

142. APPROACH MARCH OF A RIFLE SQUAD. See FM22-5 page 162

a. *Dispositions.*—When the platoon leaves the route column to take up the approach march the squad marches with the platoon as ordered by the platoon leader. (See par. 106.)

The squad dispositions (formations) are:

- Squad column
- Skirmishers
- Skirmishers right (left)
- Diamond Formation
- Wedge Formation

(See FM 22-5.) The initial (first) formation may be prescribed by the platoon leader; thereafter a squad leader changes the disposition of his squad to meet changes in the situation and terrain. In selecting a formation, the squad leader considers the necessity of employing his weapons promptly, of presenting a poor target to the enemy, and of retaining control of his squad.

(1) "**Squad column**" is vulnerable to hostile fire from the front and requires a change of formation to permit the employment of all the squad's weapons to the front, but is easily controlled and maneuvered. It is suitable for crossing areas exposed to artillery fire, for utilizing narrow covered routes, and for movement in woods, fog, smoke, and darkness. It facilitates immediate action toward the flanks. The automatic rifleman is posted close to the squad leader near the head of the column. A squad column does not usually exceed 60 paces in depth.

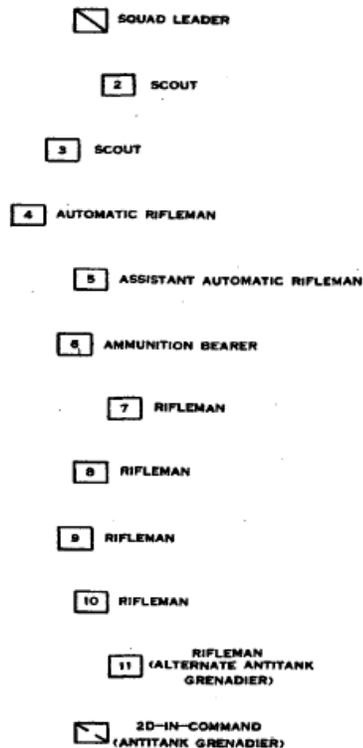


FIGURE 70.—Squad column (closed) (distance between men approximately 5 paces).

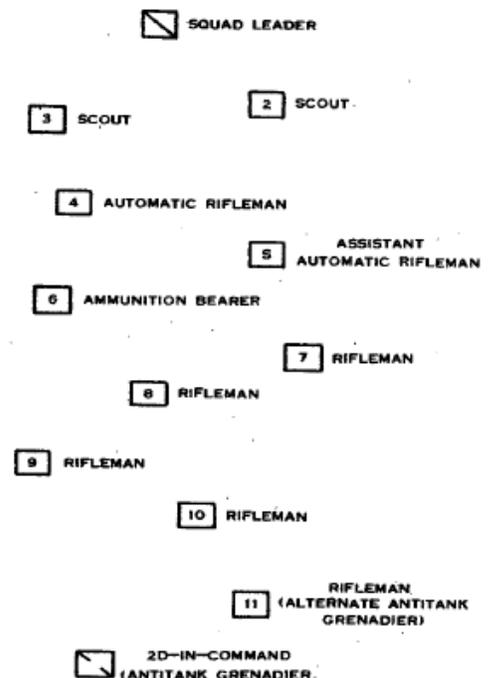
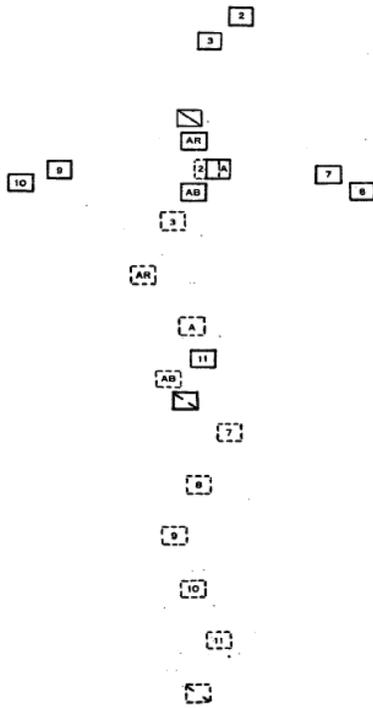
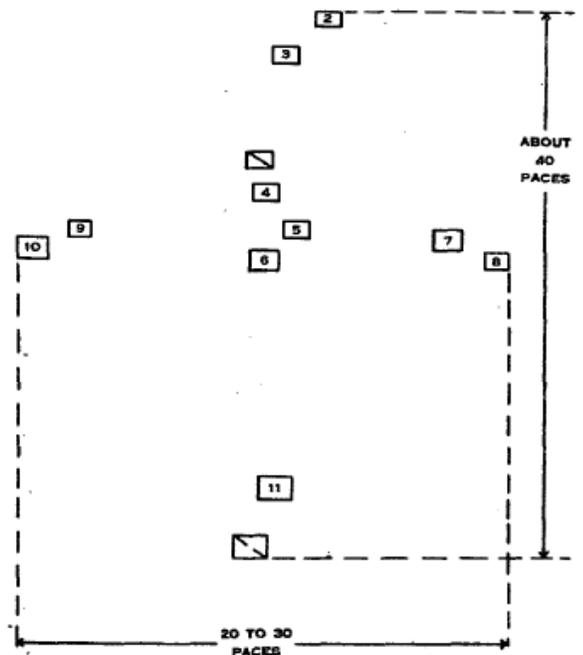


FIGURE 71.—Squad column (opened) (distance between men approximately 5 paces; width approximately 20 paces).

(2) **Diamond formation** (fig. 74).-(1) At the signal or Command DIAMOND FORMATION, usually given from squad column, but permissible from any disposition, the men dispose themselves in a diamond formation around the squad leader as shown in figures 74. The scouts, forming the leading pair, move out to the front; Nos. 7 and 8 (riflemen) move out to the right flank as a pair; Nos. 9 and 10 (riflemen) move out to the left bank as a pair; No. 4 (automatic rifleman), No. 5 (assistant automatic rifleman), and No. 6 (ammunition bearer), close to a central location in rear of the squad leader, and move as directed by him. No. 11 (rifleman) and No. 12 (second-in command) move up to the position vacated by Nos. 7 and 8 and become the rear pair. For drill, the interval between individual men is approximately 5 paces, and the leading and flank pairs are from 5 to 10 paces from the squad leader. In combat, the distance the scouts will precede the squad and the interval between the pairs on the flanks will depend upon the terrain. Visual contact must be maintained with the squad leader at all times.



① Diamond from squad column.  
FIGURE 74.—Diamond formation—Continued.



① Squad in diamond formation. (Distance between individual men approximately 5 paces; between pairs, variable depending on the nature of the terrain being traversed.)

FIGURE 74.—Diamond formation.

(3) **As skirmishers** (fig. 72).-

At the signal or command, usually given from squad column but permissible from any disposition, the squad deploys in an irregular line as shown in figure 72. Even numbers go to the right, odd numbers to the left. The squad leader is in front of his squad when it is advancing. When it halts to fire, he drops back behind the line to a position from which he can control his squad and observe to the front. If there is an automatic rifleman in the squad, he joins the squad leader and awaits orders for any special fire mission. This disposition is less vulnerable to hostile fire from the front, and enables the squad to employ its weapons to the front without change of formation; but it is more difficult to control than squad column. It is adapted to rapid dashes across open spaces, particularly shelled areas. When the squad is deployed in skirmish line its front ordinarily should not exceed 60 paces.

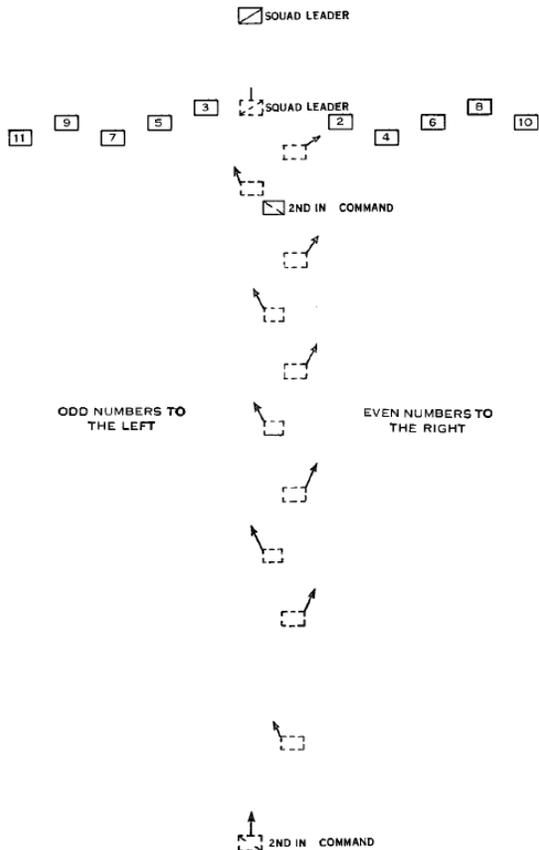
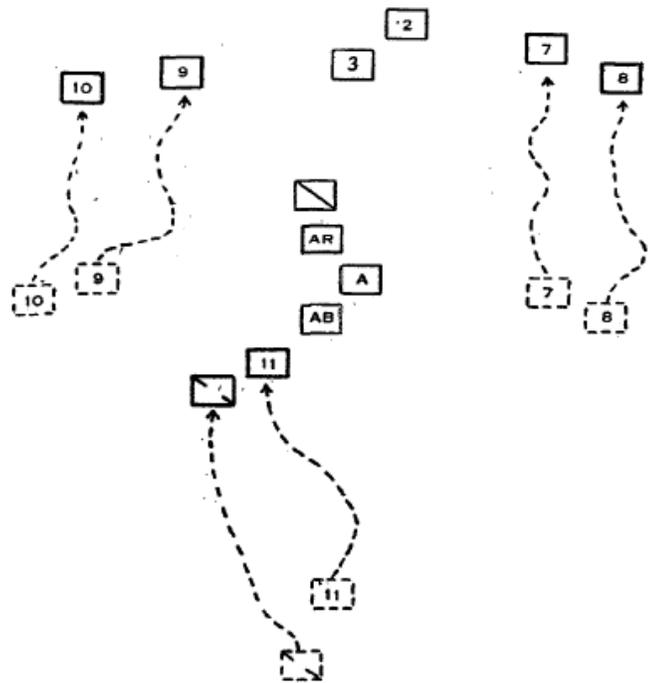


FIGURE 72.—Skirmishers (interval between men approximately 5 paces).



Skirmishers from diamond formation. (Interval between individual men approximately 5 paces; between pairs, variable depending on the nature of the terrain being traversed.)

FIGURE 74.—Diamond formation—Continued.

**(4) As skirmishers right (or left)** (fig. 73).—At the signal or command, usually given from squad column but permissible

from any disposition, the squad deploys to the right as shown in figure 73. The squad leader is in front of his squad when it is advancing. When it halts to fire he drops back behind the line to a point from which he can control his squad and observe to the front. If there is an automatic rifleman in the squad, he joins the squad leader and waits for orders for any special fire mission.

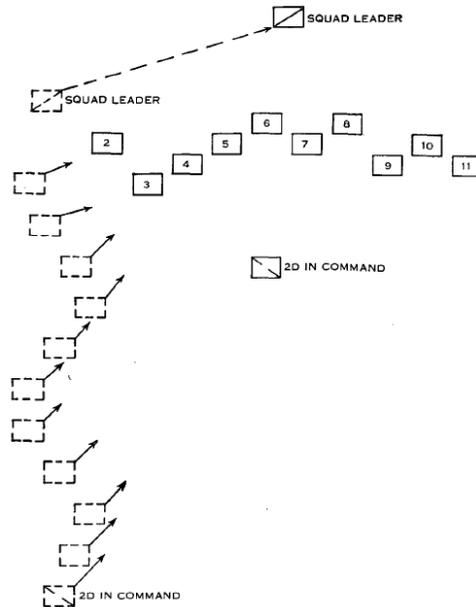


FIGURE 73.—Skirmishers right (or left) (interval between men approximately 5 paces).

**(5) Squad wedge** (fig. 74).—At the command, usually given from squad column but permissible from any disposition, the

men dispose themselves in an irregular wedge behind the squad leader as shown in figure 74. If there is an automatic rifleman in the squad, he takes position in the center of the wedge unless otherwise directed.

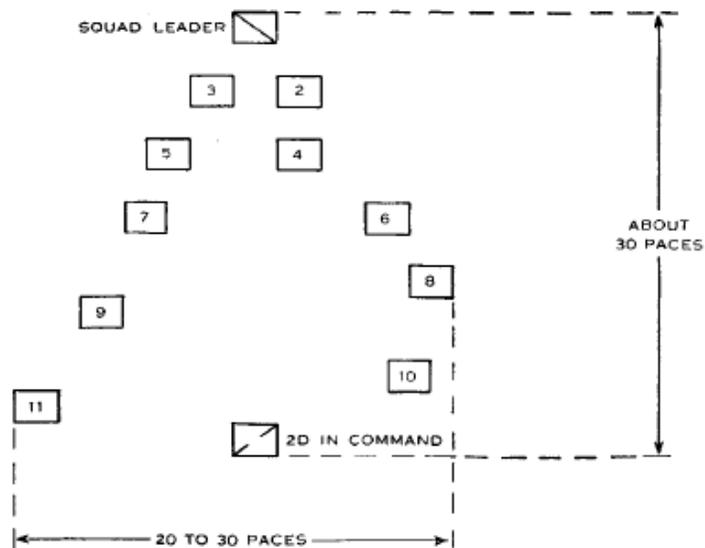


FIGURE 74.—Squad wedge.