon leader is no longer part of the formation. The platoon sergeant remains at his/her post, faces about, and carries out the platoon leader's instructions.

B10. Eyes Right

The platoon renders courtesy during ceremonies or when marching past the Colors by executing **Eyes Right**. The commands for this movement are **Eyes, RIGHT** and **Ready, FRONT**.

At the Halt, all cadets (on the command of execution, **RIGHT**), while keeping their shoulders parallel to the front, turn their heads and eyes to the right at a 45-degree angle. They focus on and follow the person passing to the front until they are again looking forward, at which time their heads and eyes remain fixed to the front. **Only the platoon leader renders the Hand Salute.**

When marching, the preparatory command **Eyes** is given as the right foot strikes the ground and the command of execution **RIGHT** is given the next time the right foot strikes the ground. On the command of execution **RIGHT**, all cadets, except the right file, turn their heads and eyes to the right and align themselves on the right file while continuing to march. Cadets in the right file do not turn their heads and eyes but continue looking straight to the front and maintain correct distance. **Only the platoon leader salutes.** To terminate the courtesy, the preparatory command **Ready** is given as the left foot strikes the ground, and the command of execution **FRONT** is given the next time the left foot strikes the ground. On the command of execution, the cadets turn their heads and eyes sharply to the front and the platoon leader terminates the Hand Salute.

B11. Changing the Direction of a Column

The platoon changes the direction of marching basically the same as the squad.

During a column movement, the base element is the squad on the flank in the direction of the turn. **(If turning to the right, it is the right flank squad, if turning to the left it is the left flank squad).**

To change the direction 90 degrees, the command is **Column Right (Left), MARCH**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the base squad executes the movement as in squad drill except that the squad leader takes one 24-inch step and then takes up the **Half Step**. The squad leader continues marching with the **Half Step** until the other squad leaders come abreast. The other squad leaders, while maintaining correct interval, execute a 45-degree **pivot** and continue marching in an arc. As they come on line (abreast) with the base squad leader, they take up the Half Step. When all squad leaders are abreast, they step off with a 24-inch step without command. All other platoon members march forward on the command of execution and execute the column movement at approximately the same location as their squad leaders and in the same manner.

NOTE: When the platoon sergeant is marching his platoon as a separate unit or when the company is marching without officers in charge, the platoon sergeant stays centered on his platoon. When the platoon leader and platoon sergeant are marching at their post in column as part of a larger formation, they execute a **Column Half Right (Left)** rather than a 90-degree column movement. After executing the **Column Half Right (Left)**, they continue marching in an arc, incline as necessary, and resume their correct positions. After sensing that the squad leaders are abreast of each other, the platoon leader

resumes the 24-inch step. At times, the platoon leader may find it necessary to shorten or lengthen his step in order to maintain correct distance from the unit to his front.

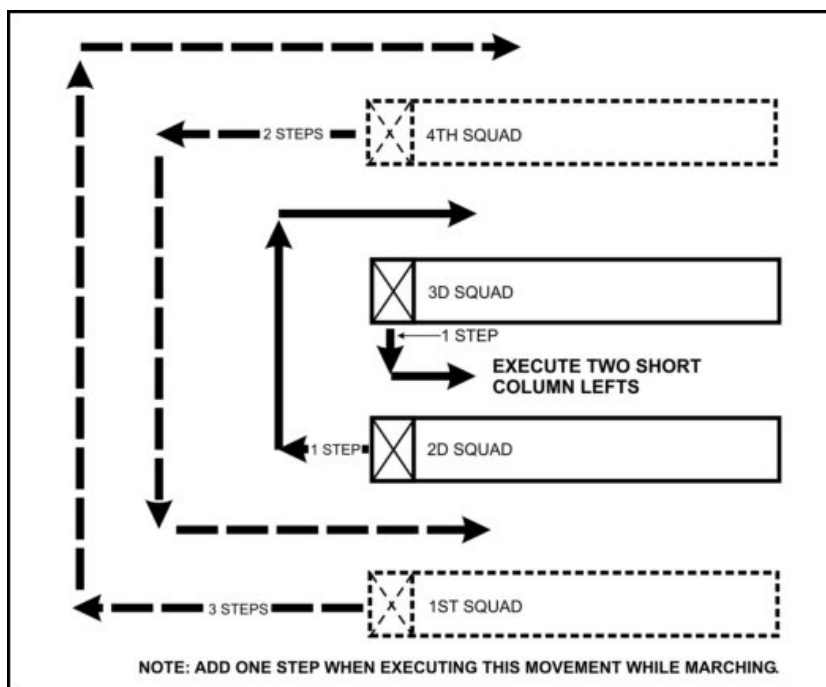
To change the direction 45 degrees, the command is **Column Half Right (Left), MARCH**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the platoon executes the movement in the same manner as a 90-degree turn except that the base squad leader, as well as the other squad leaders, execute a **Column Half Right (Left)**.

NOTE: When executing a column movement at Double Time, elements adjust the length of their steps so that interval and distance are maintained through and beyond the *pivot point*.

The platoon marches in the opposite direction (**Rear, MARCH**) in the same manner as the squad.

The platoon inclines in the same manner as the squad. The squad nearest the direction of the turn serves as the base. To avoid an obstacle in the path of the march, the platoon leader directs **INCLINE AROUND LEFT (RIGHT)**.

When space is limited, and the platoon sergeant wants to march his unit in the opposite direction (reverse), with the squad leaders at the head of their squads, he commands **Counter Column, MARCH**. On the command of execution **MARCH** (at the Halt), the first squad marches forward three steps, executes a **Column Right**, marches across the front of the platoon, and executes another **Column Right** just beyond the fourth squad. The second squad steps forward one step, executes a **Column Right**, marches forward, and executes another **Column Right** between the third and fourth squads. The third squad executes two short **Column Lefts from the Halt** and marches between the remainder of the third squad and the second squad. The fourth squad marches forward two steps, executes a **Column Left**, marches across the front of the platoon, and executes another **Column Left** between the first and second squads.

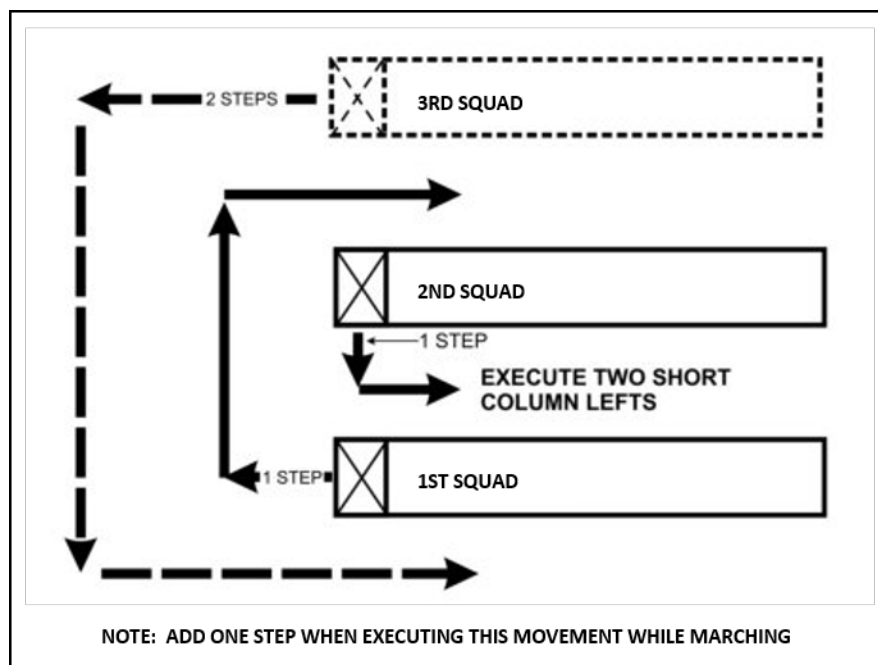


As the third squad leader marches past the last cadet in the third squad, he/she and his/her squad begin to march at the **Half Step**. After marching past the last cadet in each file, all other squads **incline** to the right and left as necessary, obtain Normal Interval on the third squad, and begin to march with the **Half Step**. When all squads are abreast of each other, they begin marching with a 30-inch step without command.

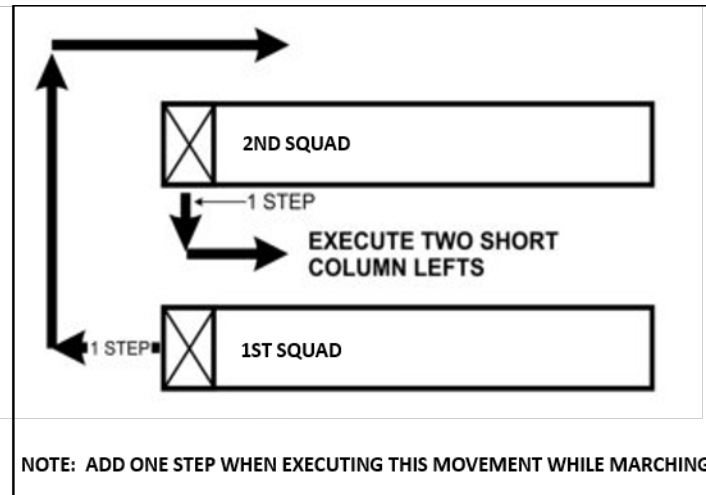
During the movement, without the platoon leader present, the platoon sergeant marches *alongside the first squad*. With the platoon leader present, the platoon sergeant marches one step to the rear and centered between the second and third squads and the platoon leader marches alongside the first squad.

When marching, the preparatory command **Counter-Column** is given as the left foot strikes the ground and the command of execution **MARCH** is given the next time the left foot strikes the ground. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the platoon executes the movement basically the same as from the Halt, except that the squad takes one additional step to ensure that the **pivot foot** is in the correct position to execute the movement.

For platoons of fewer than four squads, follow the diagrams below:



Counter Column, March with 3-Squad Platoon



Counter Column March with 2-Squad Platoon

NOTE:

When the platoon leader and platoon sergeant are marching at their posts as part of a larger formation, the platoon leader takes three steps forward and executes a column right, marches across the front of the platoon, executes another column right (just beyond fourth squad), marches to his/her post in the most direct manner, takes up the Half Step, and then steps off with a 24-inch step when the squad leaders come on line. The platoon sergeant inclines to the right, follows the third squad until the movement is completed, and then resumes his/her post.

B12. Marching to the Flanks

The platoon marches to the flank in the same manner as the squad.

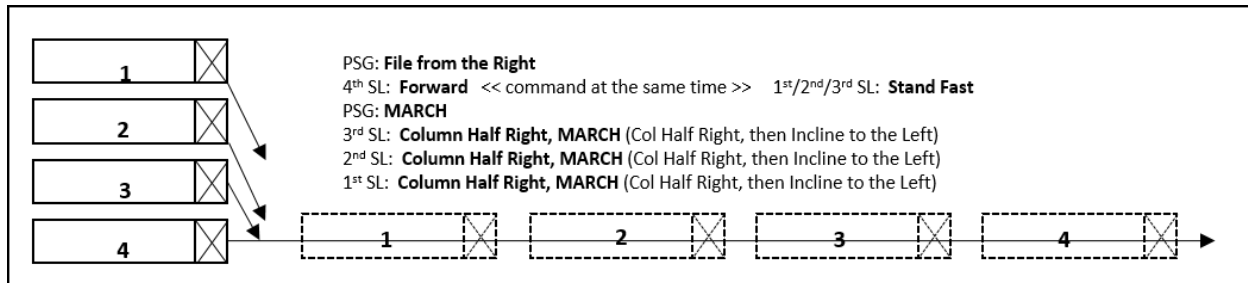
B13. Forming a File and Reforming

The platoon forms a single file, from the right, left, or as designated, only when in column and at the Halt. The commands are **File from the left (right), MARCH** or **File in sequence three-two-four-one, MARCH**.

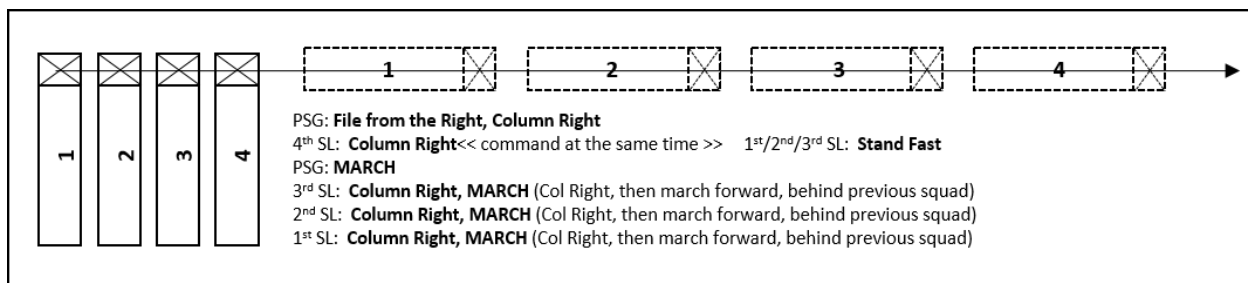
NOTE: If the squad's direction of travel is to the *left*, or *the squad is immediately following an element on the left*, then all *supplementary commands will be given over the left shoulder*. If the squad's direction of travel is forward or to the right, or is immediately following a squad on the right, all supplementary commands will be given over the right shoulder. The squad leaders give the appropriate command so that they are following the last Cadet in the preceding squad at the correct distance.

On the preparatory command, the squad leader of the designated squad gives the supplementary command **Forward**. The other squad leaders command **STAND FAST**. On the command of execution **MARCH** (given by the platoon sergeant), the lead squad marches forward. The squad leader next to the lead element (or as designated) looks over the shoulder nearest the moving element and commands **Column Half Left (Right)** when the second from the last cadet is abreast of him/her and his/her right foot strikes the ground. The squad leader gives the command of execution **MARCH** as the right foot of

the last cadet strikes the ground when abreast of him/her. On the command of execution, the squad leader executes the **Column Half Left (Right)**, then inclines without command to the **right (left)**, and follows the last cadet of the preceding squad at correct distance. Other members of the squad march forward and execute the same movements as the squad leader. The remaining squads form the file in the same manner as the squad immediately behind the lead element.



The platoon may form a file and execute a column movement simultaneously from a column formation. The command for this movement is **File from the Left (Right), Column Left (Right), MARCH**. Following the platoon sergeant's preparatory command, the squad leader of the lead element commands **Column Left (Right)**, instead of Forward. The other squad leaders command **STAND FAST**. On the platoon leader's command of execution **MARCH**, the lead squad executes the Column Left (Right). The other squad leaders command **Column Left (Right), MARCH** at the appropriate time.



NOTES:

At this point the platoon is executing platoon drill. The platoon sergeant will not release control of the squads to the squad leaders. The platoon sergeant will rest personnel on an as needed basis; for example, when filing into a building.

The squad leaders give the command of execution **MARCH** as the right foot of the last man strikes the ground at the pivot (**Column Left**), or the first time the last man's right foot strikes the ground after the pivot (**Column Right**).

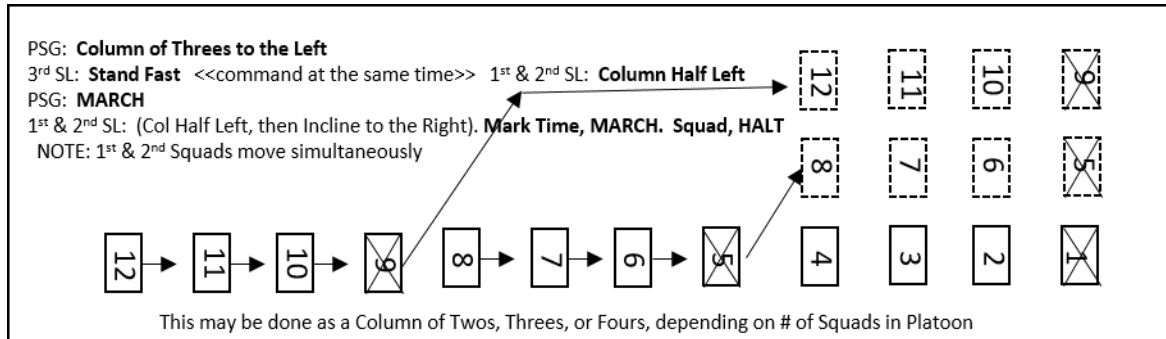
The platoon re-forms to the original column formation only from the Halt. The command is **Column of fours to the right (left), MARCH**.

NOTE: To re-form the platoon to its original column formation when the file was formed on the command **In sequence, MARCH**, the commands **FALL OUT** and **FALL IN** must be given.

On the preparatory command, the squad leader of the base squad commands **STAND FAST**. All other squad leaders command **Column Half Right (Left)**. On the platoon sergeant's command of execution

MARCH, the base squad stands fast; all other squads execute the **Column Half Right (Left) simultaneously**.

As each of the moving squad leaders reach a point (line) that ensures correct interval on the element to their left (right), they automatically incline to the left (right) and command **Mark Time, MARCH** and **Squad, HALT** so that their squad is abreast of the base (other) squad when halted.



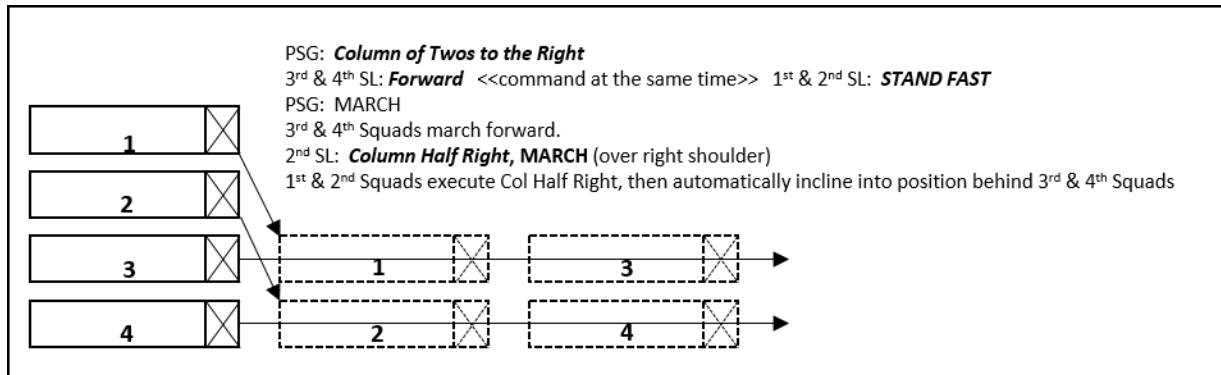
B14. Forming a Column of Twos and Reforming

The platoon forms a column of twos from the right or left when in a column of fours at the Halt. The command is **Column of Twos from the Left (Right), MARCH**.

On the preparatory command, the squad leaders of the two lead squads command **Forward**. The other squad leaders command **STAND FAST**.

On the platoon sergeant's command of execution **MARCH**, the two lead squads march forward. The squad leader (second or third) next to the lead element gives the command to start both of the remaining squads in motion. Looking over the shoulder nearest the moving elements, the squad leader gives the preparatory command **Column Half Left (Right)** (when the second from the last cadet is abreast of him/her) and then gives the command of execution **MARCH** as the right foot of the last cadet strikes the ground abreast of him/her.

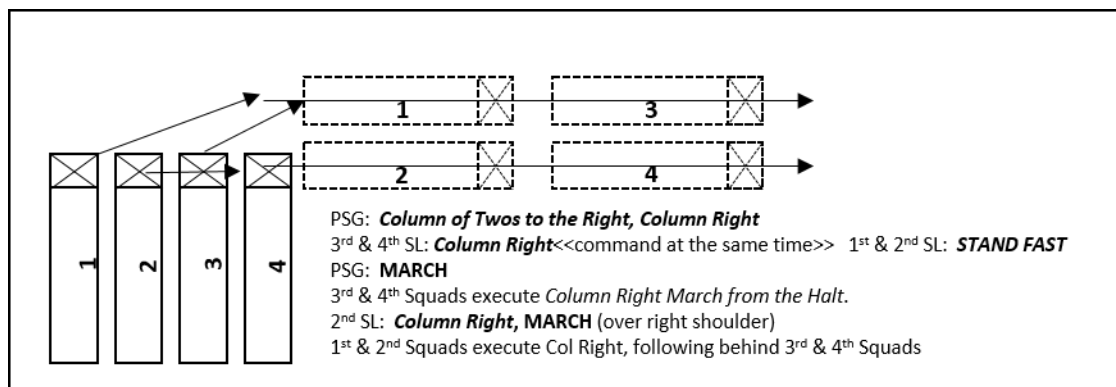
On the platoon sergeant's command of execution, both squad leaders execute the **Column Half Left (Right)**, incline to the right (left) without command, and follow the last cadets of the preceding squads at correct distance (**do not close the space if the files of the two leading squads are not even**). Other members of the remaining squads march forward and execute the same movements as their squad leaders.



The platoon may form a column of twos and execute a column movement simultaneously from a column formation. The command for this movement is **Column of Twos from the Left (Right), Column Left (Right), MARCH**.

The squad leaders of the lead squads command **Column Left (Right)** instead of **Forward**. The squad leader of the *second (third) squad* gives the command **Column Left (Right)**; however, he/she executes **Column Left (Right)** as the outer file (executing a 45-degree pivot, then arcing around). The remaining two squad leaders command **STAND FAST**.

On the platoon sergeant's command of execution **MARCH**, the lead squads execute the **Column Left (Right)**. The squad leader (second or third) next to the lead elements gives the command to start both squads in motion. Looking over the shoulder nearest the moving elements, the squad leader gives the preparatory command **Column Left (Right)** when the second from the last cadet is abreast of him/her. Then he/she gives the command of execution **MARCH** as the right foot of the last cadet strikes the ground at the pivot (**Column Left**) or the first time the last cadet's right foot strikes the ground after the pivot (**Column Right**). The outside squads (fourth or first) execute a 45-degree pivot then arc as normal in a column movement for a platoon.

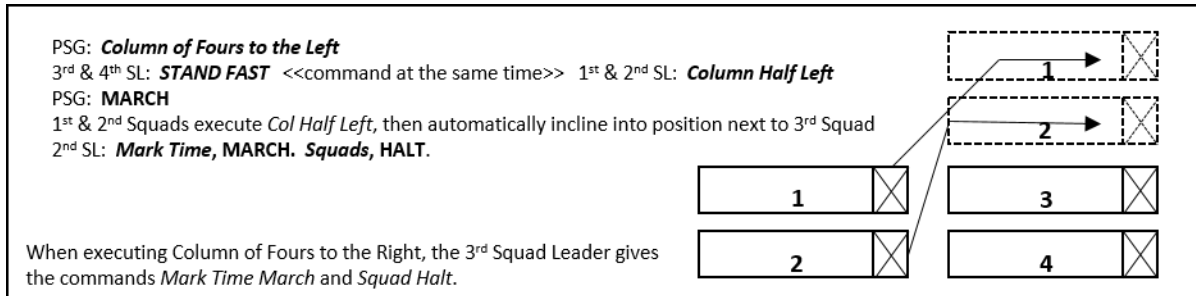


The platoon re-forms to the original column formation only from the Halt. The command is **Column of Fours to the Right (Left), MARCH**.

When re-forming into a column of fours without the platoon leader present, the platoon sergeant remains at his post centered on the platoon. When re-forming into a column of fours with the platoon leader present, the platoon leader faces as in marching and resumes his original position in the column.

The platoon sergeant follows the rear element and resumes his post in the formation when the element has halted.

On the preparatory command, the squad leaders of the base squads command **STAND FAST**. The trailing squad leaders command **Column Half Right (Left)**. On the platoon sergeant's command of execution **MARCH**, the base squads stand fast. The trailing squad leaders execute *slightly* more than the *Column Half Right (Left) simultaneously*. As the trailing squad leaders reach a point (line) that will ensure correct interval on the element to their left (right), *they automatically incline to the left (right)*. The squad leader nearest the stationary squads (second or third) commands **Mark Time, MARCH** and **Squads, HALT**.



B15. Inspections Basic Info

Inspections at platoon level are typically conducted by the platoon sergeant. If the platoon leader wants to inspect, he/she conducts the inspection from his/her post. For continuity purposes, this section will address the platoon sergeant's actions only. We're only covering in-ranks inspections here, not barracks inspections.

The platoon has one prescribed formation for inspecting personnel and equipment in ranks—the line formation.

To conduct in-ranks inspections, use the following procedures:

With the platoon in line formation, the platoon sergeant commands **Count, OFF**. The platoon executes Count Off in the manner described in Platoon Drill (B4).

After the platoon has counted off, the platoon sergeant **commands Open Ranks, MARCH**. The platoon opens ranks as described for Platoon Drill (B7), and **Dress Right Dress** if checking alignment is desired.

At this point, the platoon is ready to be inspected. Typically, the squads are inspected by the squad leaders; however, they may be inspected by the platoon sergeant or platoon leader.

B16. Squad Leader's Inspection:

If the platoon sergeant wants the squad leaders to inspect their squads, he/she will direct **INSPECT YOUR SQUADS**. *Salutes* are not exchanged.

The squad leader marches forward and to the left, inclines as necessary until he is at a point 15 inches in front of and centered on the first Cadet.

The squad leader remains at a *modified Position of Attention* moving his/her head and eyes only. After inspecting at the center position, he/she takes a short step forward and to the left and inspects, returns to the center and steps forward and to the right and inspects, and returns to the center position.

Having inspected the first cadet, the squad leader **faces to the right as in marching** and takes one (two if at normal interval) step, halts, and faces the next cadet at the appropriate distance. The squad leader conducts the inspection for the rest of the Cadets in the squad.

After inspecting the last Cadet in the squad, the squad leader **faces to the right as in marching** and marches around behind the squad, inclining as necessary. While the squad leader marches back to his post, he/she inspects the squad from the rear.

After resuming his post, the squad leader turns his/her head and eyes over his/her left shoulder and commands his/her squad to assume **At Ease**.

The platoon sergeant remains at his/her post (inspects the Guidon Bearer if appropriate). After the last squad has been inspected and is at *At Ease*, the platoon sergeant commands the platoon to **Attention**.

After commanding the platoon to *Attention*, the platoon sergeant commands **Close Ranks, MARCH**. The platoon executes per lesson B7.

If the platoon is being inspected as part of a larger formation and control of the platoon has not been turned over to the platoon sergeant, he/she faces about, executes *At Ease*, and awaits further instructions from the first sergeant.

B17. Platoon Leader's/Platoon Sergeant's Inspection:

If the platoon sergeant is not going to inspect the entire platoon, he/she directs the squad leaders of the appropriate squads to inspect their squads. All others will be inspected by the platoon sergeant.

The platoon sergeant faces to the *Half Left* as in marching and marches by the most direct route to a point 15 inches in front of and centered on the first squad leader (or the squad leader of the squad to be inspected). As soon as the platoon sergeant halts in front of the squad leader, he/she commands the other squads to *At Ease* and inspects the squad leader.

The platoon sergeant remains at a *modified Position of Attention* moving his/her head and eyes only. After inspecting at the center position, he/she takes a short step forward and to the left and inspects, returns to the center and steps forward and to the right and inspects, and returns to the center position.

Having inspected the squad leader, the platoon sergeant faces to the right as in marching and takes one (two if at normal interval) steps, halts, and faces the next cadet at the appropriate distance. After the platoon sergeant steps off, the squad leader takes a half step forward and faces about. When moving from cadet to cadet, the squad leader and platoon sergeant move *simultaneously*.

Having inspected the last Cadet in the squad, the platoon sergeant faces to the right as in marching and marches around behind the squad, inclining as necessary, and inspects the squad from the rear.

As the platoon sergeant begins to inspect the first squad from the rear, he/she commands the next squad to *Attention*. The squad leader returns to his/her post. After the platoon sergeant arrives in front of the next squad leader, he/she commands the first squad to *At Ease* over the *right shoulder*.

The platoon sergeant and squad leader execute in the same manner as in inspecting the first squad until the entire platoon has been inspected. After inspecting the rear of the last squad, the platoon sergeant marches by the most direct route to his post, halts, faces to the left and commands the platoon to ***Attention***.

After commanding the platoon to *Attention*, the platoon sergeant commands ***Close Ranks, MARCH***, executed per Lesson B7.

If the platoon is being inspected as part of a larger formation and control of the platoon has been not been turned over to the platoon sergeant, he/she faces about, executes *At Ease*, and awaits further instructions from the first sergeant.