

AIRSOFT

TACTICAL MANUAL

by J.W Hurcomb

written
for
Airsofters



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INTRODUCTION

About this eBook: I originally started writing this manual for my squad. When we started playing airsoft, I knew that we all wanted to train and get better. I spent countless hours reading through everything I could get my hands on and watching as many videos as possible on airsoft tactics. I then compiled it all into one document we could train from.

Next, I got all the information checked by more experienced airsofters. Special mention and thanks go to all those part of Reddit's airsoft community.

After, getting good reviews from those posts I decided to rewrite the document and format it so it could be used by others who wanted to form a squad or team, were new to airsoft and wanted to learn how to come better, or wanted a document to help them train their squad/team to become better airsofters.

I have gone through the book a number of times, but there may be a few punctuation and grammatical errors. Also please excuse some of the pictures as the filter worked better on some than others.

Introduction to airsoft: Airsoft, is a military simulation game similar to paintball, but using airsoft guns otherwise known as BB guns. Using airsoft guns allows a large degree of realism to the game. As BB's don't leave a mark when they hit, players use the honor system to call themselves out.

While we may dress up in military style clothes, hold replica weapons and use tactics similar to those used in the military. It needs to be stated that no player should ever pass themselves off as a member of the military or claim to be a member of the military, unless the player is ex-military.

The reality is we are playing tag with expensive toys. This is why I prefer to refer to those who play airsoft as players and not soldiers or operators.

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AIRSOFT GLOSSARY

I've compiled a list of all the airsoft terminology I will use throughout the manual plus some others that are good for a new player to know.

AEG: Automatic Electric Gun.

AEP: Automatic Electric Pistol.

Backspin: Rearward rotation applied to the BB upon contact with the Hop Up.

BB: Ball Bullet, a plastic spherical bullet 6-8mm in diameter.

BDU: Battle Dress Uniform in other words camouflage clothing.

Breaching: Entering a room to kill all the defenders.

Call Up Time: Time a team meets up to play.

CO: Commanding Officer.

Concealment: Anything you can hide behind that BB's can go through.

Cover: Anything you can hide behind that BB's can't go through.

Covering fire: Player One watches as Player Two moves forward. If an enemy attacks or appears Player one fires at them. (otherwise known as bound and overwatch)

CQB: Close Quarters Battle (usually means indoors or urban warfare).

Digital Cam: A type of camouflage also known as Universal Camouflage Pattern. It uses a pixelated pattern.

DM: Designated Marksman.

DMR: Designated Marksman Rifle. An assault rifle that has a longer range than an AEG.

EBB: Electric Blow Back.

Engage & Firefight: Both mean to be shooting at an enemy.

Fallback: Move back to a stronger position.

Fatal Funnel: Any hallway or entry where a defender can easily kill all attackers.

Fire-Team (FT): A two to four man unit working towards the same goal. They can use Fire-Team tactics to their advantage.

Fire Team Leader (FTL): The player that leads the fire team.

Flank: Move to the enemy's side.

FPS: Feet per Second

GBB: Gas Blow Back

Gear Up: Putting on your game gear in preparation for a skirmish.

High Cap: High Capacity Magazine, holds the most ammo, but needs to be wound to be used and makes a noise when you shake it.

Hop Up: An adjustable system that is used to add backspin to BB's extending the range.

Lock and Load: Lock the magazine into the gun and load the first round into the chamber.

Low Cap: Low capacity magazine, holds the same number as the Real Steel weapon.

Magazine: What you put your BB's into. Note: It's not called a clip.

Mid Cap: Mid capacity magazine, holds triple to quadruple the amount of ammo of a Low Cap. Doesn't make noise when it's shook.

Milsim: Military Simulation. Players that like to wear full military dress and work on military like tactics.

MOLLE: Modular Lightweight Load-carrying Equipment. A type of vest that has lots of loops & belts on it for accessories.

MPS: Meters per Second.

Multicam: A type of camouflage.

NBB: Non Blow Back (for Gas guns that don't have a blow back).

Plink/Plinking: Firing in the back yard or private area at targets or tin cans.

Prone: Lying flat on your stomach.

Push/Push Forward: Move towards the enemy.

RAS: Rail Adapter System, see RIS.

Real Steel: The real version of a weapon.

RIS: Rail Interface System, allows accessories to be attached and mounted onto a gun.

RPM: Rounds per Minute.

RPS: Rounds per Second

Skirmish: An organized airsoft game.

Springer: Spring BB gun. A gun where the slide has to be pulled back manually to fire.

Squad: Two to three Fire-Teams make up a squad. Can use squad based tactics to their advantage.

Squad Leader (SL): Player that leads the squad.

Suppressing fire: Same as covering fire except the whole time you are firing making the enemy keep his head down.

SAFETY

No matter what the rules are where you play there are some basics you should always follow.

1. If you're not using your weapon to play the game or test firing it keep the safety on.
2. Always wear your mask during game play and don't shoot at anybody that doesn't have a mask on.
3. Follow safe shooting distances during the game.

When a new player joins your team or squad take some time to go over the rules and make sure they understand that airsoft is a safe sport if these rules are followed. If they're not permanent injuries may occur.

GEAR

All that is needed to play airsoft is some form of eye protection and an airsoft gun. However, these would be considered the basics and you may want to consider getting more equipment as you can.

It is personal preference and extra equipment doesn't necessarily mean you're a better airsofter. Some players enjoy playing the game and just use what's needed. Others like to wear full military uniforms with all the accessories.

BDU: For those wanting to simulate they're in the military BDU's add a lot of realism. They also help with camouflage. Another benefit in having specific airsoft clothes you're normal clothes won't get dirty and damaged from playing airsoft.

Boots: Good for when you are playing in areas where there are hazards on the floor.

Elbow pads: Not the most commonly worn accessory, but if you plan to play a lot of CQB or plan to be smashing into walls a pair of pads to protect your elbows isn't a bad investment.

Face protection: If there's one thing on this list I would highly recommend it would be this. If you are a beginner player it will help give you more confidence to move forward knowing you won't take a direct shot to your face. BB's can and have shot out teeth. If you don't want to pay for expensive dental work I would buy face protection.

Gloves: Protects your hands from being shot. It's unlikely, but getting shot in the knuckle, thumb or finger are some of the most painful places to be hit.

Helmet: Falling in an airsoft arena is always a real possibility with BB's scattered everywhere. A helmet will protect your head from this or from banging into a wall or other obstacle while playing.

Knee Pads: Protect your knees when rushing up against walls.

Pistol holster: Running a rifle and pistol. Sure, you can just put the pistol down the back of your pants or in a pocket; the only concern isn't the look. Personally, I think it looks fine. The problem is your pistol can fall out and if you don't notice you're next game will be find the pistol in the huge airsoft arena.

Sling: Holding an airsoft rifle for a game is easy. Holding your rifle for multiple games or a huge event can become tiring. A sling takes some of that stress off your arms.

Tactical Vest: As you acquire more equipment, pockets don't cut it. A vest gives you good storage. Just don't get so excited and come a walking airsoft shop.

GETTING STARTED

Starting a team: When I say starting a team I mean putting together a group of people to play airsoft with. Before you start a team consider if it's easier to join a team that already plays together. Consider that to create your own team and play you will need to find at least six to eight people, which would be a very small game and highly likely get boring after a few games. You will also need to find an area to play in which can be difficult.

Finding people to play airsoft is also a problem. Airsoft is a niche sport and expensive to join if you have to buy the equipment before you can play your first game. Start by asking friends you already know. Get the friends that join your team to ask their friends and so on. Go online and use local websites, forums and Facebook pages to recruit more players.

Lastly, get a team message board or Facebook page set up and make sure it can be found via google for people that are searching for local airsoft teams.

Starting a squad: When I say starting a squad, I mean getting a few guys from the team you already play with to form a squad. The squad should have a common goal. It could be you want to play milsim, work on tactics or just be more social. Whatever your goal is from working on tactics and being the best players in the team or drinking a case of beer after the game. Have a reason for why you want a squad.

Approach a few people in the team you are closer friends with or you think would be interested in being a part of a squad with that sort of goal. If they're in, form a small squad and start working away. Once you've got the foundation laid down invite more people. You'll find that as your squad gets more into whatever your common goal is people that are also interested in that will naturally gravitate to join you.

Team / squad ranks: Because many people correlate airsoft with the military you'll find many teams and squads have military ranks. Personally, I'm against it. A full milsim game where you want a full military simulation with a command order is one thing.

A social team that gets together to work on tactics and drink beer is another.

I've always found that people that like to have ranks like them because they are at the top and want the people below them to have to work hard to get close to them. It's an ego boost for them.

The most that is needed is a team/squad captain that does the organising and gets everybody together, that's their only job. There is always someone that will naturally take this role, usually a founder but not always.

Difference between experienced and beginner guns: The difference between the two is not the FPS or MPS, as all fields have limits on how fast guns can shoot. It comes down to the price, the distance it can shoot, the reliability and what the internals and externals are made of.

A beginner gun is usually cheaper and hasn't been customized. While an experienced player's gun is probably more expensive and has been customized for their play type.

TRAINING

If you've decided that you want a team or squad that is going to train together the next question is how you are going to conduct these trainings? How serious do you want to be? Are you going to have a set day where the players come together to train? Or are you going to train before, after or during game day when others are having a break? Not everybody can naturally teach a skill, so I'm going to offer my experience to help you start strong and get the most out of your trainings.

Before the training day decide what points you want to work on. I've tried to list them in order of importance and in such a way that we follow the basic teaching principle of 1 + 1. This means we add one new thing on to the last thing we learnt. You can work on one point at a time or try and combine points that naturally go together or that are easy and you can quickly get through.

Before your training session spend a few minutes going over what you are going to train on and make sure you know how you are going to teach it. You don't want to waste precious training time on figuring out your next step.

How to structure a lesson:

Set Up: Quickly talk about what you learnt last training session. 30 seconds to a minute should be more than enough to jog everybody's memory. Introduce what you are going to teach in this session, it can be as easy as just reading the explanation from this book.

Training: Demonstrate the new point and how to do it correctly. Make sure everybody gets a chance to try and make it work for them.

Practice: Instead of playing a skirmish where more than likely as soon as BB's fly past a player's head they'll forget what they're suppose to practice, it's better to run a drill that focuses on drilling that point into the players muscle memory.

Wrap up: Afterwards discuss how the drill went and anything players learnt while practicing the point. Finish by concluding what was learnt.

Example Session for Cover and Concealment

Set Up: Review the previous session on aggression. Read the Cover and Concealment point from this book.

Training: Show examples in the field of the difference between cover and concealment. For the different types of cover demonstrate how best to hide behind that bit of cover and how far back you can go before you are exposed. Show that peeking around is usually better than looking over top. Demonstrate peeking from both sides so the enemy doesn't know what side you are going to pop out of. Explain that quick peeks are better than long gazes. Finish by explaining that if you crouch or lie prone and look around the enemy will not be able to react as fast.

Have each player have a go at hiding behind cover, practice peeking from both sides with their rifle out ready to fire. Seeing how far they can go back till they're exposed and how best for them to hide their whole body behind that select piece of cover.

Practice: Play an airsoft version of What's The Time Mr Wolf. One player is the wolf and stands at one end of a field full of cover. His job is to fire indiscriminately making sure the players use cover and adding stress to moving up the field. If any player stays out longer than 2 seconds the wolf may fire directly at that player. All the rest of the players must move from one end of the field towards the wolf's end of the field. If they get shot, they aren't out, but should take note of where they got shot so it can't be discussed later.

Wrap Up: After everybody's had a go being the wolf the group should review the game and where people got shot. Why they got shot and how it could be improved upon. Go through the points of using cover and concealment one last time.

INDIVIDUAL SKILLS

While a real bullet would almost instantly hit where it was aimed, BB's have a remarkable ability to do anything, but fly straight. Real world tactics are designed to keep soldiers from getting shot. Successful airsoft tactics are aggressive, mobile and recognize the difference in ballistics.

The following in order of importance is a heavily researched list of tactics to help an individual better his airsoft game.

1. Communication: The most important tactic that can help everybody and the one new players stop doing the second they get into the game. You should always be talking to your team-mates. Where is the enemy? What is he doing? Where are you? What are you doing? What do you want or need? Where are your friends? What are they doing? What do they need? Four guys should be able to work out where every enemy in a room is.

With communication nobody should be stuck behind cover for too long. If someone attacks he should have support.

Don't worry about stealth at the moment, worry about providing information.

Later on you will learn a full list of tactical words and phrases, but for the moment these should suffice.

- Moving
- Shooting
- Reloading
- Incoming BB's
- Cover me
- Suppressing fire

2. Be aggressive: Taking the fight to the enemy and moving as much as possible wins airsoft battles. Lack of movement, loses battles. Nobody won the Medal of Honor hiding behind a tree; you aren't going to shoot anybody from there. If you aren't moving forward attacking and keeping the initiative that means you've let the enemy take control of the fight and use his tactics to beat you.

Doing something is always better than doing nothing. It's better to try and fail then sit and wait to get shot. If you have the enemy pinned under cover, move up. Don't just keep shooting at them hoping they'll stick their head out and get hit.

3. Use cover and concealment: You should never stand out in the open at any point in a game. You are either behind cover or you are moving between cover.

When behind cover if possible try not to look over, but around. This makes it much easier to duck back into cover. It also creates a lower profile. If the cover has two sides try to peek around both. If you always look from one side the enemy will catch on to the pattern and train his sights to the side he knows you will pop out from.

When you look around take quick peeks instead of long gazes. Long gazes allows more time for the enemy to hit you.

If you crouch and look around the enemy will not react as fast. This is because the human eye picks up movement above the waist better than below.

Don't be scared to go prone behind cover or trees. You will present a lower target and can hide behind lower bits of cover.

Concealment is different from cover in that concealment you can hide behind, but BB's can still fly through and hit you. Long grass is an example of concealment.

If there is no cover available at least try to stay closer to a wall, but not touching it. BB's can ricochet off the wall and hit you.

4. Stances: Players should know how to take the difference stances and know how to hold the weapon.

Standing Ready: Knees should be slightly bent, elbows in to make a smaller target, butt of the gun in the shoulder, rifle facing towards the enemy.



You can see the player has the gun pushed into his shoulder and aimed at where the enemy may be. His elbows are tucked in though he's knees aren't bent as much as would be desired. This position is still strong.



From another view we can see the player is looking right down the sights ready to engage any enemies that appear in his line of sight.



From the front view we can see that his left arm is tucked in nicely though he could try and tuck his right arm in a bit more if possible and comfortable.



Another shot of the standing ready stance. This time the player has his knees bent, elbows tucked in and gun ready. We can tell just by looking at this picture this player is ready for action.

Low ready carry: Rifle 45 degrees down, butt stock in the shoulder.



A good stance to use when against walls or you are player three in a breach.

The player has his butt stock resting in his shoulder, gun aimed down. All the same things about knees and elbows apply from the previous stance.

Kneeling: Elbows on thigh to cushion and help stabilise the weapon. Front foot flat on the ground, rear leg flat on the ground with foot up for stabilising, elbows in.



From the photo we can see the left elbow is resting on the thigh to help stabilise the weapon. The left front foot is flat on the ground while the right leg is flat on the ground he is still on the ends of his toes in case he needs to get up quickly.

Elbows in to help make himself a smaller target.

Prone: Lying down, one leg straight up and down, the other bent at a right angle. This helps if you need to start crawling. Elbows in.



This is slightly different to the description above. Here the player has both legs stretched fully out, to help stabilize himself. Good for when you will be in the position for a while. If you plan to move you may want to bring one leg up so it's bent at the knee ready to start moving.

Otherwise keep your elbows in and aim down the sight.

5. Run between cover & keep moving: When moving between cover, you shouldn't be out in the open for longer than two seconds. If possible, try to move with cover blocking the enemy's aim. If you can't stay behind cover while moving don't move straight towards them or away from them. You'll give the enemy an easy shot. Try to run in a diagonal line so that the enemy has to follow you. If the cover is to your right or left, just run to the side as normal. You'll move faster than they can shoot you, this is especially important for darting between rooms in CQB.

Keep moving during the game. Don't let yourself get stuck behind cover. Use fire and move, communication and even falling back and taking a new path forwards to keep the enemy guessing where you are and to stop being flanked.

If you're moving without someone suppressing or providing cover keep your gun up and ready to fire at the enemy. On the other hand if you have someone filling one of those two roles worry less about needing to shoot and more about moving as fast as possible to the next bit of cover.

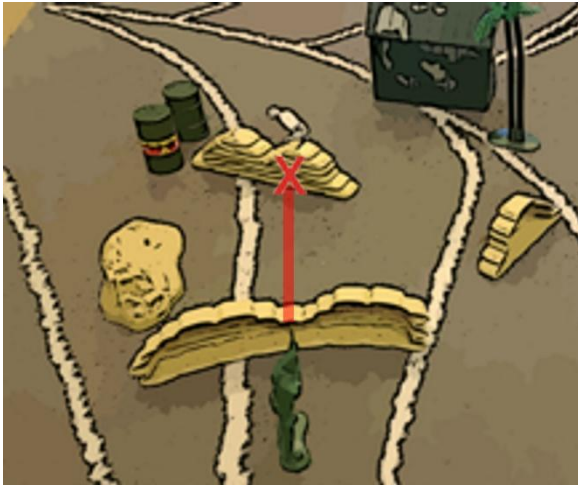
At the beginning of the game run to get into a good forward position or get into a good defensive position.

If you are hiding behind cover that is low or there is a lot of fire happening, crawling can make movement a lot safer.

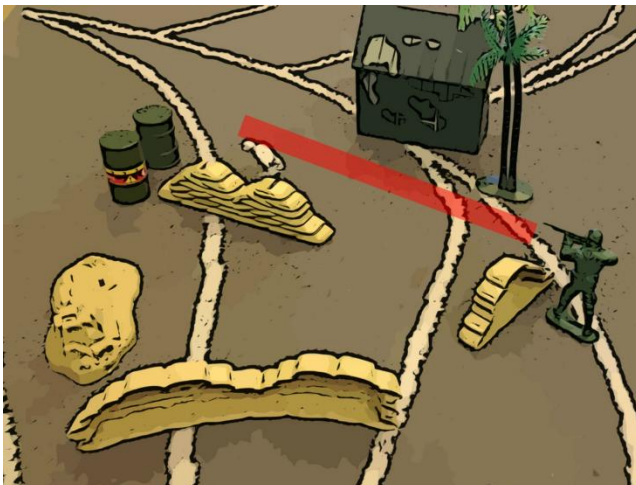
When you're moving around the combat area don't use trails and other easy methods of travel. The enemy may be watching the obvious path or have set up an ambush.

The fatal funnel is real in combat, and it's real in airsoft. Hallways and doors are the worst place to be especially if you've got teammates behind you. Get through those doors and hallway areas as fast as possible.

6. Flanking: If an enemy is behind cover and you can't get a good shot onto them your best option is to flank them. In other words, move to their side where you can get a clear firing angle on them.



The white player is behind cover stopping the green player from getting a shot on him.



The green player moves to the right to get a good angle on the white player.

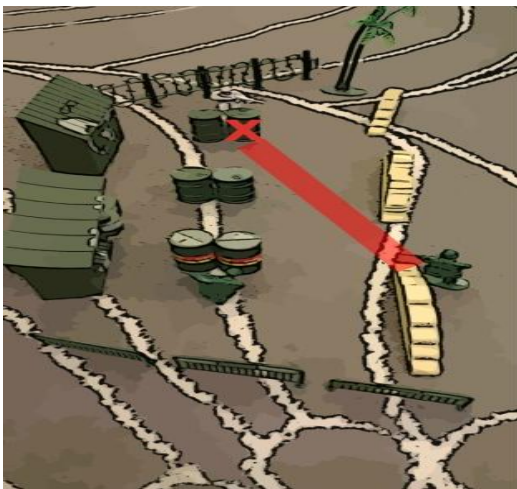
7. Fire and move: This is a tactic where you fire at the enemy to get their head down behind cover and then move to a new position, preferably one on their flank. If you can continue firing while you move forwards to a new position that's great otherwise fire as long as you can while moving.

If you are exceptionally quiet and stealthy as well as having moved forward you may be able to enquire an added tactical advantage of the enemy not knowing you have changed positions.

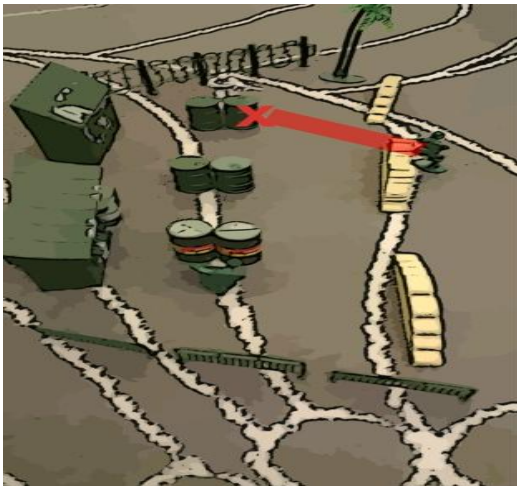
This tactic works best on people who are new or haven't done much training as they will instinctively hide their head to stop from getting hit.



The white player and green player one are both behind cover and unable to shoot each other or move effectively. The green player on the right though can perform the fire and move.



First the green player moves up the line and starts firing on the white player. Firing full-auto the white player puts his head down stopping him from seeing the green player as he moves.



The green player quickly dashes forwards to the next gap and continues firing. A novice player will keep his head down the whole time during this move, a more experienced player will keep taking quick peeks from behind cover.



The green player dashes to the white players flank and is able to shoot him easily.

8. Slicing the pie: This is a room clearing tactic that can be used for room entry, checking what's in a room before you walk past it, or looking around cover. Standing slightly out from cover you take a diagonal step out towards the other side of the door. Letting you see a bit of the room. Once you've confirmed that the area is clear you take another small step diagonally out to see a little bit more of the room. At any time someone shoots at you, lean back towards cover to be out of sight. The whole time keep your weapon up and ready to fire.



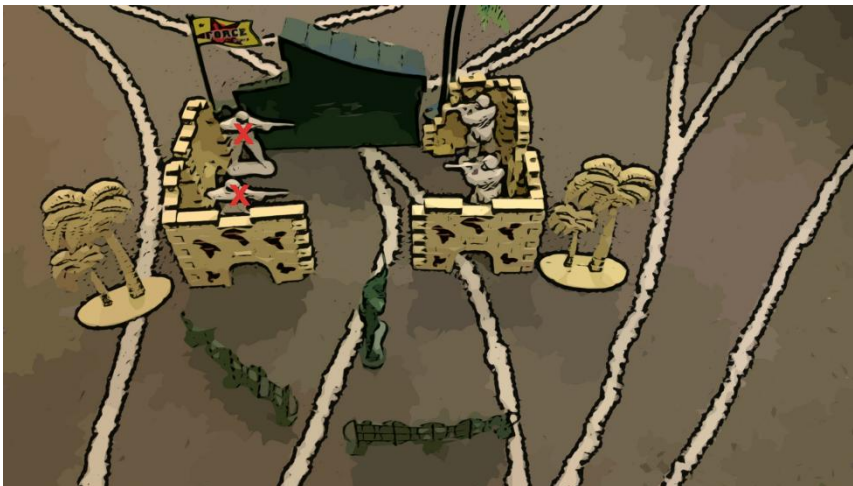
The green player has came across a room and decides to slice the pie to see in. At the moment he can't see into the room and those in the room can't see him.



He takes his first step out to the left and back. Seeing a white player he shoots. If the white player started firing at him all the green player has to do is take one step back and he'll be behind cover.



He takes another step to the left and back and shoots the next player he sees.



The next step lets him see to the centre of the room having cleared the first half.



He continues moving to the left and is able to clear the back right corner.



One more step to the left and he is able to clear the last corner and secure the room.



The green player has now got to the other side of the room and successfully cleared it.

Obviously one player would never be able to secure a room of four players, but it shows the tactic and how you can see each corner with each successive step.

9. Violence of action: In room clearing or any situation where a group are attacking dug in defenders; the defenders have an advantage that can get as high as 8:1. To counter this attackers have two specific areas that can help them level this advantage.

Stealth/Surprise: If the defender doesn't know they're about to be attacked they can be caught off guard. Attackers should try to be as quiet as possible before breaching the room, stay off the walls to stop accidental noise, move carefully so high caps don't shake, keep radios volume down and use hand signals instead of talking to communicate.

Speed/Violence: Once breaching has started attackers should use speed, noise, firepower and aggression to take the room.

10. Take control of the fight: If you are engaged, take control of the fight. Meaning your head and rifle are aimed at where the enemy is and he's hiding behind cover. If you both stay behind cover only to pop out to shoot briefly at each other and then hide again it will just come a stalemate. Train your sights on where he will stick his head back out and fire when he pops out again. Or use Fire and Move to get a better position.

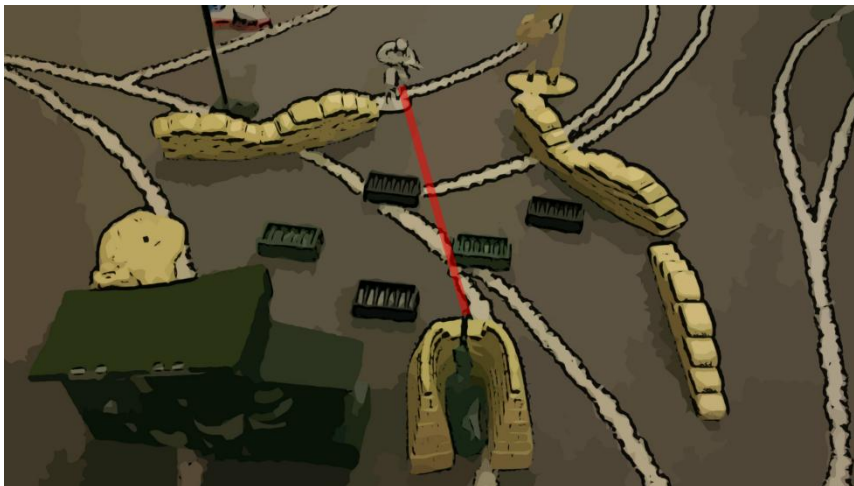
11. Snap shooting: If the enemy has control of the engagement, snap shooting can help retake control. Snap shooting is keeping your body behind cover and leaning your head, neck and shoulder out just enough you can shoot at the enemy and snap back in. Do it as fast as possible till you can retake control. You can also snap shoot into rooms if you suspect an enemy is in there.

12. Full auto: Use full auto bursts only to start suppressing fire then move to semi-auto to control the fire fight, and conserve ammo and battery.

13. Tracking and trapping: When enemies move between cover use tracking or trapping to hit them. Tracking means moving your sights along as they run, firing the whole time. Trapping means to fire where they will move to.



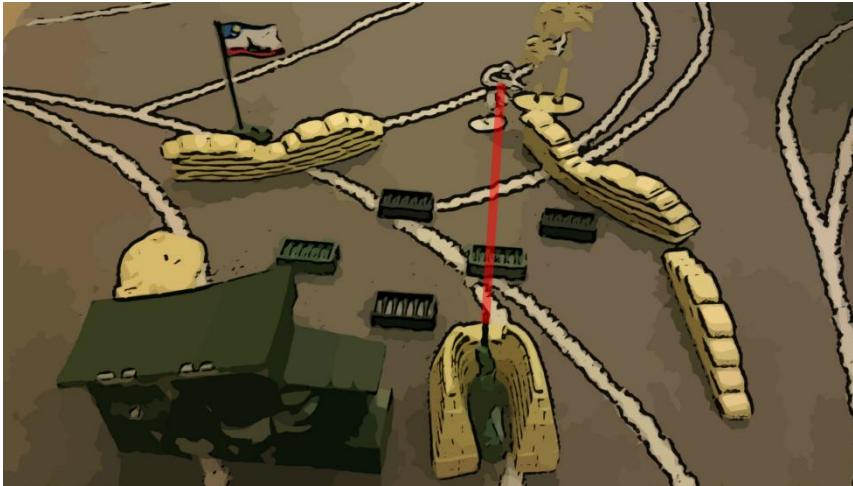
The green player is behind good cover and can hold the whole area by himself. The white player seeing that if he moves across the gap he can flank him decides to run across.



The green player uses tracking to shoot the player as he runs across.



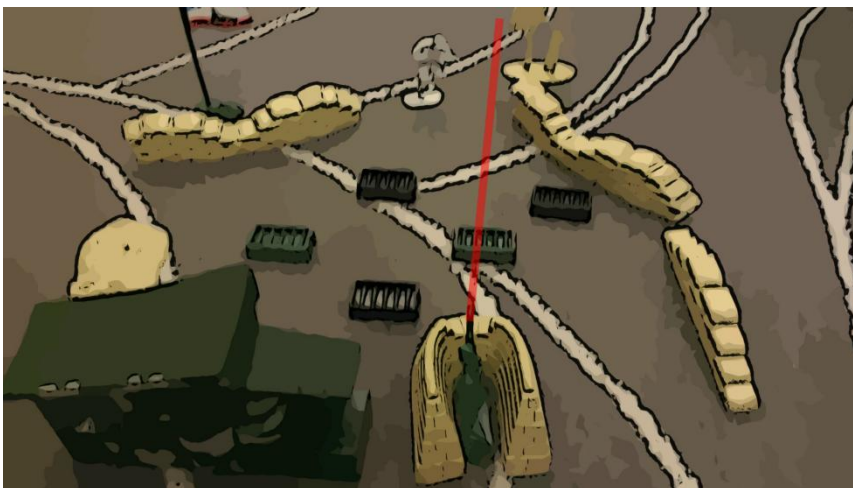
As the white player moves the green player moves his gun to the right.



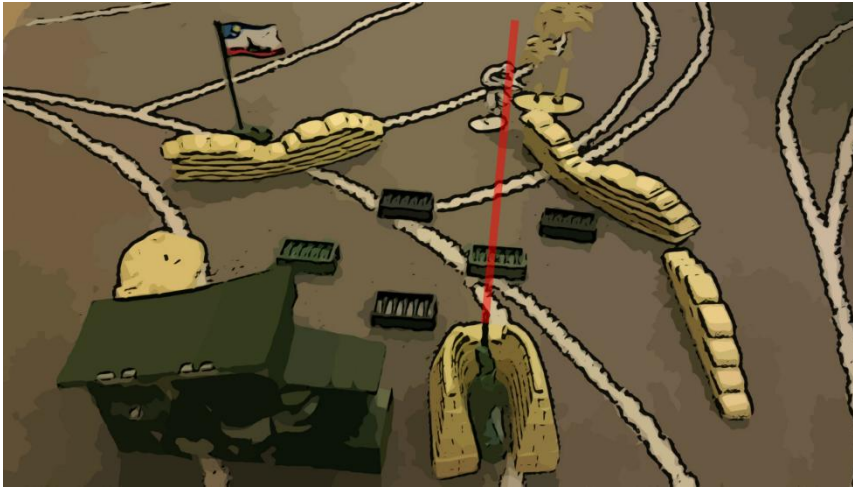
This tactic works best at closer range as BB's don't fly fast enough to reach long distances.



This time the green player uses trapping. He fires where the green player will go.



As the white player continues to move across the gap the green player continues firing.



The white player moves into the line of fire and gets hit.

14. Fall back: If you are stuck behind cover, there are too many enemies or no way to go forward without getting stuck, fall back to a stronger position and try a different route. Only retreat all the way back if it's absolutely necessary.

Don't be afraid to fall back and try a different approach. The reality is that stalemates happen and both teams can get involved in a gruelling slugfest that accomplishes nothing except high casualties and a lack of results.

Maintain a covered and concealed line of retreat when possible. It is one thing to know how to get into a tight spot; it is the mark of an experienced player to know how to get out of one.

15. Be patient: If enemies are too far away, or you don't know how many there are wait for them to come to you or try moving forwards to a stronger position. Why hit one and then be stuck in a fire fight when you can kill multiple. Also firing on an enemy that you can't hit and isn't aware of you just gives away your position.

Shoot with a purpose, in field games people always get stuck in stalemates shooting long distances. You may feel like you're doing something, but unless you're keeping them pinned while someone else manoeuvres to their flank you are just wasting ammo.

16. Tactical reloading: The best reload is knowing that you are close to running out of ammo and changing your magazine while you can still shoot till the last second of removing it. Keeping your gun up and aimed at the enemy, take out the new magazine and put it horizontally against your current magazine. Release the magazine from the rifle, turn the magazines 90 degrees, put in the new magazine. There should only be a few seconds when you can't fire at the enemy.

This may not be possible with some rifles that have larger magazines.

Another benefit of reloading before you run out is if you are running high cap magazines they make a loud whirring noise alerting everybody around you to the fact you need to change mags.



The player is running out of ammo and decides to reload before the enemy notices.



Still firing at the enemy he puts his new clip horizontally against the pistol grip and holds the bottom of the current magazine.



He now releases the magazine and lets it fall out into his left hand.



Turning his hand 90 degrees he begins to put the new magazine in while gripping the old magazine.



Once the new magazine clicks in he can continue firing at the enemy and take his old magazine away.

17. Quick to grab & take what you need: Keep magazines, grenades and your pistol somewhere that is quick for you to grab and use. Only take the gear you will need for the battle. For a five minute game you don't need to be carrying a water bottle, and canisters with extra gas and BB's.

18. 360 degree awareness: You should already be doing this for communication, but maintain 360 degree awareness including during fire fights. Turn your head around; don't just look straight with tunnel vision. Where are your friends? Are your flanks safe or about to be overrun? This will become more important when you become a part of a fire-team or squad.

19. Three eyes: Unless you are in a fire fight and are just moving your head to maintain 360 degree awareness, if you move your eyes, your gun moves too. This way you can shoot anything that your eyes see straight away.

20. Mind games: Use mind games to get the drop on enemies. Yell changing magazine while keeping your rifle aimed at the enemy for them to pop back up. Order around made up players.

21. Indicators: Listen for sounds of footsteps, coughing, and equipment noises such as magazines half full with BB's. To not give off your own indicators know that slow and deliberate movements are harder to see than quick and jerky. We don't see things move as strongly below the waist as above. Use noises such as guns firing, wind, and vehicles to mask some of the noise you make when you move.

FIRE-TEAM TACTICS

The smallest military unit next to an individual soldier is a fire-team. In the military a fire-team is made up of four soldiers working towards the same objective. In airsoft it can be difficult to get a good number of people to work together, so I've written these tactics for fire-teams consisting of two to four players.

Unlike the individual skills these aren't ordered in order of importance, but rather in order that the next tactic builds upon the ones before it.

1. Trust your team mate: A fire-team is built on trust. You need to trust that your team-mate is looking after his field of fire. He is providing cover while you move. That he is going to follow the plan. If there isn't trust the fire-team won't work.

2. Fire-Team communication: There should be strong communication between fire-team members. Where is the enemy? What is he doing? What are you doing? What do you want or need? Tell your team when you are reloading. A quick tap on the shoulder can alert a team-member to the fact you are now behind them, or that you want to tell them something such as you are about to move or attack. Everybody in the team should know what the plan is and what's about to happen. The next chapter will cover effective communication between team mates.

3. Maintain momentum, aggressiveness and teamwork: The title says it all. Keep moving, stay aggressive don't get stuck and have strong teamwork. It's annoying if an individual gets pinned, it's bad if a fire-team gets pinned. Don't let it happen.

4. Team roles: A fire-team has specific roles that can be filled by a player. This can be ever changing. In one situation a player may be suppressing, while the next they are assaulting. Being adaptable is the key for an effective fire-team.

Assault: The player that assaults the enemy position either by flanking or direct assault.

Suppression: The player that suppresses the enemy stopping them from returning fire allowing the assault player to move without worrying about being hit by a barrage of BB's.

Point Man: The player that walks at the front of the fire-team.

Security: The player that looks after the rear of the fire-team.

Scout: A player that moves ahead of the fire-team enough that if an enemy engages him the fire-team won't be caught in the firefight allowing them to organise

the best tactics to quickly defeat the enemy. Probably not a valid role for a two man fire-team.

Sniper: A player with a sniper rifle. Provides support to the fire-team. If just a two-man fire-team one player will be a sniper and the other his security to stop the enemy from attacking him.

Fire-Team Leader: The player in charge of the fire-teams tactics. He can also have one of the above roles.

5. Fire-Team leader: In the military a senior soldier is the designated fire-team leader and gives out all orders. For airsoft we don't have to be as strict. The fire-team leader doesn't have to be the player with the most experience or the best shot. It should be the person with the most knowledge regarding the current situation. If player 1 is engaged with an enemy and player 2 joins him, player 1 should naturally take the leadership position as he knows where the enemy is and the layout of the area. He can give the best tactical plan to follow.

6. Team mission: The mission is more important than the body count. Too many people are obsessed with shooting people and don't bother to learn or pursue the objective. Sometimes it really is better to avoid shooting at the enemy and letting them by you then to open fire and get into a big firefight which will keep you from your real objective.

7. Bound and overwatch: Use this tactic when the enemy hasn't been met. Player 1 stays behind cover with their weapon up and aimed at where the enemy may come from providing cover (overwatch). Player 2 moves forwards of players 1's position(bound), once he's behind cover he provides cover while player 1 moves forwards of him and the process repeats.



Fire-Team One has come upon an area full of bunkers. Though they can't see any enemies the FTL decides that they should use bound and overwatch to move forwards in case an enemy appears.



Player Two provides cover while Player One moves up to the first bunker.



With Player One now set to provide cover Player Two moves up the right side.



Player Two provides cover while Player One continues moving up on the right.



Player Two moves to the right since he can't move up the left side and still follow the two second rule of moving between cover.



Player Two holds the right side as he moves Player One quickly moves across the gap.



With Player Two having the whole area covered Player One moves up to the building.



Player Two moves up to the building.



Player Two can now move across to the final bunker. The Fire-team has successfully moved up with no incidents. At any time there was someone able to fire at an approaching enemy.

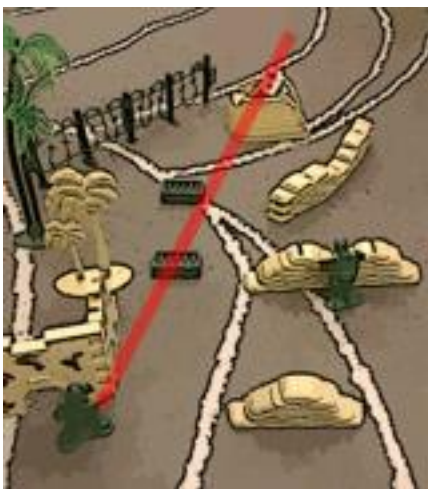
8. Fire and movement: Use this tactic when the enemy has been met. Player 1 stays behind cover and provides suppressing fire to keep the enemy from shooting. Player 2, moves preferably to the enemy's flank that gives the best advantage to negate the enemy's cover.



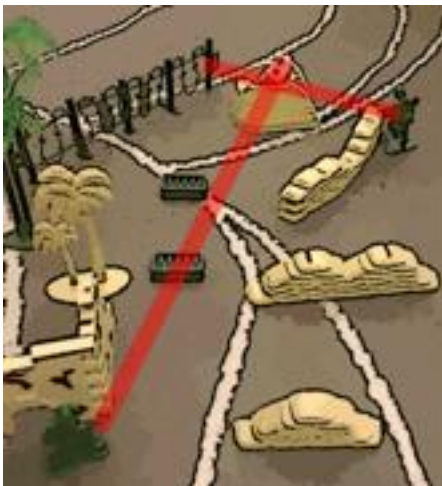
Fire-Team 1 is stuck behind a wall. A white player has got a strong position allowing him to cover all his angles.



Player One provides suppressing fire making the white player put his head down as Player Two runs across to the closest bunker.



Player One keeps shooting full auto to keep the enemies head down as Player Two continues moving up the line of bunkers.



Finally Player Two gets to the top of the last bunker and can now launch an assault on the White Player.

9. Two sided assault: Player 1 suppresses the enemy while Player 2 moves up to the next bit of cover directly ahead. Once set they take over suppression while Player 1 moves further up. Player 1 and 2 can then bring increased firepower to the front from two angles.



Fire-team 1 has come across a well defended white player behind a tree. With no flanking options they decide to assault the position together.

Player 1 lays down suppressing fire while Player 2 moves up.



Once player 2 is happily behind cover he takes over suppressing fire and player 1 moves up.



This repeats with one player providing suppressing fire while the other player moves.



As they move further up they have to lay down behind cover to provide less of a target for the white player.





With both players at the top they can now both assault the enemy from different angles.

10. The high low: When moving into a hallway or corridor, or any corner where you expect an enemy to be you can use the High Low. Have the point man drop down to a knee, the man behind grabs the back of his collar. The man behind indicates when he's ready to go by lightly pulling the collar. The point man steps out in a crouched lunge position with his gun up. The man behind stays tucked in tight behind him with his rifle in a firing position. This allows two guns into the room on the same side at the same time.



Fire-Team 1 has moved into an area with a corridor. Player 1 has dropped to their knees and peaks around to see an enemy at the other end.



Using the High Low, Player one steps out in a lunge position with Player two behind him. With two guns on target they can bring down more firepower.

11. Breaching: Breaching a room is one of the most difficult situations in airsoft. Below are two potential methods.

The individual tactic of slicing the pie can be used with the second player staying behind cover or standing behind the point man with their weapon on the shoulder to double the fire power.

Or they can use the 2 man stack. Player 1 is the point man his weapon should be up ready to engage any targets. Player 1 decides which direction he will take when he enters the room and tells Player 2 to rest the barrel of his weapon on the opposite shoulder (either by voice or by tapping the shoulder). This way two weapons go into the room at the same time and player 2 can easily take the other direction.

Communication for the breach can either be voice. Player 1 confirms player 2 is ready then enters. Or player one, taps player 2's leg. Player 2 confirms by tapping player 1's shoulder.

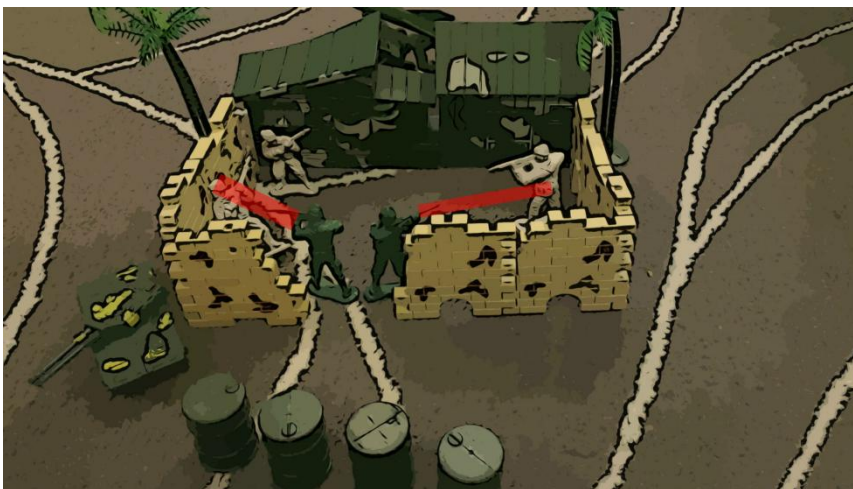


Player 1 is the point man his weapon is up and ready to fire as soon as he enters the room.

Player 2 is behind him with his weapon on Player 1's right shoulder. This means Player 2 will swing right when he enters the room.



The most dangerous point of the breach is the initial entry. Player One taps Player Two's leg telling him he's ready to enter. Player Two taps Player One's shoulder and they both enter the room as fast as they can. You can see they are already looking after their corners.



Player One goes left and takes out one enemy.

Player Two goes right and also gets a kill.



Player One moves to the next corner and scores another kill.

Player Two turns to face his next corner and confirms it's all clear.

12. Counter suppression: One of the first tactics a player learns naturally is to fire a lot of BB's at someone to try and hit them. Learning to counter this is hugely important.

Use your individual tactics of snap shooting to take control of the fight. If they are firing constant suppression try to get your barrel out and fire full-auto back.

If you have a sniper in your fire-team get him to fire on the enemy's position.

Lastly use your numbers. Let one player stay behind cover and be suppressed while the other falls back or moves to the side to find an area to launch their own suppression from.



Fire-Team One is in a bad position. The enemy has strong suppression on them forcing them to hide behind their limited cover.

You can see the field of fire for the enemy players in the picture.



In this scenario there isn't much the Fire-Team can do.

They've managed to get a player behind the trees allowing two angles of fire on the white player behind the bunker. While the sniper player tries to hit the player behind the wall.

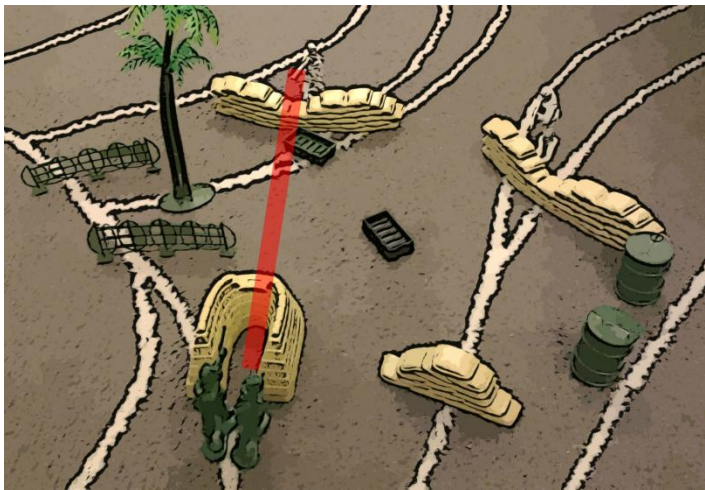
13. Counter flanking: After a player learns to use suppressing fire, he learns to attack an enemy's side. Being able to counter a flank will put a stop to the enemies plan.

If the enemy has you suppressed and they've also got an assault party flanking you try suppressing the assault party and stopping their advance.

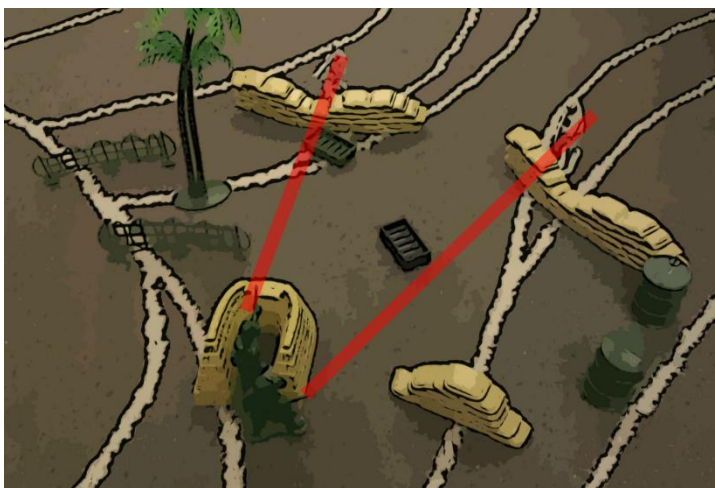
Use your numbers, one player stays to be suppressed while a counter-flanking team tries to out flank their team.

Take up the wedge formation with one position engaging the suppressing enemies and the other position engaging the assaulting enemies.

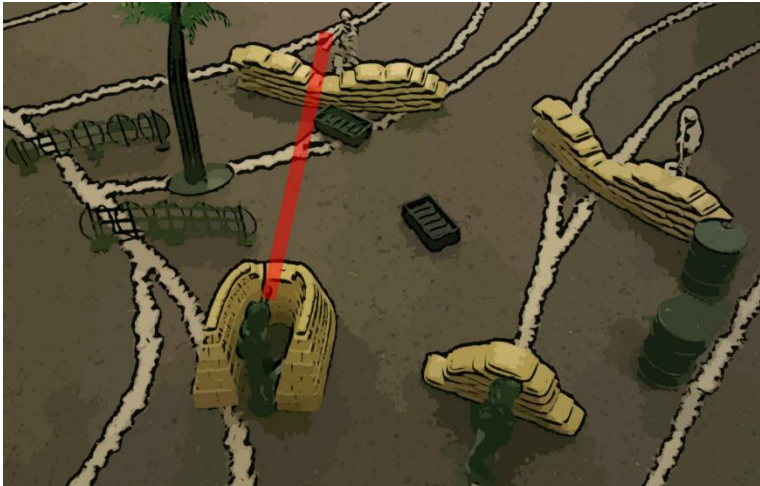
Lastly fall back to a stronger position.



Fire-Team One was holding this position when the white players found them. Now one white player is laying down suppressive fire while another begins to flank them.



Fire-Team One takes up the wedge formation and lays down their own suppressive fire on both the suppressor and the player assaulting.



With the assaulting white player still moving Player Two moves to the flank to stop his assault while Player One continues suppressing.



With both players in position they start attacking the white enemy.

From here it's up to individual skills to hit the enemy, but they're in a better position than they would have been if the white player had taken the flank and both green players were in the bunker.

14. Formations: A two man fire-team doesn't allow many formations. If your fire-team consists of four people look at the squad formations instead.

Two Man Line: Both players stand next to each other spaced apart enough a single enemy can't take both out quickly, but both can still engage if need be. It allows the most concentration of firepower to the front, the left and right flanks are protected. The rear is weak though.

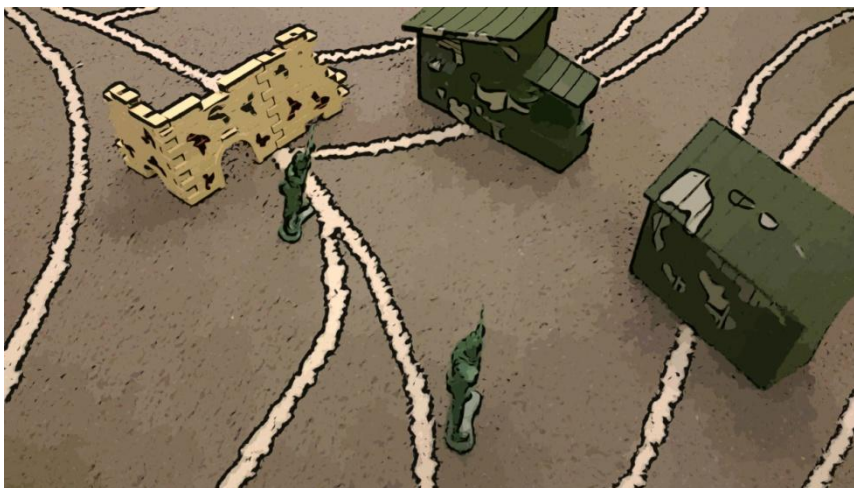


Two Man Column: One player in front of the other. Useful for walking through tight corridors or when stacking. Limited firepower to the front and rear, but strong on the sides. If the column is engaged from the front or rear possibly only one player can return fire. Can also make falling back a problem.



Two Man Wedge: One player in front the other walks to the left or right and slightly back. Allows fire to be directed to front and both sides equally, rear still weak.

When any of these formations are engaged a fire-team leader can assign one man to provide suppressing fire while the other assaults the enemy position. If there are more members in the fire-team they can be added to the above formations or make other formations listed in the squad formation list.



15. Formation movement: The fire-team members should be close enough together that if an enemy is engaged everybody can fight, but not so close a single enemy can kill everybody.

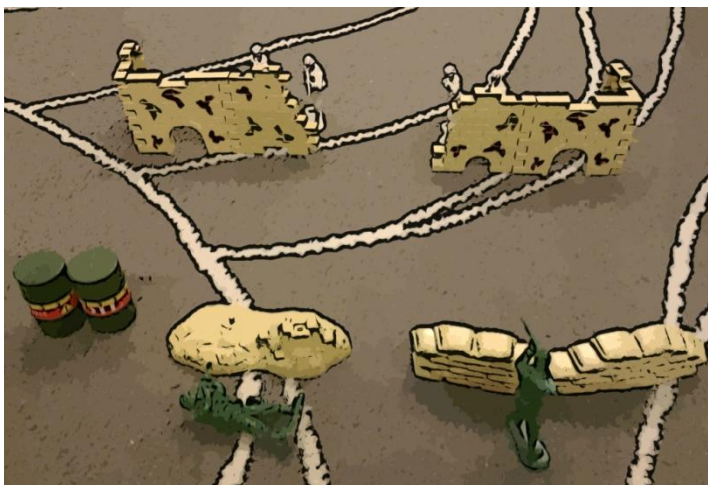
Two Man Line Formation Movement: Player 1 and 2 both shoot at the enemy. The fire-team leader decides which way he will move the line and gives the order to move.



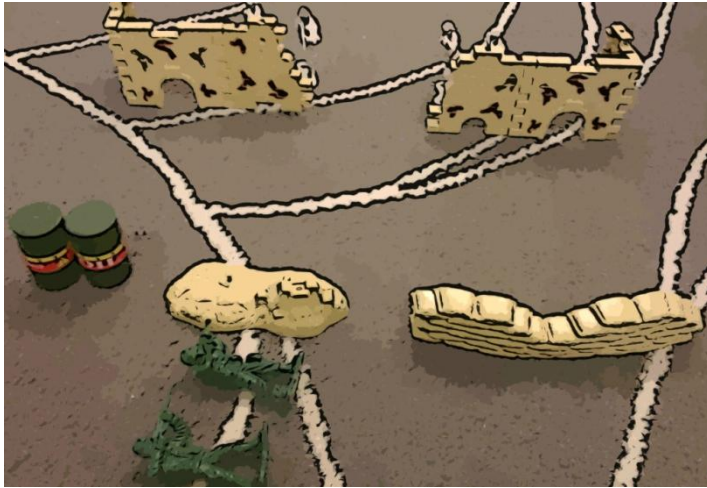
Fire-Team One is behind cover with a wall opposite. Behind are enemy players. Deciding they can't engage all these players they decide to move to the left and escape.



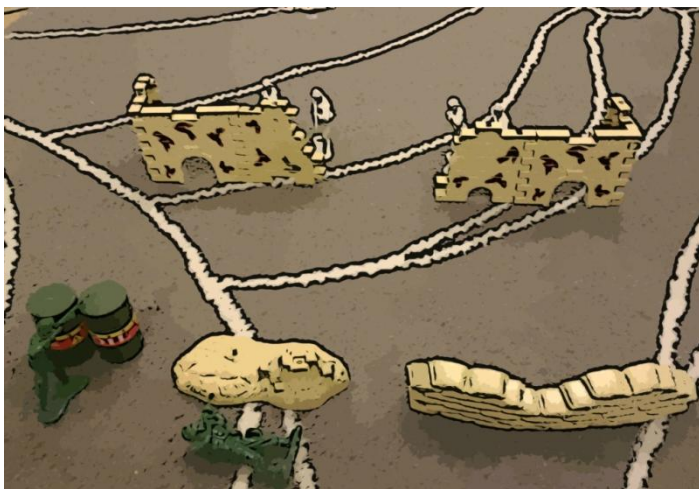
Player Two moves to the left first while Player One provides cover or suppressing fire whatever the situation dictates.



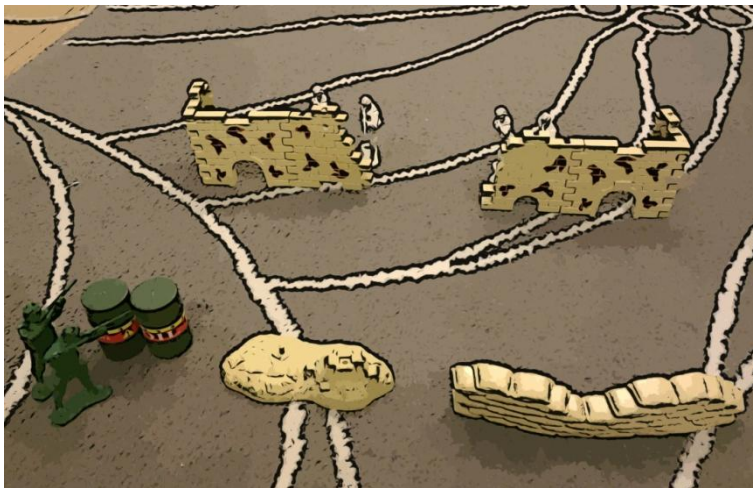
Once Player Two is safely behind cover he takes up the job of providing cover while Player One moves to the left of him.



Player One has to make sure he uses the same cover as Player Two and stays behind him when moving.



When Player One is safely on the other side he once again takes up the job of providing cover while Player Two once again begins moving.



With Player Two safely behind cover both can now escape and regroup with the rest of the squad.

Two Man Column Formation Movement: Player 1 and 2 both shoot forwards if they can. The fire-team leader decides which way (forwards, or backwards) he will move the line and gives the order to move.



Fire-Team One is moving through a tight corridor when they notice enemy players ahead of them. They decide to fall back. Player Two moves to make sure that Player One can move behind him while he provides cover or suppressing fire.



Player One quickly falls back behind Player Two.



Once Player One is behind Player Two and preferably behind some form of cover he signals for Player Two to begin moving back.

Two Man Wedge Formation Movement: With the wedge formation the fire-team leader can direct fire in any direction. The fire-team leader can then decide what of the above formations they want to take and what type of movement they should do.



Fire-Team one is moving forwards in a wedge formation when they come upon a single enemy player in front of them.



The Fire-Team Leader signals for Player Two to move up and form a line formation to bring down the most fire upon the enemy player.

16. Fall back plan: Have a fall back plan in case the enemy tries to flank you or increased firepower comes down on you. This should be conducted as a fire-team preferably with either fire and movement, or bound and overwatch conducted in reverse.

17. Fire-Team defence tactics for a taken objective: Either consolidate the position and take up defensive positions under the best cover available, or continue pushing forwards putting the objective behind as a fallback position.



Fire-Team One has been tasked with defending the flag. The FTL has put Player Two in a forward position where he can alert the fire-team to incoming enemies and engage them before they get to close the flag.

The FTL has set himself up at the last fallback point behind the best cover he could find.



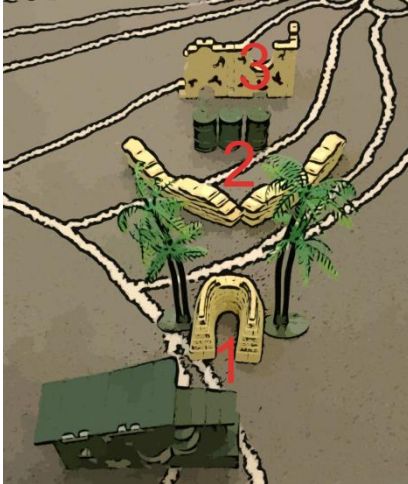
As more enemies start to come on top of the position Player Two falls back to the next bit of cover and keeps the fight up. He alerts the FTL so he can prepare himself in case Player Two falls back again.



With Player Two having fallen back to the final defensive position the Fire-Team now has to use their better understanding of the area and their preparation to defeat the enemy.

18. Team awareness: At all times everybody in the fire-team should know where everybody else in the fire-team is, what they are doing and why.

19. Way points: Possibly a good idea is to mark out points in the area as way points. Example, fall back points, forward attack points. Or if splitting up to take two sides of the area a point to join together again. Way points can also help when communicating as they can be used as points of references since everybody in the squad should know them.



1: Fallback Point for the Fire-Team. If the FT comes under attack this is the point to fallback to and launch their counter attack.

2: Meet Up Point. When the FT splits up to go left and right around the bunkers they should form back up behind the barrels before moving forwards.

3: Forward Attack Point: This is where the FT will launch their attack from.

20. Play carefully and not without too much haste: It was mentioned before to be aggressive and keep pushing forwards. Once you're fire-team is always confident to move forward. Start to make good decisions about when you should move forward and when you should wait. Just like the individual tactics, don't shoot if you can't hit the enemy or you'll get locked in a stalemate with few flanking options. Make sure even when you are pushing forwards you are still using cover, clearing areas and keeping your eyes open for new targets.

Most Importantly: In a fire-team there is no player for them self. Kill to death ratios are not important on a fire-team. The only ratio that counts is your team score to their team score. The player providing suppressing fire may not get any kills, while the attacker gets all the kills. It doesn't make either player more valuable. They both need each other. We win together or lose individually.

FIRE-TEAM & SQUAD COMMUNICATION


It's been mentioned in both Individual Tactics and Fire-Team tactics that communication is one of the most important if not most important tactics a player can use. When a newbie starts playing the goal is just to get the player talking. After they've conducted the individual training and fire-team training we can now train them to make their communication more effective.



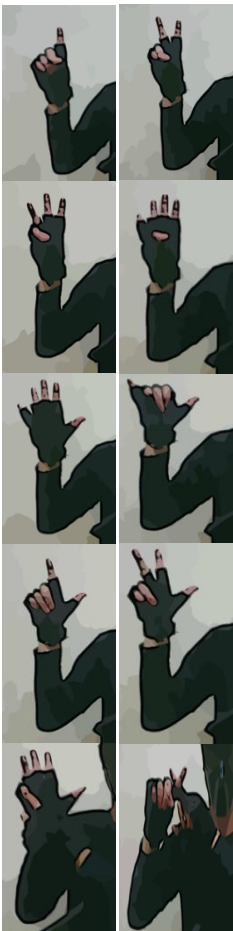
When a fire-team or squad is not engaged with an enemy more complicated tactics can be planned out. During a fire fight however communication should follow the simple rule of being brief but being clear. Say as few words as possible, while still making sure everybody can understand.




Telling people where to look, providing directions or explaining where things are can be difficult. I recommend that if the player is near you to use clock directions where by 12 is directly in front of you and 6 directly behind you.




To help with explaining where things are in a large area, before the game designate looking forward from your spawn point as north. This way you can use compass points and way points to explain. North of the spawn. East of the Spawn. Work better then right or left as these two directions change depending how we are looking at the spawn point.




The following list has been given in an order of easy to understand and learn signals to harder. The examples are also only given from signals so far learned, so please excuse some examples as they aren't the best use, but do show a potential possibility.




Voice Signal	Hand Signal	Definition & Example
There/You/I/We 	Use index and middle finger to point in the direction or at the person/team.	To help with designating who the hand signals are for and co-ordinating tactics. <i>Player One asks who is going to sneak attack the enemy?</i> <i>Player Two points at himself (I).</i> <i>Player One asks where is the enemy?</i> <i>Player Two points at a tree (There).</i>




Look / See 	Two fingers pointing to the eye	To help with giving information about what you've seen. <i>Player One points at his eyes and then at a bunker. (Look, There).</i>
Hear 	Cup ear with hand.	To help with giving information about what you've heard. <i>Player One points at himself, cups his ear with his hand and then points at Player Two. (I, Hear, You). Not a good example of when to use hear, better to use to express when you hear enemies close by.</i>
Numbers 	Use the following signals for numbers 1 to 10.	To help with giving numbers. <i>Player One holds up three fingers, points at a bunker. (Three, There).</i>




Okay 	Index finger and thumb touching to make an 'O'.	Used when you are okay or understand. For example have moved forwards and are now behind cover; letting your team mate know they can now move. Or, that you understand the order just given.
Move / Moving 	Knife hand in the direction you are moving or want the player to move towards.	Used to tell your team mates you are moving from cover and in what direction or to order team mates to move from cover and in what direction they should go. The difference between a Move and Attack order is that Attack you are expecting to meet an enemy. Move you aren't. Or you are moving to a better area to launch an attack. If an enemy does engage you during your move you will fire back. <i>Player One taps Player Two on shoulder and knife hands to the right, then points at himself and knife hands to the left. (You, Move that direction. I, Move this direction).</i> <i>Player Two, makes an O with his finger and thumb. (Okay)</i>
Attack / Attacking 	Closed fist in the direction you will attack.	Used to tell your team mates you are attacking the enemy and from what direction or to order you team mates to attack and from what direction. <i>Player One looks at Player Two and points at him then with a closed fist points to the left. He then points at himself and closed fist points straight. (You attack from the left. I'll attack to the front).</i>
Reloading	N/A	Used to tell your team mates you are reloading.



Contact (clock-direction)	N/A	<p>Used to tell your team mates that the enemy has started firing at you and from what direction.</p> <p>There is no hand signal for this as if the enemy is shooting at you there is no point in remaining quiet and should yell this to let your team mates know there is incoming fire.</p>
Get Down / Crouch 	Flattened palm, pushed down to the ground.	<p>Used to tell your team mates to get down.</p> <p><i>Player One and Two are doing a stealth mission around the enemy. Player One hears something. He pushes his palm to the ground. Points at himself and then cups his ear and points in front of them. (Get Down, I, Hear, There).</i></p>
Get Up 	Flattened palm, pushed up to the sky.	<p>Used to tell your team mates to get up.</p> <p><i>After waiting for a minute there is no more noise. Player One pushes his palm up to the sky. (Get Up).</i></p>
Stop 	Arm at 90 degrees up, closed fist.	<p>Used to tell your team mates to stop moving and find cover.</p> <p><i>Fire-Team One is moving through an area with a lot of cover when the FTL hears something move. He puts his arm up at 90 degrees, and then pushes his palm down. (Stop, Crouch).</i></p>





Cover me 	Flat hand on head.	<p>Ask your team mates to watch you as you move forwards, but not fire unless an enemy appears. (Be overwatch)</p> <p><i>FTL points at Player One and puts his hand flat on his head. He then points at player Two and knife hands to the left.</i></p> <p><i>(Player One provide Cover, Player Two Move left).</i></p>
Provide Suppressing Fire 	Fist on head.	<p>Used to tell your team mate to fire at the enemy with the aim of making them put their head behind cover.</p> <p><i>The enemy starts firing at Player Two. FTL points at Player Two and put his fist on his head. He points at Player One and with his Fist points to the right.</i></p> <p><i>(Player Two provide Suppressing fire. Player One Attack from the right).</i></p>
Slice the pie / Slicing the pie	N/A	<p>Players should do this naturally already, but this can be used if you want to tell your team mates you are about to or want them to.</p> <p><i>Player One and Two come to a wall with a door. Player One tells Player Two he will Slice the Room.</i></p>
High – Low 	Left hand above right hand.	<p>Used to tell team mates you want to conduct the high - low tactic.</p> <p><i>Player One is engaged when he tries slicing the room. He moves back to Player Two and puts his left hand above his right hand.</i></p> <p><i>(High-Low).</i></p>

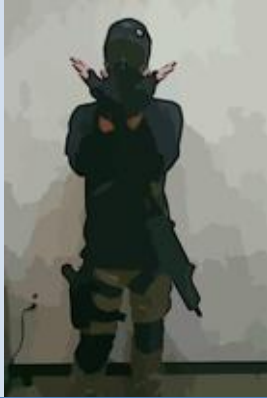
Push / Pushing 	<p>Arm at 90 degrees up, palm flat, wave your palm forwards.</p>	<p>Used to tell your team mates you are pushing forwards into the enemies area or want them to move forwards of you.</p> <p><i>FTL is behind cover with his rifle up there is no enemy movement. He puts his arm up at 90 degrees and waves his palm forward. (Push Up).</i></p>
On me 	<p>Use index and middle finger to draw a circle above your head.</p>	<p>Used to get your team mates to come to you.</p> <p><i>FTL gets some new orders he puts his two fingers up in the area and draws a circle around his head. (On me).</i></p>
Form a stack (there) 	<p>Left fist in front of right fist (use the there hand signal to stipulate where).</p>	<p>Used to get your team to form a stack on a designated wall.</p> <p>Afterwards, follow the communication under the stacking tactic.</p> <p><i>FTL hears a high cap shake inside a room. He puts his left fist in front of his right fist and points at the wall. (Stack, There).</i></p>

Wait _ seconds 	<p>Put 1 to 4 fingers on your wrist where you would put a watch. 1 = 5 seconds, 2 = 10 seconds, 3 = 15 seconds, 4 = 20 seconds.</p>	<p>Used to get your team mates to wait a set amount of time before doing another action. <i>FTL points at Player One, puts one finger on his wrist, then puts his fist on to his head. He points at Player Two, knife hands to the left, puts two fingers on his wrist, then turns the knife hand into a fist.</i> <i>(Player One, Wait 5 seconds, Suppressing Fire. Player Two, Move left, Wait 10 seconds, Attack).</i></p>
Sitrep	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Short for Situation report. Ask your team mate for what he knows. Where is the team? Where is the enemy? Where is cover? What is happening? These can be broken down. <i>FTL runs up behind cover where Player One is, asks for a Sit Rep.</i></p>
Enemy 	<p>Thumb down (use there hand signal to show where).</p>	<p>Used to tell your team mates you've seen the enemy and where they are. <i>Player One points at his eyes, thumb down, holds up two fingers, and points at two places.</i> <i>(See, Enemy, Two, There, There).</i></p>
Team-Mate 	<p>Thumb up (use there hand signal to show where).</p>	<p>Used to tell your team mates there are other Team Mates and where they are. <i>Player One puts his thumb up, holds up three fingers, and points to the north-west.</i> <i>(Team-Mate, Three, There).</i></p>

Cover 	Thumb to the side (use there hand signal to show where).	Used to tell your team mates there is cover and where it is. <i>Player One puts his thumb to the side and points in front. (Cover, There).</i>
Don't know 	Two hands palm up with shoulder shrug (normal don't know action).	Used when you don't know what was just said to you or don't know where anything is. <i>Player One makes a bunch of hand gestures at Player Two. Player One makes the Okay gesture. Player Two puts two hands palm up and shrugs his shoulder. (Okay? I don't know).</i>
Take cover	N/A	Used to tell your team mates to take cover as fire is incoming. No hand signal as if you're being shot at you no longer need to remain quiet.
Hold fire 	Use arms to form an X	Used to tell your team mates not to shoot and to maintain stealth. <i>Fire-Team 1 is moving silently forwards when they see an enemy patrol in the distance. FTL forms an X with his two arms. (Hold Fire).</i>
Cease fire	N/A	Used to tell your team mates to stop shooting because all the enemy are dead.

Frag out 	<p>Motion pulling the pin on a grenade (you there hand signal to indicate where you want team mate to throw)</p>	<p>Used to warn team-mates you're throwing a grenade or tell them to throw a grenade.</p> <p><i>FTL points at Player One, puts two fingers on his wrist, then motions pulling a pin and points at a doorway. FTL points at Player Two, knife hand points to the right, puts two fingers on his wrist, then puts his fist on his head.</i></p> <p><i>FTL points at Player Three and Four, puts his left fist in front of his right fist and points at the wall next to the door, puts two fingers on his wrist, then makes a fist.</i></p> <p><i>(Player One, wait ten seconds, throw a grenade into the door. Player Two, move to the right, wait ten seconds then provide suppressing fire. Player Three and Four, form a stack on the wall, wait ten seconds then breach).</i></p>
Grenade	N/A	<p>Used to warn team-mates about an incoming grenade or a fumbled grenade.</p>
Fall Back / Fall Back To (way point) 	<p>Thumb up waving your arm backwards.</p>	<p>Used to tell your team mates to fall back. Can add a way point to fall back to.</p> <p><i>Fire-Team 1 is quietly moving towards the enemy. The FTL hears something move. He puts his arm up at 90 degrees with his fist closed. He pushes his palm down. The enemy starts to appear in the distance. The FTL makes an X with his arm. He then puts his thumb up and waves his arm backwards. (Stop, Crouch, Hold Fire, Fall Back).</i></p>
(Point) is (designation) waypoint	N/A	<p>Used to designate areas as way points for your team.</p> <p><i>FTL, "green house is our fall back point".</i></p>

Form Line Formation 	Arms straight out to the side.	Used to tell your team mates to form the line formation.
Form Column Formation 	Arms straight out front to back.	Used to tell your team mates to form the column formation.
Form Wedge Formation 	Make a triangle with your fingertips touching and arms diagonally out.	Used to tell your team mates to form the wedge formation.
Form Diamond Formation 	Make a diamond with your thumbs and index fingers.	Used to tell your team mates to form the diamond formation.

Form Vee Formation 	Make a large V with your wrists touching and fingers going diagonally out.	Used to tell your team mates to form the vee formation.
(Player) is (formation/squad position)	N/A	Used to tell who is what in the squad. This would be too difficult to do in hand signals. Just use there hand signal to organise the squad. <i>FTL, "Player Two is Point, Player Three is security. Myself and Player Two are on the flanks".</i>
(Formation) move (direction)	N/A	Used to tell the formation to move in a certain direction. This would be too difficult to do in hand signals. <i>FTL, "Line formation, move left".</i>

From these examples you can see how the hand signals can be used to give detailed and complex tactical instructions. Remember that if there is incoming fire the time to be quiet is over and instructions should be yelled. Make them simple and clear.

SQUAD TACTICS

A squad consists of two fire-teams (four to eight players), working towards the same objective with one of the two fire-team leaders taking on the role of squad leader unless there is an extra player that can take on the role of squad leader and co-ordinate the fire teams from a good vantage point.

Unlike the individual skills these aren't ordered in order of importance, but rather in order that the next tactic builds upon the ones before it some may be like the fire-team tactics.

1. Trust your squad mates: A squad is built on trust. You need to trust that everybody in the squad is paying attention when the plan is explained. That they are going to follow the plan. They are looking after their field of fire. Providing effective cover (overwatch). If there isn't trust the squad won't work.

2. Squad communication: Just like in fire-team tactics the first thing that a squad should be working on constantly is their communication. Preferably there shouldn't be too many people talking at this level. While in a Fire-Team the two to four people can communicate quickly and easily with up to eight people not everybody can talk. Fire-team leaders and the Squad leader should be doing most of the talking to co-ordinate the attack plan. The fire-team leaders will then communicate this to their fire-team members.

3. Maintain momentum, diversion, aggressiveness, team work and surprise: Same as the fire-team. Keep moving forwards. A whole squad getting pinned down is 10x worse than a single individual getting pinned. With more resources in man power allows more diversion and tactical options. Maintain aggressiveness and surprise and most importantly keep the team work strong.

4. Types of Fire-Teams: Fire-teams like players can have a specific role. This is especially likely if the fire-team is part of a squad. Examples are assault, suppressing, recon, commando and sniper.

Assault: The fire-team that assaults the enemy position either from the flanks or by direct assault.

Suppressing: The fire-team that provides suppressing fire so that the assault fire-team can move.

Recon: Like the scout player. Goes ahead of the squad or other fire-teams to gather information. Far enough that if they're engaged the rest of the squad isn't pinned down.

Commando: A small fire-team that stealthily moves to complete an objective. They don't want to get into fire fights, but rather stay unnoticed.

Sniper: A two man fire-team with one man the sniper and the other his support.

5. Squad leader: In a fire-team the leader is picked by who is the best candidate to be the leader, based on who knows the most and can put together the strongest plan. At the beginning of the game its preferable if a person is designated a squad leader to begin with. As the game goes on and people get tagged out, the squad leader should move to the fire-team leader who has the most information and is the most capable.

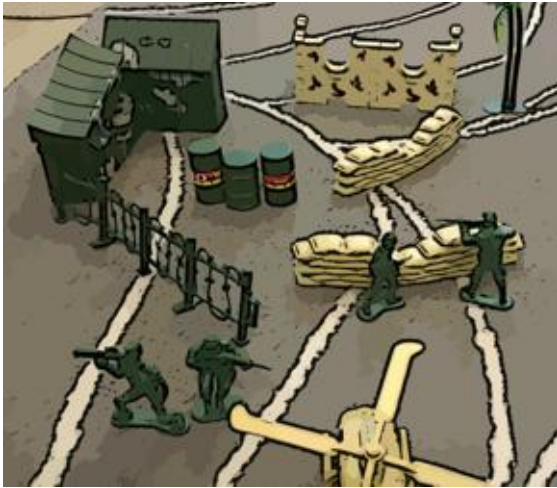
In a 4 person squad, one person will be a fire-team leader and a squad leader. It's best if you can have an extra person in a squad to be just the squad leader.

6. Team mission: The mission is more important than the body count. Too many people are obsessed with shooting people and don't bother to learn or pursue the objective. Sometimes it really is better to avoid shooting at the enemy and letting them by you then to open fire and get into a big firefight which will keep you from your real objective.

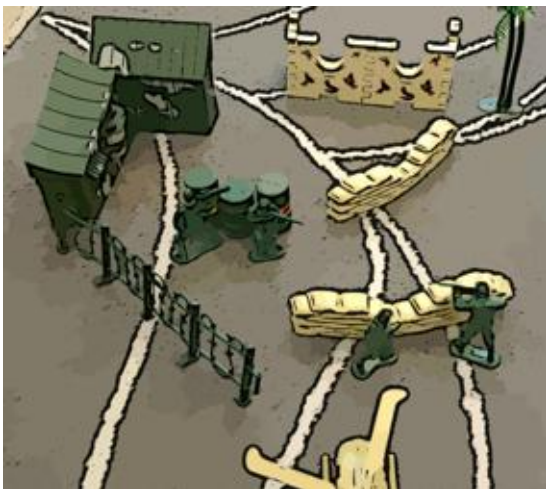
7. Bound and overwatch: Use this tactic for when the enemy hasn't been met. Fire-Team 1 stays behind cover with their weapons up and aimed at where the enemy may come from providing cover (overwatch). Fire-team 2 moves forwards of Fire-Team 1's position(bound), once they're behind cover they provide cover while Fire-Team 1 moves forwards of them and the process repeats.



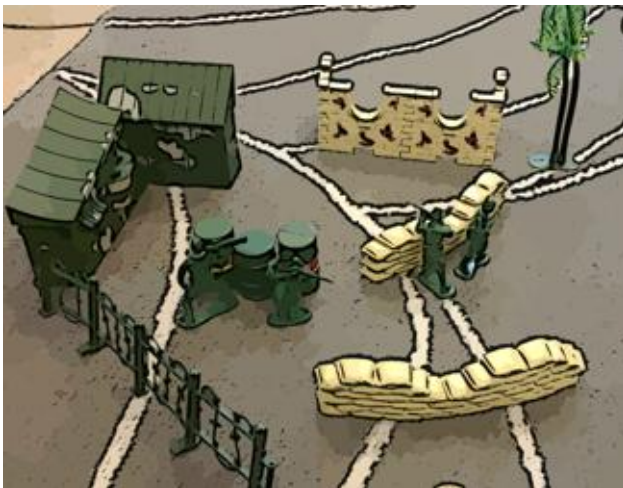
Alpha Squad have come across this helicopter and need to secure the area. They are unsure if the buildings in front are filled with enemy players.



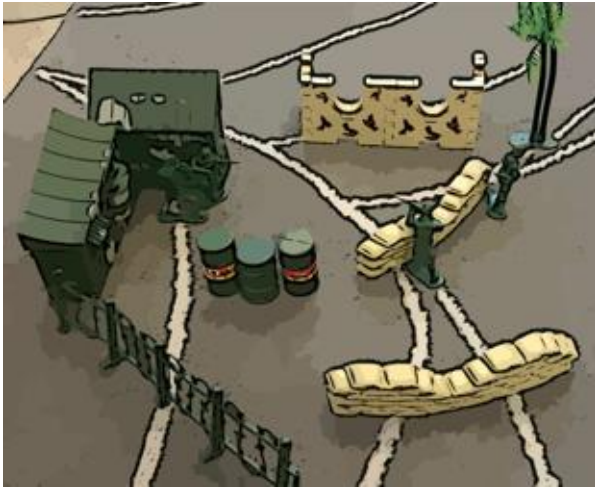
Breaking up into two fire-teams. FT1 provides cover as FT2 begins moving forwards.



Now that FT2 is safely behind the barrels. They provide cover as FT1 begins their move forwards.



FT1 makes it to the sandbags. This angle allows them a greater visibility range so the Squad Leader decides that FT2 needs to secure behind the building.



FT2 under the protection of FT1 moves to the building and stacks up against the wall ready to slice the pie of the corner.



FT2 slices the pie and confirms that the rear of the building is safe. FT1 moves up the right flank and does the same to behind the wall. The area is now secure.

8. Fire and movement: Use this tactic for when the enemy has been met. Fire-team 1 stays behind cover and provides suppressing fire to keep the enemy from shooting. Fire-team 2, moves preferably to the enemy's flank that gives the best advantage to negate the enemy's cover.



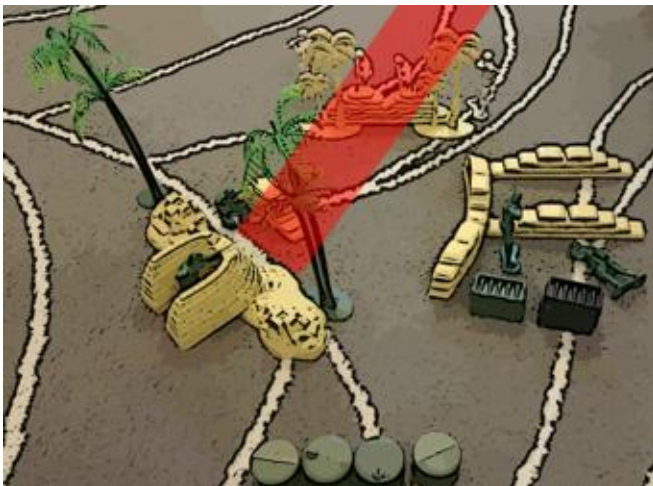
Alpha Squad is exchanging sporadic fire with the enemy. At this rate neither will win. The Squad leader decides the squad will use Fire and Movement to kill the enemy.



The Squad Leader sends Fire-Team 1 to the left flank to lay down continuous suppressing fire.

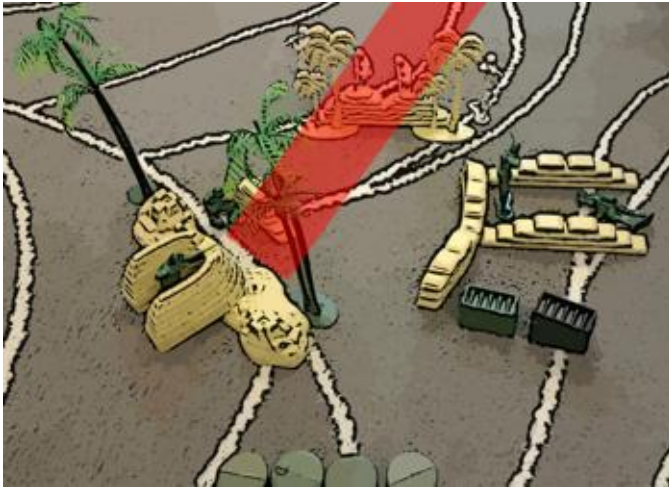


Once FT1 is able to control the enemy FT2 begins moving slowly and carefully up the right flank.



As FT2 moves up the side one player sticks close to the side while the other player lays down.

FT2's job is just to move as carefully behind cover as they can. They need to trust that FT1 will provide the suppressing fire to stop the enemy from shooting accurately at them.



With FT2 close to the end they can start to do some shooting of their own to keep the enemy's head behind cover.



With FT2 finally at the top they can assault the position.

FT1's Fire Team Leader moves the FT slightly further up the cover to give a stronger angle of attack.

9. Two sided assault: Fire-team 1 suppresses the enemy while fire-team 2 moves up to the next bit of cover directly ahead. Once set they take over suppression while fire-team 1 moves further up. Fire-team 1 and 2 can then bring increased firepower to the front from two angles.



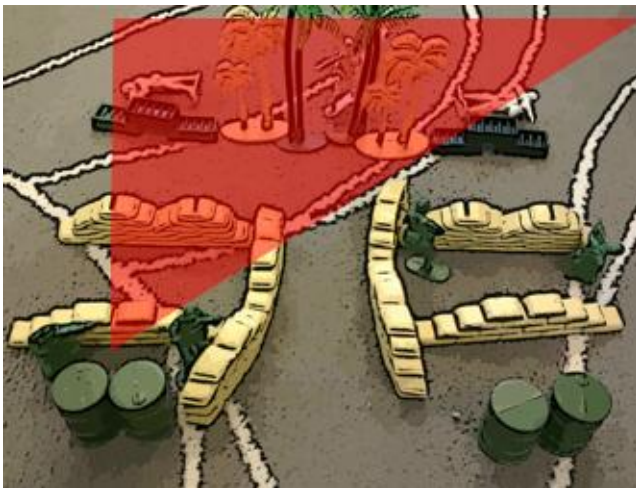
Alpha Squad has been split into two Fire Teams. The Squad leader decides that the best course of action in this area is a two sided or double assault.



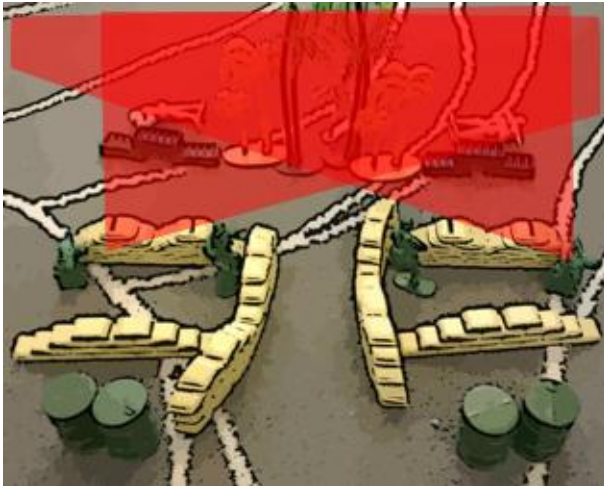
FT1 lays down suppressive fire while FT2 moves up to the next bit of cover.



Next, FT2 lays down suppressive fire as FT1 makes there move forwards.



This pattern continues with one FT laying suppressing fire while the other moves till they both can get close to the enemy.



Once both are within range they can bring down increased firepower from a large range of angles.

10. Form a stack off the wall: A stack can consist of up to four men. The first man is the point man, his weapon should be up and ready to engage any targets when he enters the room. Once the point man has decided which direction he will take when he enters the room he tells the 2nd man so he can rest his weapon on the opposite shoulder. This way two guns go into the room at the same time and both players can go the direction they need to. The 3rd man enters the room and goes the same way as the point man. The 4th man, also known as rear security has two jobs. First he keeps an eye on the rear to make sure nobody attacks from behind while the players prepare the stack. Next he enters the room and goes the same direction as the 2nd man. Lastly, he is most likely the player to stay close to the door and keep security to ensure no enemy come from the rear.

Communication for the stack is important. It can be either verbal or with shoulder taps. First the point man decides which direction he is going and either tells the 2nd man verbally or by tapping the shoulder where he should put his gun. The 2nd man, taps the 3rd mans leg when he's ready. The 3rd man, taps rear security's leg when he is ready. Security after ensuring his is ready and that the rear is clear. Turns around and taps 3rd man on the shoulder. 3rd man taps 2nd man on the shoulder. 2nd man taps the point man on the shoulder. When the point man feels the tap he enters the room.

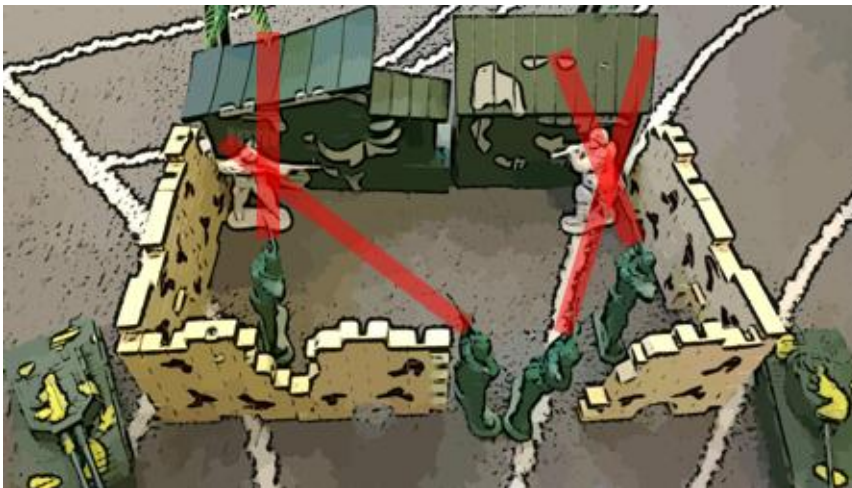
Remember breaching a room is one of the hardest activities in CQB. The defenders have a huge advantage. Attackers should try to maintain the advantage of surprise if they can. Use violence of action and speed to get the room cleared.



Alpha squad has stacked up against the wall ready to breach this building. The last player is keeping an eye on the rear.



The first two players enter at the same time turning to engage different corners.



The next soldiers may file in one at a time or almost together. They engage the back corners directly.



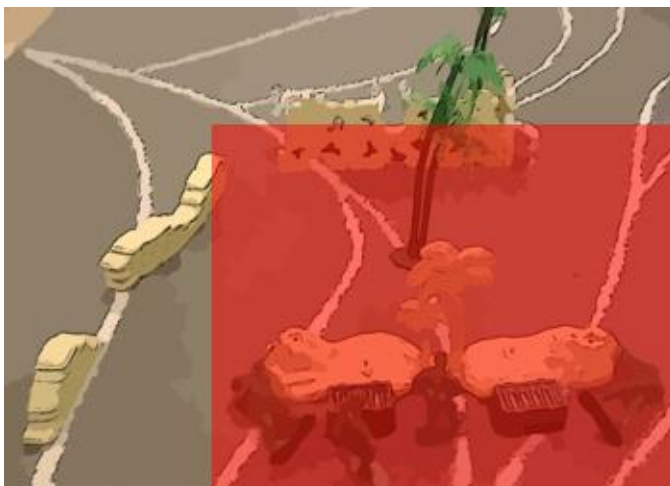
With the room clear the squad places one player at the door to stand guard.

11. Counter suppressing: Use your individual tactics of snap shooting to take control of the fight. If they are firing contact suppression try to use different sides of cover to start your counter suppression otherwise try to get your barrel out and fire full-auto back aiming at them as best as you can.

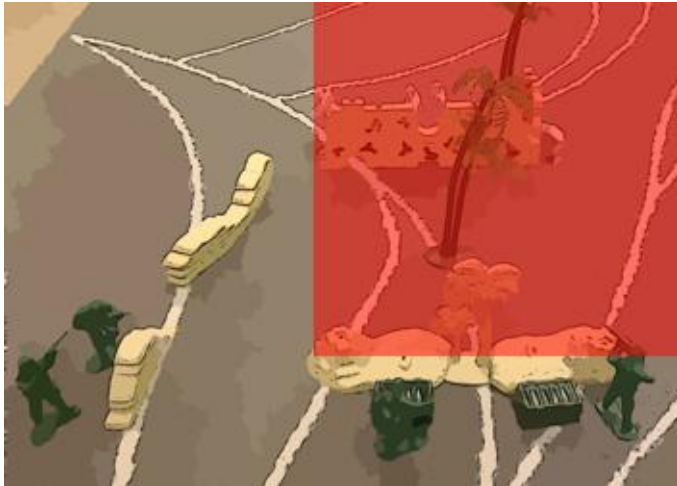
If you have a sniper in your squad get him to fire on the enemy's position.

Use your numbers. Let one player stay behind cover and be suppressed while the others fall back, try to flank the enemy and assault his position or move to the side and fire their own suppression.

If they're moving up form an ambush with your squad.



The white squad is behind good cover and suppressing the green squad who has poor cover.



Splitting into two F.T's, FT1 fires their own suppressing fire and snap shooting to allow FT2 to get to the left flank.



FT2 moves up the bunkers to shoot at the white players from the side. FT1 continues shooting from the front.

12. Counter flanking: If the enemy has you suppressed and they've also got an assault party flanking you try suppressing the assault party and stopping their advance.

Have one fire-team stay and be suppressed while the other fire-team counter flanks the enemies flanking team.

Take up the wedge formation or diamond formation with the points trying to engage the suppressing enemies and the other two points engaging the assaulting enemies.

Lastly fall back to a stronger position.



Alpha Squad has been suppressed by two F.T's. And it looks like the F.T on the left is planning to move up the barrels to get a stronger angle on the squad.



Using snap shooting and high-low to get two guns out the squad suppresses the enemy long enough to get one player to the other side.



The squad has separated into two fire-teams. Each shooting diagonally across to get a strong angle. They have been able to stop the flanking F.T and keep the suppressing F.T stuck behind the building.



As the enemy players keep moving forwards and bringing more fire power on the squad. The squad falls back to a stronger defensive position.

13. Formations: As a squad should consist of at least four people it allows a lot more formations than a fire-team.

Line: The squad stands next to each other spaced enough a part a single enemy can't take both out everybody quickly, but the whole squad can still engage if need be. Allows the most concentration of firepower to the front and the left and right flanks are protected. The rear is weak though.



Column: One player in front of the other. Useful for walking through tight corridors or when stacking. Limited firepower to the front and rear, but strong on the sides. If the column is engaged from the front or rear possibly only one player can return fire. Can also make falling back a problem.



Staggered Column: Same as the column above, but instead of one single column. The second man is back and slightly to the left or right forming a second column.



Diamond: A strong formation with all sides covered. A point man in front. Two men behind him to each side looking after each flank. And one man behind them pulling up rear security. Each man should know his field of fire.



Wedge: A big V with the apex going towards the enemy. Strong concentration of fire on the front and the two flanks are protected. The squad leader can move the extra man from side to side to increase fire-power where needed.



Vee: A big V with the apex at the lowest point. In this formation it's best if the squad leader is in the middle to give commands. The two other flanks can work together for bound and overwatch, and fire and movement.



14. Formation movement:

Line Formation Movement: Player 1, 2, 3 and 4 all shoot at the enemy. The squad leader decides which way he will move the line and gives the order to move.



Players 1, 2 and 3 are all behind cover while 4 is in the open. The Squad leader decides to move the squad to the left.



Player 4 moves behind each player as they provide cover or suppressing fire whatever the case may be.



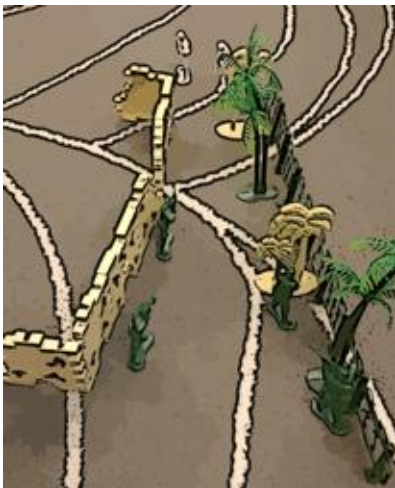
The player makes sure to stay behind both the other players and their cover for maximum security.



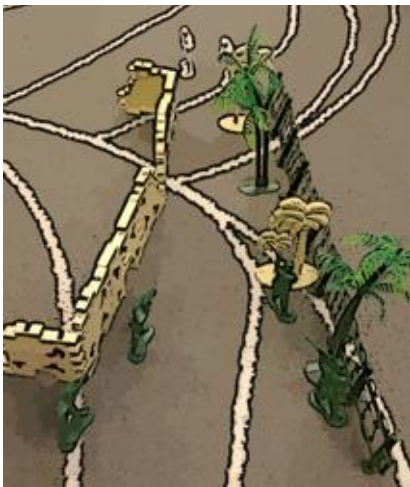


Finally Player 4 is now safely behind cover. If the SL wants it Player 3 can now begin his move to the left.

Column Formation Movement: As many players as possible shoot at the enemy. The squad leader decides which way (forwards or backwards) he will move the column and gives the order to move.



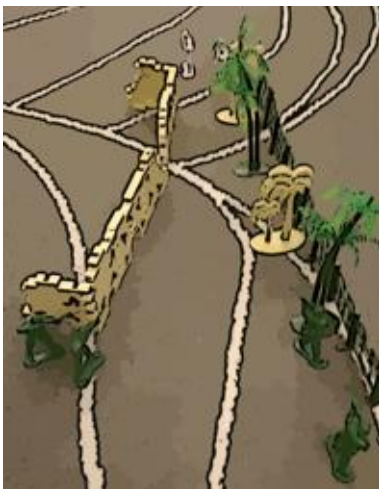
Using a staggered column this squad has better movement than a traditional column.



When they hit the enemy the front player moves back behind the wall while all the other players either provide cover or suppressing fire.



The next player at the front takes his turn to move to the rear.



Now the whole squad is safely behind cover and out of the fatal funnel.

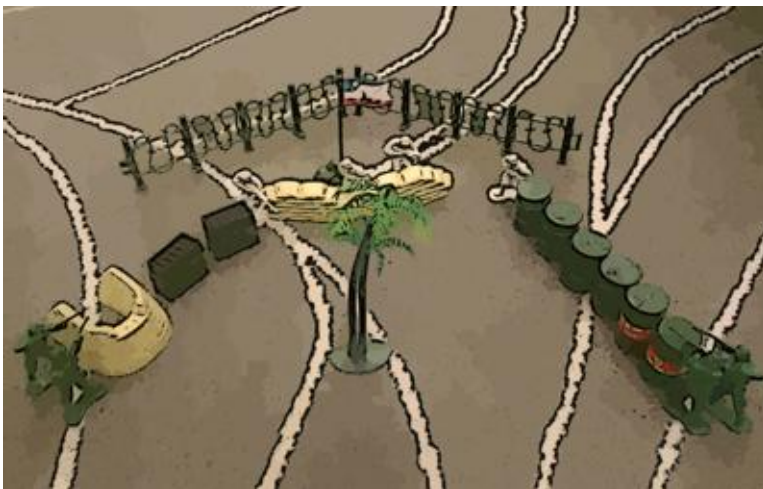
Wedge Formation Movement: The wedge formation is a versatile formation that allows a squad leader to quickly move the squad into different formations and maximise fire onto the enemy.



From here if the squad is attacked the squad leader can move 4 to the side needed for maximum fire power. Or can have 1 &2, form a fire-team to either suppress or attack while 3&4 either suppress or attack. The squad can also be quickly formed into a line formation or a column formation.



As the enemy suppressing fire comes down on the squad they drop down to the ground.



They can then quickly form up into two FT's.

Diamond Formation Movement: This formation doesn't allow as quick movement into other formations as the Wedge formation, but does allow a strong squad to have all the angles covered.



With training a squad can quickly move from the diamond formation into a line or column formation. The quickest movement is to the wedge formation. Fire-teams can also be quickly made and given orders.



In this example the right FT has formed a line formation to engage the white player on the right. While the left FT has formed a column formation to move up the building and engage the white player on the left.

Vee Formation Movement: The reverse of the wedge formation. Easier to fall back and make a new formation then move forwards. Good for ambushes. The point man should make contact first and then the squad can use a pincer movement to flank the enemy.



Number 4 could be a sniper and provide communication to the two flanks.



Here the two players to the right have moved to the right flank while the player to the left had moved to the left flank. The player in the middle has stayed behind the barrels so he can co-ordinate the two FTs.

15. Have a fall back plan: Have a fall back plan in case the enemy tries to flank you or increased firepower comes down on you. This should be conducted as a squad, preferably with either fire and movement or bound and overwatch, squad tactics conducted in reverse.

16. Squad defence tactics: Either consolidate the position and take up defensive positions under the best cover available, or continue pushing forwards putting the objective behind as a fallback position. When the attack begins concentrate fire at the point of most likely attack to stop the push. Keep the squad flexible enough that you can move players around to the best position for defence.

If you have enough men you can both consolidate the position and use patrols to take the fight to the enemy instead of them taking the fight to you. Once your patrol gets under too much fire they can fall back to the defending point. Have a recon patrol to send information back to the defenders.

Use the terrain and cover to your advantage. You should have adequate time to prepare the area. Try to have each players position be able to cover the other players. Make sure one player is responsible for rear security so that if the defence fails you have a retreat plan.

Try to keep the element of surprise so the enemy doesn't know where all your squad's players will be and how many.

Have a forward way-point that when the enemy crosses the squad can open fire. As the enemy gets closer the rate of fire should increase.

Have fall back positions in case you start to get over run.

Keep noise to a minimum to retain the element of surprise.



In this example our squad has done a good job of setting up to defend the area.

At the rear they have two soldiers semi-hiding to maintain some stealth. These soldiers can also move to the side that needs the most reinforcing.

In the middle they have two soldiers behind strong cover.

And at the front they have a two man patrol moving between the barrels.



As the white players appear the men behind the barrels and the men behind the bunkers can open fire.

The patrols mission is to be the scout and let the squad know where the enemy is and how many.



With the white players moving up and taking cover the scouts fall back to behind cover. Here the two FT's can all have their own firing angle to look after and make sure that they are overlapping to keep a strong concentration of fire on the enemy.



As the enemy keeps pushing two players fall back to the strongest defensive positions and the hidden players appear to reinforce these positions.

Two players stay at the bunkers to slow the enemy down as the squad gets organised.

17. Way points: Possibly a good idea is to make points in the area as way points. Example, fall back points. Forward attacks points. Or if splitting up to take two sides of the area a point to join together again. Way points can also help when communicating as they can be used as points of references since everybody in the squad should know them.



1: Fallback Point for the Squad. If the squad comes under attack this is the point to fallback to and launch their counter attack.

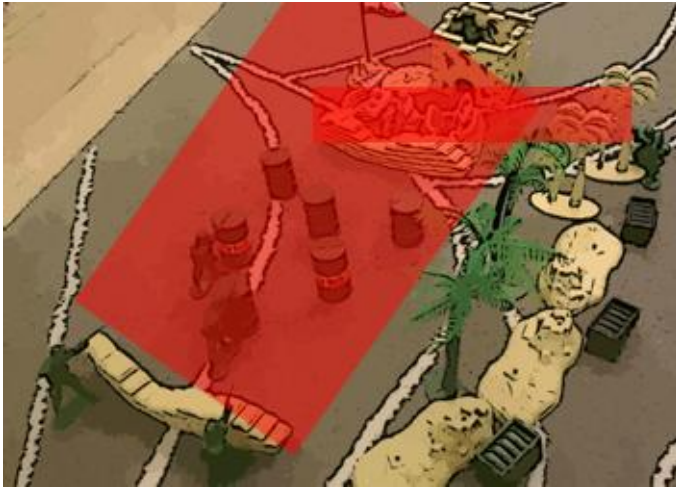
2: Meet Up Point. When the Squad splits up to go left and right around the bunkers they should form back up behind the barrels before moving forwards.

3: Forward Attack Point: This is where the Squad will launch their attack from.

18. Diversion: If an enemy has set up a strong defence position. Re set up the fire-teams to have a small fire team and a large fire-team. Have the large team go to one side and launch a full assault to draw the enemy to that side. Have the smaller fire-team take on a commando role and sneak in from the other side and take out the other team from the rear.



Here the white players have a strong defensive position, but there is a way to out flank them. The green squad sends most of their troops straight at the white players to draw their fire while a smaller stealthy FT commando their way around to their weaker flank.



When the commando FT is ready the engage from the weak side and defeat the enemy players.

19. Maintain awareness: Know where your team-mate are facing so you can watch an unwatched area. Otherwise known as looking after your field of fire. Be aware of where your team is. This will prevent team kills and poor usage of resources.

20. Play defensively: It was mentioned before to be aggressive and keep pushing forwards. Once your squad is always confident to move forwards start to make good decisions. Just like individual tactics don't shoot if you can't hit the enemy. Or you'll get locked in a stalemate and your squad will have to fight them instead of completing your objective.

Make sure when you are pushing forwards you are still using cover, clearing areas, watching your corners and keeping your eyes open for new targets.

Most Importantly: In a squad there is no player for them self. Kill to death ratios are not important in a squad. The only ratio that counts is your team score to their team score. The fire-team providing suppressing fire may not get any kills, while the attacking fire-team gets all the kills. It doesn't make either fire-team more valuable. They both need each other. We win together or lose individually.

RADIO COMMUNICATION

Radio's can be a great tool to airsoft players, but they are also a potential problem. Even an experienced airsofter can get excited about having a new toy and use the radio too much. I highly recommend that only once an airsofter has experienced all other areas do they start using radios.

If possible consider getting a radio that can have dual bands. One band for leaders to discuss overall strategy and another band for the squad/fire-team.

The core principles of voice communication in airsoft are as follows.

- Do you need to use the radio? Can you use hand signals or talk?
- Be brief. You want to say a lot with only a few words. You should always strive to use the least number of words needed to convey the message and get off the channel. If there's a firefight happening a lot of people may need to give information, and it's all important. Don't hog the radio.
- Don't be so concerned with being brief that it causes confusion. Be as clear as possible while maintaining that brevity.
- Be clear. In addition to being brief, you must also strive to be clear in what you say. This requires using PROWORDS, tactical commands and a loud clear voice.
- Allow a split second before beginning a transmission. (This ensures your message will not be cut off.)
- Speak directly and clearly into the mic 2-3 inches away from your mouth. Talk across the mic, not into it.
- Use the TO-FROM method of addressing messages.
- Do not yell.

Note: Never use Over & Out or Roger Wilco. Both of these make you look like an idiot that is imitating war movies.

When you have a radio the most important thing you understand is not everybody needs to talk, but everybody needs to listen. Depending on your squad it may be decided that only leaders can talk on the radio and the leaders will voice the orders to his team.

Try to think of what you want to say before you key up your mic otherwise you will have "um's" and "uh's" throughout your message. Taking up time and reducing clarity.

Sending a message is like writing an email. First you say TO: then FROM: If it's an important message wait a second and say your message. Otherwise end the message with OVER and wait for the recipient to come back to you with GO AHEAD.

Bad Traffic

Adam: Hi guys, I need some help! There are... um... oh shit BB's. Yeah, there are a lot of guys here. Remember that big building we saw before we broke up into two fire-teams. Just in front of that. Could you guys, ahh, boys get down, sorry, could you guys flank them?

Brad: Sorry, I missed the beginning of that. You want us to help?

Adam: Yeah, that would be great. We are in front of the big building we saw before we broke off into two fire-teams. Flank them from the right.

Brad: Ok, guys get up Adam and the boys need us. Yeah man, we're on our way.

Adam: Guys where are you?

Charlie: We are by the road.

Adam: Not you. I'm talking to Brad.

Brad: We're at the front of the building. There's nobody here.

Adam: Other side. I said flank.

Brad: We had no idea where you were!

This happens all the time when people with no radio discipline get their hands on a radio. In the first message Adam, never said who he was talking to. He didn't know what he wanted to say, couldn't give good directions of where he was and talked to his team-mates while still on the radio. This meant that Brad missed some of the message and Adam had to repeat it. Then Brad confirms the message twice in between which he talks to his team mates. Adam once again jumps back on the radio to ask where Brad is without directing the message to him resulting in Charlie updating his position and finally because the directions weren't clear "in front of", Brad ended up in the wrong place.

Good Traffic

Adam: Brad, Adam, Over.

Brad: Adam, go ahead.

Adam: Fire-Team Alpha engaged north of Building One waypoint. Request Fire-Team Bravo flank from the east. Priority. Over.

Brad: Roger.

Four messages which are brief and clear. If BB's were incoming Adam could use the WAIT proword to go off the line and hide behind cover before continuing his transmission.

Proword	Explanation
OUT	This is the end of my transmission and I don't need a reply. Like putting a period/full stop on a sentence.
OVER	This is the end of my transmission to you and a reply is needed. The receiver would reply with whatever information is needed, or possibly ROGER.
ROGER	I have received your transmission and will comply. No need to use OUT. (In the military this would be WILCO)
TO	This transmission is for the people following TO.
FROM	This transmission is from the person following FROM.
GO AHEAD	Send your transmission.
READING YOU LOUD AND CLEAR	Your signal is good and clear.
SPEAK SLOWER	You're talking to fast or the transmission isn't coming through clear. Talk slower.
PRIORITY	This message or order is a priority.
BE ADVISED	The following is important.
COPY	Do you hear? Are you listening?
I COPY	I hear. I'm listening.
READ BACK	Repeat this message back to me. Used to confirm they understood what you said.
I READ BACK	Repeating your message back to you. Confirming you understood what was said.
SAY AGAIN	Repeat all of your last transmission. Or after a point in the message SAY AGAIN AFTER_____. Used to confirm you understood correctly what was just said.
I SAY AGAIN	Repeating my message.
SILENCE (Repeated three times)	Don't talk on the radio! Stay silent till you hear SILENCE LIFTED.
SILENCE LIFTED	You may talk again.
EXECUTE TO FOLLOW	Carry out my order when I say EXECUTE.
EXECUTE	Carry out the order previously given.
WAIT	I need to do something for a few seconds.

WAIT – OUT	I must pause longer than a few seconds.
MORE TO FOLLOW	More information is to be given. Can be used to take a brief pause.
DISREGARD THIS TRANSMISSION – OUT	This transmission is an error. Disregard it.
SITREP	The people after are asked for a SITREP.
WRONG	Your last transmission was incorrect. The correct version is ____.

CONCLUSION

This brings us to the end of the eBook. Use these skills and tactics to help make yourself and your team better. Though remember the most important thing when we play airsoft is having fun.

Once again if you found this eBook helpful and would like to make a payment to the author it can be small or big please go to the following website <http://gum.co/airsofttactics>. If you can't afford to pay, but would like to send your appreciation, please email the author on jwhurcomb@gmail.com.

Train Hard, Fight Easy.

J.W Hurcomb

But remember, when the battle gets chaotic and there are thousands of BB's flying around you. Your ability to survive, fight and win the battle will come down to more than just your skill and the skill of your team. Luck will always play a part in this game, making no two games ever be the same.





