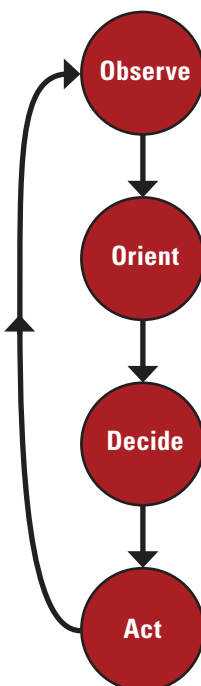


Sniper Awareness and Counter-Sniper Tips

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Disclaimer: This is not current U.S. policy. Always rely on existing doctrine. Examine and use the information herein in light of your mission, operational environment, the Law of War, and other situational factors.



Do not forget the best way to STOP the SNIPER:
KILL the SNIPER!

Let him escape, and he will attack someone else, somewhere else.
KILL the SNIPER!

Proactive Tips

What can be done to avoid being a "sniper's target"?

- Maintain 360° security.
- DON'T SET PATTERNS.
- Deny enemy use of overwatching terrain.
- Remove rank insignia and do not salute in the field in accordance with area of operation (AO) guidance/local policy.
- Don't stand out; everyone should look the same.
- Use observation posts (OPs) and ground and aerial sensor platforms.
- Use magnified optics to scan for snipers.
- Use small recon and security patrols.
- Limit exposure; move quickly and use cover and concealment.

"Slice the Pie, Reduce Exposure"

- Wear protective armor.
- Use armored vehicles.
- Erect shields/screens for cover/concealment.
- Use smoke hazes or smoke screens to obscure the sniper's field of view and limit the effectiveness of his fire.
- Stick to the shadows; use cover and concealment.

Reactive Tips

What should be done once a sniper has engaged the element?

- Take up covered/concealed positions (also conceal with SMOKE). Any wounded soldier applies "self aid."
- Identify sniper location and return fire.
- Attack: Maneuver on enemy location and kill him.
- Reorganize and evaluate casualties.

- DO NOT fixate on casualties! Kill the sniper, then attend to casualties.
- Have a PLAN and REHEARSE IT.
- Maintain 360° security.

KNOW:

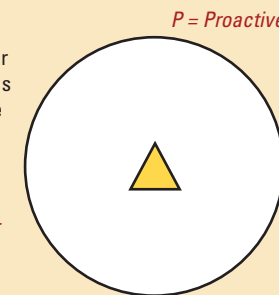
- FM 7-8: Infantry Rifle Platoon and Squad
- BD 1A: Squad Attack
- BD 2A: React to Contact
- BD 4: React to Ambush

Locating Sniper Positions "Slice the Pie"

Narrow the area of possible sniper locations, then search or engage in the most likely area.

Imagine that your unit is located at the center of a circle with a radius based on the effective range of a sniper.

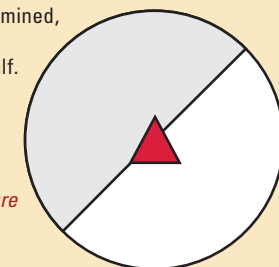
P: Limit your exposure using walls, vehicles, and hard cover at your back and sides.



Once the first shot is fired, an initial direction can be determined, effectively cutting the area of the circle in half.

Focus visual searches on the suspected areas.

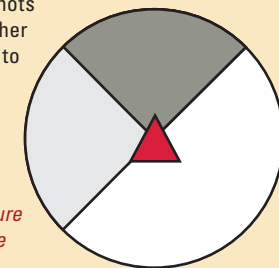
P: Further limit exposure by using angles and corners to flanks.



Listen for additional shots from the sniper to further narrow the half-circle to a wedge.

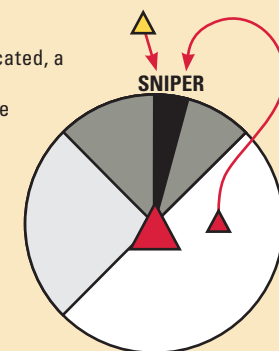
Again, focus on searching the suspected wedge.

P: Reduce your exposure to a small "slice" of the "pie" that is also your sector of responsibility.



Once detected and located, a second element can maneuver to defeat the sniper or cut off the escape route.

P: If you must be exposed in the open due to METT-TC, then try to move often and cover your partner's danger areas.



In the open, keep in constant motion. You should always be moving in "S" or "W" paths.

Enemy TTPs

1. *Deliberate: well planned, resourced*
2. *Hasty: targets of opportunity*

- Urban: 25–200 meters; street level—elevated
- Rural: may operate at longer ranges
- The enemy sniper
 - Will wait to take follow-on shots at any soldier moving into the "kill zone"
 - Will often videotape the attack for propaganda/training/after action review purposes
 - Might operate as part of a team using multiple shooting positions
 - Might use prepared vehicle shooting platform like the "D.C. Sniper"
 - Vehicles might be marked in a way that allows passage through co-opted checkpoints
 - Might attempt to assess success by driving or walking by the target after the shot
 - Might use "bait" (i.e., a dead body or IED) to draw friendly forces into his "kill zone"
 - Will engage the easiest target, such as a top gunner or stationary guard—KEEP MOVING!
 - Will aim for vulnerable areas of body armor
 - Will attack mostly during daylight hours
- Enemy TTPs can and will change.

Friendly TTPs

These have proven to reduce sniper activity and success.

- Increase/change your security posture after 20 minutes in one location and continue to change/upgrade.
- Use interpreters with radio on scan to pick up enemy communications.
- Use cover and concealment whenever possible, e.g., camouflage netting over TC and gunners on Strykers.
- Stop and search suspicious vehicles seen driving by more than once.
- Plan to use roving vehicles that can flex to investigate suspicious vehicles.
- Keep personnel in CONSTANT motion, walking in "W" and "S" patterns.
- Use intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) platforms.
- Keep vehicles available for searches.

- The enemy will change his TTPs.
- Do NOT forget to change your TTPs.
- Be unpredictable; don't set patterns.

Levels of Snipers

1 Specially Trained Sniper: The most dangerous sniper is one who has been specially selected, trained, and equipped with an accurate sniper rifle outfitted with modern scopes, night vision, and even thermal imagers. He is an expert trained to select key individuals as his targets. He can hit at great ranges (sometimes out to 1,000 meters) and is skilled in avoiding detection. This sniper is the most difficult to counter effectively.

2 Trained Marksman. A trained marksman is a common sniper often found in urban combat. He is a skilled soldier, equipped with a standard-issue weapon, who is an above-average shot. He normally has fair-to-good field craft skills and is difficult to detect in the urban environment. He might be employed singly or in teams to create confusion among friendly forces, cause casualties, or harass and disrupt the tempo of operations. He can be found in fairly large numbers in the armies of many potential adversaries.

3 Armed Irregular. This sniper might have little or no formal military training but might have experience in urban combat. He might wear a distinguishing uniform and might even appear to be merely another of the thousands of noncombatants found in a large urban area. He might carry his weapon openly and might go to great lengths to avoid identification as a sniper. His strengths are his knowledge of the local terrain and his ability to melt into the local populace.

S-A-L-U-T-E

For Reporting Observed Activity

S – Size

A – Activity

L – Location

U – Uniform/Unit

T – Time and Date

E – Equipment



S – Size

- What is the size of the unit?
 - Number of personnel
 - Number of vehicles (highway, rail, etc.)

A – Activity

- What are they doing?

L – Location

- Where are they located?
 - Grid coordinates

U – Uniform/Unit

- What are they wearing?
- What unit do they belong to?

T – Time and Date

- What time of day/night do you see them?
 - Day and time group (DTG)
 - Zulu or local

E – Equipment

- What type of equipment did you see?

Tips

- Throw smoke, then collect and evacuate casualties as required.
- Find the sniper by his mistakes: reflections, dust clouds, muzzle flashes, etc.
- Insert a cleaning rod in a bullet hole to indicate the bullet's path and possible point of origin.
- Use unit fires within rules of engagement (ROE).
- Use overmatching fires within ROE.
 - Cordon most likely area (25- to 200-meter radius from your position).
 - Hunt down and KILL the enemy sniper.
 - If you cannot kill the sniper, harass him!
- Use thermal imagers if they are available and if the ambient temperature warrants it. Thermals provide an excellent force multiplier, especially when used in conjunction with smoke. They will not work

as well when ambient temperatures are higher (70–100°F). Thermals work well in the daylight if conditions are right.

- Use “reflection” on enemy optics. Shining lasers or spotlights during hours of darkness can reflect many things, including enemy optics. **Warning:** compromising your location is a risk.
- Ensure positive identification of target; weigh risk of excessive collateral damage.

How far out should a search for an enemy sniper focus?

Focus searches around 25–200 meters first. It is possible for “specially trained snipers” to engage at farther ranges but less likely that they will be successful at farther ranges. In rural areas search distances are often farther.

Principles

Pre-patrol

- Conduct pre-patrol brief using the 5-paragraph operations order format. Highlight current Intel and enemy tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs).
- Rehearse battle drills.

On Patrol

- Maintain 360° security.
- Limit stationary time.
- Limit exposure.
- Respond quickly and aggressively.
- Find, fix, and finish.
- Everyone is a counter-sniper.
- Use optics to “out look” the enemy.
- Use improvised or field-expedient technology (e.g., nets, screens, etc.) immediately.

Post-patrol

- Conduct detailed patrol debriefing.
- Follow through (you did find, fix, and finish; now **exploit** and **analyze**).

Review

- SLICE THE PIE.
- Scan near and far, high and low.
- Use telescopic optics.
- Seek cover/concealment and return fire.
- Use more smoke.
- Focus cordon/search around 200 meters.
- Focus cordon/search along a narrow “slice of the pie.”
- Harass the enemy sniper.
- Kill the enemy sniper!

Sources

Appendix F from FM 7-92: THE INFANTRY RECONNAISSANCE PLATOON AND SQUAD (AIRBORNE, AIR ASSAULT, LIGHT INFANTRY)

FM 7-8: INFANTRY RIFLE PLATOON AND SQUAD

Chapter 6 from FM 3-06.11: COMBINED ARMS OPERATIONS IN URBAN TERRAIN

FM 23-10: SNIPER OPERATIONS

Canadian Sniper Manual